

## Az-Zukhruf

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

### Name

It is derived from the word *zukhruf-an* which occurs in verse 33 of this Surah.

### Period of Revelation

It could not be known from any authentic tradition, but a study of its subject matter shows that this Surah also was revealed in the same period in which the Surahs Al-Mumin, As-Sajdah and Ash-Shura, were revealed. It appears that the revelation of this series of the Surahs began when the disbelievers of Makkah were planning to put an end to the Prophet's (peace be upon him) life. Day and night they were holding consultations in their assemblies as how to eliminate him and even an attack on his life had also been made as has been clearly referred to in verses 79-80.

### Theme and Topics

In this Surah a forceful and severe criticism has been made of the Quraish and the common Arabs creeds and superstitions of ignorance in which they persisted. Their stubbornness has been exposed in a firm and effective way, so that every member of the society, who was reasonable in

some degree, should be made to consider the evils in which the community was involved and its tyrannical treatment of the person who was trying to redeem it.

The discourse starts in a way as if to say: You, by means of your mischief, want that the revelation of this Book should be stopped, but Allah has never withheld the appointment of His Prophets and the revelation of His Books because of the mischief of the people, but has destroyed the wicked people, who obstructed the way of His guidance. The same He will do again. A little further in verses 41-43 and 79-80 the same thing has been reiterated. Though the people who were plotting against his life are meant, the Prophet (peace be upon him) has been addressed to the effect: Whether you remain alive or not, We will certainly punish the wicked. And the people themselves have been plainly warned to the effect: If you have decided to take an action against Our Prophet, We too will take a decisive action.

Then, it has been told: What is the reality of the religion that the people are following so devotedly and what are the arguments on whose strength they are resisting Muhammad (peace be upon him).

They themselves admit that the Creator of the earth and heavens and of themselves and their deities is only Allah. They also know and admit that the blessings they are benefiting from have been bestowed by Allah; yet they insist on making others associates of Allah in His Godhead. They regard Allah's servants as His children, and even the daughters, whom they regard as disgraceful for themselves. They believe that the angels are goddesses. They have

carved their images as females. They adorn them with female dresses and ornaments and call them daughters of Allah. They worship them and invoke them for the fulfillment of their needs. How did they know that the angels were female?

When they are rebuked for these superstitions, they present the pretense of destiny and say: Had Allah disapproved of these our practices, we could not have worshiped these images, whereas the means of finding out whether Allah had approved of something or not, are His Books and not those things which are happening in the world according to His Will. For under His Will not only idol worship but crimes like theft and adultery, robbery, murder, etc. also are being committed. Can this argument be used to justify as right and proper for the commission of every crime and evil in the world?

When it is asked: Do you have any authority, apart from this wrong argument, for the polytheism of yours? They reply: The same has been the practice since the time of our forefathers. In other words, this in their opinion is a strong enough argument for a creed's being right and true, whereas the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), descent from whom is the only basis of their pride and distinction, had rejected the religion of his elders and left his home, and he had discarded every such blind imitation of his forefathers, which did not have the support of any rational argument. Then, if these people had to follow their elders only, for this also they selected their most ignorant elders and abandoned their most illustrious elders like the

Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them).

When they are asked: Has ever a Prophet or a Book, sent down by God, given this teaching that others beside Allah are worthy of worship? They present this practice of the Christians as an argument that they took Jesus (peace be upon him), son of Mary, as son of God and worshiped him; whereas the question was not this whether the community of a Prophet had committed shirk or not, but whether a Prophet had himself taught shirk. Jesus (peace be upon him), son of Mary, had never said that he was son of God and that the people should worship him. His was the same teaching which every other Prophet had given: My Lord as well as your Lord is Allah, so worship Him alone.

They were disinclined to believe in the Prophethood of the Prophet (peace be upon him) because he was neither a rich man nor a person of high worldly position and rank. They said: Had Allah willed to appoint a prophet among us, He would have appointed one of the great men of our two cities (Makkah and Taif). On that very basis, Pharaoh also had looked down upon the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and said: If Allah, the King of the heavens, had to send a messenger to me, the king of the earth, He would have sent him with bracelets of gold and a company of angels in attendance. Where from has this mendicant appeared. I am superior to him, for the kingdom of Egypt belongs to me, and the canals of the Nile are flowing under my control. What is the status of this man as against me? He has neither wealth nor authority.

Thus, after criticizing each practice of ignorance of the

disbelievers and rejecting it with rational arguments, it has been pointed out: Neither has God any offspring, nor are there separate gods of the earth and heavens, nor is there any intercessor who may be able to protect from His punishment those who adopt deviation knowingly. Allah is far above this that He should have children. He alone is the God of the whole Universe. All others are His servants and not associates in His attributes and powers, and only such men can intercede with Him, who are themselves followers of the truth and they also can intercede only for those who may have adopted obedience of the truth in the world.

1. Ha. Mim.

حَم

2. By the lucid Scripture.

وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ

3. Indeed, We made it a Quran in Arabic that you might understand.\*<sup>1</sup>

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

\*<sup>1</sup> The object of taking an oath by the Quran is to impress this fact: We are the Author of this Book and not Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the attribute of the Quran chosen for the oath is that it is a lucid Scripture. To swear by the Quran itself with this attribute in order to impress that the Quran is divine Word by itself implies this: O people, this is an open Book before you. Read it intelligently. Its clear and un-ambiguous themes, its language and literary style, its teaching which distinguishes the truth from falsehood, all are testifying to the fact that none but the Lord of the Universe could be its Author.

Then the sentence: “Indeed, We made it a Quran in Arabic that you might understand” has two meanings:

(1) It is not in any foreign tongue but in your own language; therefore, you can have no difficulty in assessing its value and worth. Had it been in a non-Arabic language, you could have offered the excuse that you could not determine its being divine, or otherwise, for you did not understand it. But you cannot offer this excuse about this Arabic Quran. Its each word is clear to you, its each passage and discourse, both in language and in theme, is plain for you. Now you may see it for yourself whether this could be the word of Muhammad (peace be upon him) or of some other Arab.

(2) We have sent this Book in Arabic because We are addressing the Arabs, who can only understand an Arabic Quran. The person who disregards this expressly rational ground for sending down the Quran in Arabic and regards it as the word of Muhammad (peace be upon him) instead of divine Word only because Muhammad’s mother tongue is also Arabic, commits a grave injustice. (To understand this second meaning, please see Surah HaMim As-Sajdah, Ayat 44 and its E.N).

4. And indeed it is in the Source of Decrees with Us,<sup>\*2</sup> exalted, full of wisdom.<sup>\*3</sup>

وَأَنزَلْنَا فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلَّ  
حَكِيمٌ

<sup>\*2</sup> *Umm al-Kitab*: the “Original Book”: the Book from which all the Books sent down to the Prophets have been derived. In Surah Al-Waqiah the same thing has been

described as *Kitab-um-Maknun* (the hidden and preserved Book) and in Surah Al-Burooj, Ayat 22 as *Lauh-i Mahfuz* (the preserved tablet), that is, the tablet whose writing cannot be effaced, which is secure from every kind of interference. By saying that the Quran is inscribed in *Umm al-Kitab*, attention has been drawn to an important truth. Different Books had been revealed by Allah in different ages to different Prophets for the guidance of different nations in different languages, but all these Books invited mankind to one and the same faith. They regarded one and the same thing as the truth. They presented one and the same criterion of good and evil. They propounded the same principles of morality and civilization. In short, they brought one and the same *Deen* (religion). The reason was that their source and origin was the same, only words were different; they had the same meaning and theme which is inscribed in a Source Book with Allah, and whenever there was a need, He raised a Prophet and sent down the same meaning and subject-matter clothed in a particular diction according to the environment and occasion. Had Allah willed to raise the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in another nation instead of the Arabs, He would have sent down the same Quran in the language of that nation. In it the meaning and content would have been expressed according to the environments and conditions of the people and land. The words would have been different and the language also different but the teaching and guidance the same basically, and it would be the same Quran though not the Arabic Quran. This same thing has been expressed in

Surah Ash-Shuara, thus: This (Book) has been revealed by the Lord of the worlds. The trustworthy Spirit has come down with it upon your heart so that you may become one of those who are (appointed by God) to warn (the people) in plain Arabic language, and this is also contained in the scriptures of the former peoples. (verses 192-196). (For explanation, see Surah Ash-Shuara, Ayats 192-196 and the E.Ns there of).

\*3 This sentence is related both to *Kitab-i mubin* and to *Umm al-Kitab*. Thus, it is in praise of both the Quran and the Original Book from which the Quran has been derived. This praise is meant to impress the fact that if a person does not recognize the true worth of this Book and does not benefit from its wise teachings because of his own folly, it would be his own misfortune. If someone tried to degrade it and found fault with it, it would be his own meanness. It cannot become worthless on account of someone's lack of appreciation of it, and its wisdom cannot be eclipsed by anyone's throwing dust at it. This is by itself a glorious Book, which stands exalted by its matchless teaching, miraculous eloquence, faultless wisdom and the sublime personality of its great Author. Therefore, none can succeed in minimizing its value and worth. In verse 44 below the Quraish in particular and the Arabs in general have been told that the revelation of the Book for which they are showing such lack of appreciation had provided them a unique opportunity of honor, which if they lost, would subject them to a severe accountability before God. (See E.N. 39 below).



5. Then should We turn away the reminder from you, because you are a transgressing people.\*4

أَفَنضْرِبُ عَنْكُمْ الذِّكْرَ  
صَفْحًا أَنْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا

مُسْرِفِينَ

\*4 In this one sentence the entire history that had taken place since the time the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had proclaimed to be a Prophet till the revelation of these verses during the past few years has been compressed. This sentence depicts the following picture: A nation has been involved in ignorance, backwardness and depravity for centuries. Suddenly, Allah looks at it with favor. He raises in it an illustrious guide and sends down His own Word to take it out of the darkness of ignorance so that it is aroused from slumber, it gives up superstitions of ignorance and it becomes aware of the truth and adopts the right way of life. But the ignorant people of the nation and the tribal chiefs turn hostile to the guide, and try their utmost to defeat him and his mission. With the passage of time their hostility and mischief go on increasing; so much so that they make up their mind to kill him. At this, it is being said: Should We stop making any efforts to reform you because you are proving to be unworthy people? Should We withhold sending down this Admonition, and leave you lying in the same wretched state in which you have been lying since centuries? Do you really think that should be the demand of Our Mercy? Have you ever considered what doom you would meet when you have

turned down the bounty of Allah and persisted in falsehood after the truth has come before you?

6. And how many a prophet did We send among the men of old.

وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَبِيِّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ



7. And never came to them a prophet except that they used to ridicule at him.\*5

وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا كَانُوا

بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ

\*5 That is, if such absurdity and senselessness had barred the sending of a Prophet or a Book, no Prophet would ever have come to any nation nor a Book sent to it.

8. Then We destroyed stronger than these in might. And has preceded (before them) the example of the ancient peoples.\*6

فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا

وَمَضَىٰ مَثَلُ الْأَوَّلِينَ



\*6 That is, the result of the senselessness of some particular people could not be that the entire mankind should be deprived of the guidance of the Prophethood and the Book. The result has always been that the worshippers of falsehood, with the pride of power, did not desist from mocking the Prophets and were ultimately destroyed. When Allah's wrath descended upon the people, those who possessed thousands of times greater power than that possessed by the chiefs of the Quraish, they were crushed to annihilation like mosquitoes and fleas.

9. And if you ask them: “Who created the heavens and the earth.” They will surely say: “The All Mighty, the All Knower created them.”

وَلَيْنِ سَأَلْتَهُم مِّنْ خَلْقِ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَيَقُولُنَّ  
خَلَقَهُنَّ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

10. (The one) Who has made for you the earth a resting place,<sup>\*7</sup> and has made for you therein roads<sup>\*8</sup> that you might be guided.<sup>\*9</sup>

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ  
مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا  
لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

**\*7** At other places the earth has been described as a bed, but here as a cradle. That is, just as a child lies resting in its cradle, so is this great globe meant to be a place of rest for you, which is suspended in space, which is spinning on its axis at a speed of 1,000 miles an hour, which is revolving around the sun at a speed of 66,000 miles an hour. Its interior is so intensely hot that it can melt the stones and sometimes it manifests its power in the form of volcano eruptions. But, in spite of that, the Creator has made it so tranquil that one sleeps on it in full peace and there is no jerk whatsoever. One lives on it and does not at all feel that this globe is suspended and he is hanging from it with his head pointing downward. One moves about on it with satisfaction and never thinks that he is riding on a vehicle moving faster than a bullet. You dig it at will and turn it inside out and beat it as you like to obtain your sustenance. Whereas, a little shaking of it in an earthquake makes you

feel what a terrible giant it is, which Allah has subdued for you. (For further explanation, see Surah Al-Naml, Ayat 61 and E.N. 74 of it).

**\*8** The passes in the mountains and the rivers in the hill and plain regions are the natural paths, which Allah has provided on the surface of the earth. Man has spread on the earth by means of these. If the mountainous ranges had been created erect, without a crevice, and there had been no rivers and streams, man would have been confined to the same areas where he was born. Then, Allah through another grace has not made the entire surface of the earth uniform in nature, but has created different marks of distinction by means of which man recognizes different lands and feels the difference between one land and another. This is the second important means by which man became able to move about on the earth. This blessing can be appreciated by the one who has had a chance of going on a vast desert, where for thousands of miles the earth is without any landmarks and one does not know where one has reached and where one has to go.

**\*9** This sentence gives two meanings simultaneously:

(1) That by means of these natural paths and landmarks you may find your way and reach the place you want to reach.

(2) That you may obtain guidance from the observation of this craftsmanship of Allah Almighty. May reach the underlying reality and understand that this system of the earth is not functioning haphazardly, nor has been devised by many gods jointly, but there is one All-Wise Creator,

Who has made these paths in the hills and on the plains in view of the needs and requirements of His creatures, and has given each region of the earth a different form in countless different ways by means of which man can distinguish one region from the other.

**11.** And who sends down from the sky water in due measure.<sup>\*10</sup> And We revive therewith a dead land. Thus will you be brought forth.<sup>\*11</sup>

وَالَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً  
بِقَدَرٍ فَأَنْشَرْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَيْتًا  
كَذَلِكَ نُخْرِجُوكَ

**\*10** That is, for each region He has ordained an average measure of the rain which falls year after year for long ages regularly. It does not happen that an area may have two inches of the rainfall one year and 200 inches of it the next year. Then He spreads the rainfall over different places in different times in such a way that it becomes beneficial on the whole for the products of the earth. And this is also His wisdom that He has deprived some parts of the earth of the rainfall almost entirely and turned them into dry barren deserts, and in some other parts, He sometimes causes famines to occur and sometimes sends torrential rains so that man may know what a great blessing the rain and its general regularity is for the populated areas, and he may also remember that this system is under the control of another power, whose decrees cannot be changed by anyone. No one has the power that he may change the general average of the rainfall of a country, or effect a variation in its distribution over vast areas of the earth, or

avert an impending storm, or attract the clouds towards his own land and compel them to rain. (For further explanation, see Surah Al-Hijr, Ayats 21-22; Surah Al-Muminun, Ayats 18-20).

\*11 Here, the birth of vegetation in the earth by means of water has been presented as an argument for two things simultaneously:

(1) That these things are happening by the power and wisdom of One God; no one else is His associate in these works.

(2) That there can be life after death and it will be. (For further explanation, see Surah An-Nahl, Ayats 65-67; Surah Al-Hajj, Ayats 5-7; Surah An-Naml, Ayat 60; Surah Ar-Room, Ayats 19, 24; Surah Fatir E.N. 19 and Surah YaSeen E.N. 29).

12. And who has created all the pairs,<sup>\*12</sup> and has made for you ships and cattle those which you ride.

وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا  
وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْفُلْكِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ  
مَا تَرْكَبُونَ

\*12 Pairs here does not imply only pairs of men and women among human beings and of males and females among animals and vegetation, but there are countless other things which the Creator has made as matching partners of each other and by whose coming together and combination new and ever new things come into being in the world. For example, among the elements, some can be combined with others and some cannot be combined. The combination of

those which can combine is resulting into various compositions, e.g. the negative and positive charges in electricity are the matching partners of each other and their mutual attraction is causing wonderful things to happen in the world. If man considers the structure and the mutual relationships and the different forms of cooperation and the results of the combination of this and other countless pairs which Allah has created among countless of His creations. He cannot help testifying to the truth that this great workshop of the world is the creation of one and only one Almighty, All-Wise Designer, and is functioning only under His care and control. Only a man of mean intelligence could suppose that all this happened, and is happening, without a Wise Being, or there is the possibility in it of the agency and interference of more than one God.

**13.** That you may mount upon their backs, then remember the favor of your Lord when you mount thereon, and say: “Glorified be He who has subjected this for us, and we could not have subdued it.”\*13

لَتَسْتَوْرَأَ عَلَى ظُهُورِهِ ثُمَّ  
تَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ  
عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي  
سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ  
مُقْرِنِينَ



\*13 That is, only man from among all the creatures of the earth has been given this power by Allah to use boats and ships and animals as conveyance. Should he never think and be grateful as to who it is who created possibilities for

him to run boats in the mighty oceans, and who created some animals, among the countless kinds of animals, with a nature that they become his servants in spite of being far stronger than him in power, so he ride on them and drive them wherever he likes. To benefit by these blessings and to forget the Benefactor is a sign of the heart's becoming dead and the conscience's being insensitive. For, when a man endowed with a living heart and a sensitive conscience will sit on these conveyances, he will be filled with the feelings of the blessings and with the gratitude for it, and will cry out: Glorified is the Being Who subjected these things to me. Glorified is He from that another should be His associate in His Being and attributes and powers. Glorified is He and free from the weakness that He should become helpless of performing the functions of His Godhead by Himself and should stand in need of other associate gods. Glorified is He that I should make another an associate with Him in rendering thanks for these blessings.

The best practical commentary of the intention and meaning of this verse are the words that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pronounce at the time he sat on the conveyance. Abdullah bin Umar says that whenever the Prophet (peace be upon him) sat on a conveyance for a journey, he would pronounce Allahu-Akbar three times, then would recite this verse, and then pray: O God, I implore You to grant me in this journey the grace of goodness and piety and such acts as may please You. O God, make the journey easy and roll up the long distance for us. O God, You alone are the Companion during the



journey and Guardian of the family in our absence. O God, take care of us during the journey and our household in our absence. (Musnad Ahmed, Muslim, Abu Daud, Nasai, Darimi, Tirmidhi).

Ali says: Once the Prophet (peace be upon him) put his foot in the stirrup with *Bismillah*, and then, after riding, said: *Alhamdu-lillah subhan-alladhi sakhkhara lana hadha . . . .*, then pronounced *Alhamdu-lillah* three times, and *Allahu-Akbar* three times; then said: *Subhana-ka la-ilaha illa anta, qad zalamtu nafsi faghfir-li*. Then he laughed. I asked: What made you laugh. O Messenger of Allah? He replied: When a servant says: *Rabb-ighfir-li*, Allah Almighty is very pleased with this. He says: My servant knows that there is none beside Me who can forgive sins. (Ahmed, Abu Daud, Tirmidhi, Nasai, and others)

Abu Mijlaz says: Once I rode on my animal and recited this verse: *Subhan-alladhi sakhkhara lane hadha . . . .*, Hasan said: Have you been commanded to say so? I said: What should I say then? He replied: Say, thank God, Who guided us to Islam: Thanks to Him, Who did us a favor by sending Muhammad (peace be upon him): Thanks to Him Who admitted us into the best community that has been raised for the people; then recite this verse. (Ibn Jarir, Ahkam al-Quran by Jassas).

14. “And indeed, to Our Lord we are surely returning.”\*14

وَإِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ

\*14 That is, while embarking on every journey one should remember that there is ahead a longer and final journey also. Besides there is the possibility in the use of every

conveyance that an accident may turn that very journey into one's last journey; therefore, every time one should remember his return to his Lord so that if something unexpected happens, he does not die unaware.

Let us pause here for a while and consider the moral results of this teaching. Can one imagine that a person who while sitting on a conveyance starts his journey consciously with full remembrance of Allah and his return and accountability before Him, would commit sins and injustices and tyrannies on the way? Can a person think or utter these words from his mouth when he intends to go to meet a prostitute, or to visit a club for the purpose of drinking and gambling? Can a ruler, or a government official, or a merchant who has stepped out of his house with such thoughts and such words at his lips, usurp the rights of others when he reaches his destination? Can a soldier utter these words while boarding his aircraft or tank when he goes out to shed blood of the innocent and deprive the weak of their freedom? If not, then this one thing alone is enough to bar every movement undertaken for the commission of a sin.

**15.** And they assign to some of His slaves a share with Him.\*<sup>15</sup> Indeed, man is clearly ingrate.

وَجَعَلُوا لَهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْءًا  
إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ مُّبِينٌ

\*<sup>15</sup> “Assign to some of His slaves a share with Him” implies declaring a servant of Allah His offspring, for an offspring inevitably is homogeneous with and a part of the father's body, and regarding somebody as Allah's son or

daughter means that he or she is being made a partner in Allah's Being. Besides, another form of making a creature a part of Allah is that it should be regarded as possessor of the attributes and powers as are specifically Allah's own, and it should be invoked under the same concept, or rites of worship performed before it, or its sanctities observed and regarded as imperative and binding. For, in that case man divides divinity and provider between Allah and His servants and hands over a part of it to the servants.

16. Or has He taken, out of what He has created, daughters and He has selected for you sons.

أَمْ آتَّخَذَ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ بَنَاتٍ  
وَأَصْفَنَ لَكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17. And when one of them is given tidings of (the birth of a girl) that which he set forth as a parable to the Beneficent, his face becomes dark, and he is filled with grief.\*16

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِمَا ضَرَبَ  
لِلرَّحْمَنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ  
مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

\*16 Here, the folly of the polytheists of Arabia has been fully exposed. They said that the angels were the daughters of Allah. They had carved out their images as females, and these were their goddesses whom they worshiped. About this Allah says: In the first place, in spite of knowing and recognizing that the Creator of the earth and heavens is Allah and it is He Who has made this earth a cradle for you and it is He Who sends down the rain from the sky, and it is He Who has created these animals for your service, yet you

have taken others as gods beside Him, whereas those whom you serve as deities are not God but creatures of God. Then, further more, you have made some of the servants associates of Allah not only in His attributes but in His Being as well, and invented the creed that they were Allah's offspring. Then, not resting content with this, you assigned to Allah that kind of the offspring which you regard as disgraceful for your own selves. When a daughter is born in your house, your face grows dark, you feel distressed, and sometimes you bury her alive. This offspring you assign to Allah and reserve for yourselves the sons, whom you regard as a source of joy and pride. Even then you claim that you believe in Allah.

**18.** Or (they like for Allah) one who is raised up in adornments (women), and who in dispute cannot make (itself) clear.\*<sup>17</sup>

أَوْ مَن يُنْشَأُ فِي الْهَلِيَّةِ وَهُوَ  
فِي الْخِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِينٍ

\*<sup>17</sup> In other words, You have assigned to Allah the offspring that is by nature delicate, weak and frail, and adopted for yourselves the offspring that is bold, courageous and fearless.

This verse shows permissibility of the ornaments for the women, for Allah has mentioned the ornaments as a natural thing for them. The same is also confirmed by the Hadith. Imam Ahmad, Abu Daud and Nasai have related on the authority of Ali that the Prophet (peace be upon him) took silk in one hand and gold in the other and said that both were forbidden to be used in dress by the men of

his Ummah. Tirmidhi and Nasai have related from Abu Musa Ashari a tradition, saying that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Silk and gold have been forbidden for the men but made lawful for the women of my Ummah. Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas has discussed this question in his Ahkam ai-Quran and related the following traditions:

Aishah says: Once Usamah, son of Zaid bin Harithah, was hurt and started bleeding. The Prophet (peace be upon him) loved him like his own children. He sucked his blood and spat it out, and cheered him saying: Had Usamah been a daughter we would have adorned him with ornaments! Had Usamah been a daughter, we would have dressed him in fine clothes!

Abu Musa Ashari has related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Wearing of silken clothes and ornaments of gold is unlawful for the men of my Ummah but lawful for the women.

Amr bin Aaas has related: Once two women came before the Prophet (peace be upon him), and they were wearing bracelets of gold. He said: Would you like that Allah should make you wear bracelets of the fire instead of these? They replied that they would not. Thereupon he said: Pay their dues, i.e. the zakat due on them.

Aisha has stated that there is no harm in wearing the ornaments if the zakat due on them is paid.

Umar wrote to Abu Musa Ashari: Order the Muslim women who live in the areas under your administrative control that they should pay the zakat dues on their ornaments.

Imam Abu Hanifah has related the following traditions on the authority of Amr bin Dinar: Aishah had arranged ornaments of gold for her sisters and Abdullah bin Umar for his daughters.

After citing all these traditions, Allama Jassas writes: The traditions that have been related from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the companions about the permissibility and lawfulness of gold and silk for the women are better known and more common than those that are there about their unlawfulness, and the above verse also points to their lawfulness. Then the practice of the Muslims also from the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions till our time (i.e. till the latter part of the 4th century of hijrah) has been the same, and no one ever objected to it. In such matters, no objection can be admitted on the basis of the isolated reports (Akhbar ahab).

**19.** And they have made the angels, those who are the slaves of the Beneficent, females.<sup>\*18</sup> Did they witness their creation.<sup>\*19</sup> Their testimony will be recorded and they will be questioned.

وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ  
عِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنثًا أَشْهَدُوا  
خَلْقَهُمْ سَتُكْتَبُ شَهَادَتُهُمْ  
وَيُسْأَلُونَ



**\*18** That is, who are free from this that they should be males or females.

**\*19** Another translation can be: Were they present at the time of their creation?

**20.** And they say: “If the Beneficent One had (so) willed, we would not have worshipped them.”\*20 They have no knowledge whatsoever of that. They do not but falsify.

وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَا  
عَبَدْنَاهُمْ مَا لَهُم بِذَلِكَ مِنْ  
عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

**\*20** This was their reasoning from destiny to cover up their deviation and error, and this has been the argument of the wrongdoers in every age. They argued that their worshiping the angels became possible only because Allah allowed them to do so. Had He not willed so they could not have done it; and then it had been a practice with them for centuries and no torment from Allah had descended on them, which meant that Allah did not disapprove of their this practice.

**21.** Or have We given them a scripture before this (Quran), so to which they are holding fast.\*21

أَمْ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ كِتَابًا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ  
فَهُمْ بِهِ مُسْتَمْسِكُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

**\*21** It means this: These ignorant people think that whatever is happening in the world has the approval of Allah for it, because it is happening according to His will. This argument, however, is wrong. For it is not only shirk which is being committed in the world, but countless other crimes like stealing, robbery, murder, bribery, etc. are also taking place, which nobody likes. Then, can it be said by the same reasoning that all such acts are lawful and good only because Allah is letting them happen in His world, and

when He allows them to happen, He must have approved of them also? The means of knowing what Allah likes and what He hates are not the events that are happening in the world, but the Book of Allah, which comes through His Messenger and in which Allah Himself states as to what beliefs, what deeds and what morals He likes and what He dislikes. If these people have a Book, which came before the Quran, and which tells that Allah has appointed the angels also as deities beside himself and that they should worship them also, they should cite it. (For further explanation, see Surah Al-Anaam, Ayats 107-112, 137, 148-149; Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayat 28; Surah Younus, Ayat 99; Surah Hud, Ayats 118-119; Surah Ar-Raad, Ayat 31; Surah An-Nahl, Ayats 9, 35-36, 93; and E.N. 20 of Surah Az-Zumar and E.N. 11 of Surah Ash-Shura).

**22.** But they say: “Indeed, we found our forefathers upon a certain way, and indeed we are guided on their footsteps.”\*22

بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا  
عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ  
مُهْتَدُونَ

\*22 That is, they have no authority of any divine book. The only authority they have is that it has been the practice since the time of their forefathers. Therefore, they have taken the angels as goddesses in imitation of them.

**23.** And similarly, We did not send before you (Muhammad) into a township any warner, but

وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي  
قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا



its affluent said: “Indeed we found our forefathers on a certain way, and indeed we are following on their footsteps.”\*23

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا ءَابَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا  
عَلَىٰ ءَاثَرِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ



\*23 Here, the point worth consideration is why only the well to do people of every community have resisted the Prophets and upheld the imitation of their forefathers in every age. Why have they alone been in the forefront to oppose the truth and to endeavor to maintain the established falsehood and to beguile and incite the common people against them? Its basic causes were two:

(1) The well to do and affluent people are so absorbed in making and enjoying the world of their own that they are not inclined to bother themselves about the useless debate (as they assume it to be) between the truth and falsehood. Their love of ease and mental lethargy renders them so heedless of religion and conservative that they want the established order, no matter whether it is based on truth or falsehood, to retrain in force so that they do not have to take the trouble of thinking about the new order at all for themselves.

(2) Their interests become so dependent on the established order that when they get the first glimpse of the order presented by the Prophets, they start feeling that if it came, it would not only put an end to their leadership but also would deprive them of the freedom to consume the lawful and commit the unlawful. (For further details, see Surah Al-Anaam, Ayat 103; Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayats 66-70. 75, 88

109, 127; Surah Houd, Ayats 27-28; Surah Bani-Israil, Ayat 16; Surah Al-Muaminun, Ayats 24-33, 46; Surah Saba, Ayat 34 and the corresponding E.Ns).

24. He (the warner) said: “Even if I brought you better guidance than that upon which you found your forefathers.” They said: “Indeed, we disbelieve in that with which you have been sent.”

﴿ قُلْ أَوْلَوْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِأَهْدَىٰ  
مِمَّا وَجَدْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ ءَابَاءَكُمْ  
قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ  
كَافِرُونَ ﴾

25. So We took vengeance on them, then see how was the end of those who denied.

﴿ فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ  
عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ ﴾

26. And when Abraham said to his father and his people: \*24 “Indeed, I am disassociated from that which you worship.”

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ  
إِنِّي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴾

\*24 For details, see Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayats 124-133; Surah Al-Anaam, Ayats 74-84; Surah Ibrahim, Ayats 35-41; Surah Maryam, Ayats 41-50; Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayats 51-73; Surah Ash-Shuara, Ayats 69-89, Surah Al-Ankabut, Ayats 16-27; Surah As-Saaffat, Ayats 83-100 and the corresponding E.Ns.

27. “Except He who created me, and indeed He will

﴿ إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيِّدِي ﴾

guide me.”\*25



\*25 In these words not only did the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) state his creed but also gave the argument for it. The reason for not having any connection with the other deities is that they neither have created nor they give right guidance in any matter, nor they can; and the reason for having a connection only with Allah Almighty is that He alone is the Creator and He alone gives, and can give the right guidance to mankind.

28. And he made it a word lasting\*26 among his offspring that they might return.\*27

وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ



\*26 A word: the word that none but the Creator is worthy of worship in the world.

\*27 That is, whenever they swerve from the right path, this word should be there to guide them so that they return to it again. This event has been mentioned here in order to expose the foolishness of the disbelieving Quraish and to put them to shame, as if to say: When you have adopted obedience of your ancestors, you have selected the most depraved of them for the purpose instead of the most righteous and illustrious, who were the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them). The basis of the leadership of the Quraish in Arabia was that they were the descendants of the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them) and were the attendants of the Kabah built by them. Therefore, they should have followed them and

not their ignorant forefathers who had given up the way of the Prophets and adopted polytheism from the neighboring idol-worshippers. Furthermore, by mentioning this event another error of those people has been pointed out. That is, if the blind imitation of the forefathers, without the distinction of good and evil had been the right thing, the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) should have done so in the first instance. But he had plainly told his father and his people that he could not follow their creed of ignorance in which they had abandoned the Creator and made those imaginary beings their deities, who were not the creator. This shows that the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) did not believe in following the forefathers, but his creed was that before one followed the forefathers one should see whether they were following the right way or not, and if it became known by reason that they were following the wrong way, one should give up their way and adopt the way that was proved right.

**29.** But I gave enjoyment (of life) to these and their fathers, until there came to them the truth and a clear messenger.<sup>\*28</sup>

بَلْ مَتَّعْتُ هَؤُلَاءِ وَاٰبَاءَهُمْ  
حَتَّىٰ جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ وَرَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ



**\*28** Another meaning of the word *rasulum-mubin* can be: A Messenger whose being a Messenger was obvious and apparent: Whose life before and after the Prophethood clearly testified that he was certainly Allah's Messenger.

**30.** And when the truth (the Quran) came to them, they said: “This is magic<sup>\*29</sup> and indeed we are disbelievers therein.”

وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ قَالُوا هَذَا  
سِحْرٌ وَإِنَّا بِهِ كَافِرُونَ

**\*29** For explanation, see Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayat 3 and E.N. 5 on it, and E.N. 5 of Surah Suad.

**31.** And they said: “Why was this Quran not sent down upon a great man of the two towns.”<sup>\*30</sup>

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ  
عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ

**\*30** The two towns: Makkah and Taif. What the disbelievers meant was: Had Allah really willed to send a messenger and intended to send down a book to him, He would have selected a great man from our these central cities for the purpose. For Allah could not have selected for this great mission a person who was born an orphan, who did not inherit much property, who passed his youth by tending goats, who even at present earned his living through business with his wife’s money, and who was neither the chief of a tribe nor the head of a family. Were not there well known chiefs like Walid bin Mughirah and Utbah bin Rabiah in Makkah, and nobles like Urwah bin Masud, Habib bin Amr, Kinanah bin Abdi Amr and Ibn Abd Yalil in Taif? This was their reasoning in the first instance, they were also not inclined to believe that a man could be a Messenger. But when the Quran refuted this

misconception by argument and reason and they were told that in the past only men had come as Messengers and a man only could be a Messenger for the guidance of the people, and not another kind of being and the Messenger who came did not descend suddenly from heavens but were born in the same ordinary dwellings, walked about in the streets, had children and families and stood in need of food and drink (see Surah An-Nahl, Ayat 43; Surah Bani Israil, Ayats 94-95; Surah Yousuf, Ayat 109; Surah Al-Furqan, Ayats 7, 20; Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayats 7-8; Surah Ar-Raad, Ayat 38), they took this stand, saying: Well, even if a human being, he should be a big man, who should be wealthy, influential and awe-inspiring and having a large following. How could Muhammad bin Abdullah (peace be upon him) be fit for this appointment?

**32.** Is it they who distribute the mercy of your Lord. It is We who have distributed between them their livelihood in the life of the world, and We have raised some of them above others in ranks, that some of them may make use of others for service.<sup>\*31</sup> And the mercy of your Lord is better than the (wealth) which they accumulate.<sup>\*32</sup>

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ  
 نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي  
 الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ  
 فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَتَّخِذَ  
 بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا وَرَحْمَتُ  
 رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ



**\*31** This is the answer to their objection, which briefly mentions many important things:

First, it asks: Since when do these people become responsible for distributing the mercy of your Lord? Is it for them to decide whom Allah should favor with His mercy and whom He should not? (Here, by Allah's mercy is implied His general mercy from which everyone has a share).

Second, Allah says: Prophethood is a great blessing. We have even kept the distribution of the common means of life in the world in Our own hand, and have not entrusted it to anyone else. We create someone beautiful and another ugly, someone with a sweet voice and another with a harsh voice, someone robust and strong and another weak and frail, someone intelligent and another dull, someone with a strong memory and another forgetful, some with healthy limbs and another a cripple, or blind or deaf and dumb, someone in a rich family and another among the poor, someone in an advanced country and another in a backward community. No one can do anything about this destiny concerning birth. One is compelled to be what We have made him. And it is in no one's power to avert the impact his circumstances of birth have on his destiny. Then it is We our self Who are distributing provisions, power, honor, fame, wealth, government, etc. among men. No one can degrade the one whom We have blessed with good fortune, and no one can save from ruin the one whom We have afflicted with misfortune. All plans and schemes of man become ineffective against Our decrees. In this universal divine system, therefore, how can these people decide as to whom should the Master of the universe make

## His Prophet and whom He should not?

Thirdly, an abiding principle that We have kept in view in this divine system is that everything should not be given to one and the same person, or everything should not be given to everybody. If you look around carefully, you will see that great differences exist between the people in every respect. We have given one thing to one person but deprived him of another, and given the same to another one. This is based on the wisdom that no human being should become independent of others, but everyone should remain dependent on the other in one way or the other. Now if would be foolish on your part to think that We should have given the Prophethood also to the same person whom We had blessed with wealth and nobility. Likewise, will you also say that wisdom, knowledge, wealth, beauty, power, authority and all other excellences should be assembled in one and the same person, and the one who has not been given one thing, should not be given anything else?

**\*32** Your Lord's mercy: the Prophethood. It means: Your leaders and chiefs whom you regard as big people because of their wealth and dignity and chiefship, are not worthy of this wealth, which has been given to Muhammad bin Abdullah (peace be upon him). This wealth is far superior to that and for this the criterion is different. If you think that every noble and rich man is worthy of becoming a prophet, it would only show your own thinking. Why do you expect Allah to be so ignorant and simple?

**33.** And if it were not that the mankind would become

وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً



one community, We would have made, for those who disbelieve in the Beneficent, for their houses roofs of silver and stairs (of silver) upon which to mount.

وَاحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ  
بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقْفًا مِّن  
فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ



34. And for their houses, doors and couches (of silver) upon which to recline. \*33

وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا  
يَتَّكُونَ



\*33 That is, this silver and gold whose possession by somebody is the highest blessing and the very climax of good fortune in your sight, is so base and contemptible a thing in the sight of Allah that had there been no danger of all human beings being inclined towards unbelief, He would have made every disbeliever's house of gold and silver. Since when has the abundance of this worthless commodity become proof of man's nobility and his piety and his spiritual purity? This kind of wealth is even found in the possession of those foul and wicked people whose filthy characters make the whole society stink. And this you have made the criterion of man's greatness of character.

35. And adornments of gold. And all that is not but an enjoyment of the life of the world. And the Hereafter with your Lord is for the righteous.

وَزُخْرَفًا وَإِن كُلُّ ذَلِكَ لَمَّا  
مَتَعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ  
عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ



**36.** And whoever is blinded from the remembrance of the Beneficent,<sup>\*34</sup> We appoint for him a devil, then he is to him a companion.

وَمَنْ يَعِشْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ  
نُقِضَ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ  
قَرِينٌ

**\*34 Dhikrir Rahman:** His remembrance as well as His admonition and the Quran.

**37.** And indeed, they hinder them (people) from the way (of Allah), and they think that they are (rightly) guided.

وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ  
وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ

**38.** Until, when he comes to Us, he says (to devil companion): “Ah, would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts, an evil companion.”

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَنَا قَالَ يَلَيْتَ بَيْنِي  
وَبَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَبِئْسَ  
الْقَرِينُ

**39.** And never will it benefit you this Day, when you have wronged. That you will be partners in the punishment.<sup>\*35</sup>

وَلَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ  
أَنْتُمْ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ

**\*35** That is, in this there is no aspect of consolation for you that the one who misguided you is being punished, for you are also receiving the same punishment for accepting and following the deviation.

**40.** Then will you (O Muhammad) make the deaf

أَفَأَنْتَ تَسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ أَوْ تَهْدِي

hear, or guide the blind, and him who is in error manifest.\*36

الْعُمَى وَمَنْ كَانَتْ فِي ضَلَالٍ  
مُبِينٍ

\*36 It means to say: Pay attention to those who are inclined to listen and have not closed their eyes to the realities, and do not consume yourself in showing the way to the blind and making the deaf to hear, nor consume yourself with the grief as to why your near and dear ones are not coming to the right path, and why they are making themselves worthy of Allah's torment.

41. So whether We take you away (in death), indeed, We shall take vengeance on them.

فَأِمَّا نَذْهَبَنَّ بِكَ فَإِنَّا مِنْهُمْ  
مُنْتَقِمُونَ

42. Or (whether) We show you that which We have promised them, then indeed, We have complete command over them.\*37

أَوْ نُرِيكَ الَّذِي وَعَدْنَاهُمْ فَإِنَّا  
عَلَيْهِمْ مُّقْتَدِرُونَ

\*37 This thing can be understood fully only by keeping in view the background in which it was said. The disbelievers of Makkah thought that the person of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had become a source of trouble for them. If they could somehow get rid of him, matters would become normal. On the basis of this evil thought they were holding consultations day and night and planning to kill him. At this, Allah addresses His Prophet (peace be upon him) so as to tell them indirectly: It doesn't

make any difference whether you remain among them or not. If you live, you will see them meet their doom with your own eyes. If you are recalled from the world, they will be sent to their doom in your absence, because they cannot in any case escape the consequences of their misdeeds.

**43.** So hold fast to that which is inspired to you. Indeed, you are on a straight path. <sup>\*38</sup>

فَأَسْتَمِسِكُ بِالَّذِي أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ  
إِنَّكَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

**\*38** That is, you should not worry as to what punishment do those who are resisting and opposing the truth with injustice and dishonesty receive and when. Nor should you worry whether Islam flourishes during your lifetime or not. For you this satisfaction is quite enough that you are on the right path. Therefore, you should go on fulfilling your mission unconcerned about the results, and leave it to Allah whether He defeats falsehood in front of you or after you.

**44.** And indeed, this (Quran) is a reminder for you and your people. And soon you will be questioned. <sup>\*39</sup>

وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ  
وَسَوْفَ تُسْأَلُونَ

**\*39** That is, there can be no greater good fortune for a person than that Allah should choose him from among all men to become the recipient of His Book, and there can be no greater good fortune also for a nation than that Allah should raise His Prophet in it, apart from all other nations of the world, and should send down His Book in its tongue, and give it the opportunity to rise as the standard-bearer of

divine message in the world. If the Quraish and the people of Arabia have no sense of this great honor, and spurn it, a time will come when they will be called upon to account for it.

45. And ask those whom We sent before you of Our messengers. Did We ever appoint, beside the Beneficent, gods to be worshipped.\*40

وَسَأَلْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا أَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ ءِالِهَةً يُعْبَدُونَ

\*40 Ask the Messengers: Find out from the Books brought by them. Just as the meaning of: “If there arises any dispute among you about anything, refer it to Allah and His Prophet,” is not that the dispute should be taken before Allah and His Messenger, but that one should turn to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger for a decision, so “asking the Messengers” also does not mean that one should approach all the Messengers who have left the world and ask them, but the right meaning is: Discover what teachings the Messengers of Allah have left in the world as to which of them taught that another than Allah also is worthy of worship and service.

46. And indeed We\*41 sent Moses with Our signs\*42 to Pharaoh and his chiefs. And he said: “Indeed, I am a messenger of the Lord of the Worlds.”

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَقَالَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

\*41 This story has been narrated here for three objects:

(1) That when Allah sends His Prophet to a country and nation and affords it the opportunity which He has now given to the Arabs by appointing the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to Prophethood, and it, instead of taking advantage of this, commits the folly of Pharaoh and his people, it meets the same fate which has become an object lesson in history.

(2) That just as Pharaoh also on account of his arrogance and pride of kingdom and grandeur and wealth and possessions had belittled the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) as mean and contemptible, so the unbelieving Quraish are now regarding Muhammad (peace be upon him) as insignificant as against their chiefs. But God's judgment was different which ultimately proved who was really great.

(3) That to mock Allah's revelations and show stubbornness against His warnings is not a mere joke, but a very serious sin. If you do not learn a lesson from the fate of those who have been doomed on account of this, you also would go to your doom on account of the same.

\*42 This implies the signs with which the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had gone to the court of Pharaoh, i.e. the signs of the staff and the shining hand. (For explanation, see Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayats 107-108; Surah TaHa, Ayats 20-22; Surah Ash-Shuara, Ayats 32-33; Surah An-Naml; Ayats 10-12, Surah Al-Qasas; Ayats 31-32).

47. Then when he came to them with Our signs, behold, they laughed at them.

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا  
يَضْحَكُونَ

**48.** And We showed them not of a sign except it was greater than its sister (sign), and We seized them with the punishment that perhaps they might return.\*43

وَمَا نُزِيهِمْ مِّنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ  
أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أُخْتِهَا وَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ  
بِالْعَذَابِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

**\*43** This implies the signs which Allah showed them through the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) afterwards, and these were the following:

(1) A public encounter of Allah's Prophet with the magicians, who believed after their defeat. For details, see Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayats 112-126; Surah TaHa, Ayats 68-73; Surah Ash Shuara, Ayats 37-51.

(2) A severe famine which hit the land of Egypt according to Prophet Moses' (peace be upon him) announcement and which left the country only by his prayer.

(3) Dreadful rain and hail-storms accompanied by lightning and thunder struck the country even as Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had announced, which destroyed the crops and dwellings and which also was removed only by his prayer.

(4) The sudden appearance of locusts in the land. This calamity was also not removed when Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) prayed to Allah.

(5) Lice and weevils spread throughout the country according to the announcement made by Moses (peace be upon him), which afflicted men and animals on the one hand, and destroyed granaries on the other. This torment was also averted when Prophet Moses (peace be upon him)

was requested to pray for its removal.

(6) Frogs appeared everywhere in the country according to the warning given by Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), which put the whole population to great distress. This calamity did not also retreat until Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) prayed for it.

(7) The torment of blood appeared precisely as foretold by Moses (peace be upon him), which turned the water of all canals, wells, springs, pools and cisterns into blood. The fish died and the water smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink from it for a full week. This evil was also averted when the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was asked to pray for its removal. For details, see Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayats 130-136. Surah An-Naml, Ayat 12 and E.N. 37 of Surah Al-Mumin.

Chapters 7 to 10 of Exodus also contain the details of these calamities, but it is a combination of gossip and truth. It says that when the calamity of blood appeared, the magicians also worked a similar miracle, but when the calamity of the lice came, the magicians could not produce lice in response, and they said that it was God's work. Even more strange than this is that when the storm of the frogs came, the magicians also brought about frogs, but in spite of that Pharaoh requested only the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) to pray to God to take away the frogs. The question is when the magicians could produce frogs, why didn't Pharaoh get the frogs taken away through them? And how did it become known which of the frogs were Allah's work and which of the magicians' work? The same



question arises about the blood. When according to the warning of Moses (peace be upon him) water became blood everywhere, which water did the magicians turn into blood? And how was it known that the water of a particular place had turned blood by the power of the magicians? Such are the things which show that the Bible does not consist of purely divine revelation, but the people who wrote it mixed up many things in it from their own imagination. The pity, however, is that the authors also were people of ordinary intelligence, who did not even know how to invent a story.

49. And they said: “O you sorcerer, invoke your Lord for us with what He promised to you. Indeed, we will be guided.”

وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا السَّاحِرُ ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ إِنَّنَا لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50. Then when We removed the punishment from them. Behold, they broke their word.<sup>\*44</sup>

فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابَ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُثُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

\*44 The stubbornness of Pharaoh and the chiefs of his people can be judged from the fact that when distressed by the torment they wanted the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) to pray for its removal, even then they did not recognize him as a Prophet but addressed him as a magician, whereas they were not unaware of the truth about magic, and they also knew that those miraculous things could not be brought about by the power of magic.

The most that a magician can do is that in a limited area he can so influence the people present in front of him as to make them feel that water has become blood, or frogs are coming out in large numbers or swarms of locusts are advancing. And within this limited place also no water will actually become blood, but water will remain water as soon as it comes outside it; no frog will be produced in actual fact, but will prove to be an imaginary thing as soon as brought outside the circle; locusts also would be imaginary: they would not be able to destroy any crop. As for this that a famine appears throughout a country, or that the canals and springs and wells of the country are filled with blood, or that swarms of locusts spread over thousands of square miles and eat up crops growing over thousands of acres, this has neither been accomplished by a magician so far, nor can it ever happen by the power of magic. Should such magicians be there in the service of a king, he need not keep forces and fight wars; he could conquer the whole world by the power of magic. Even if the magicians possessed such power, they would not seek service under the kings, but would assume kingship themselves.

The commentators in general have been perplexed as to why Pharaoh and his courtiers addressed the Prophet Moses as “O sorcerer”, when they requested him to pray for the removal of the calamity, for the one who seeks another’s help in a hard time flatters him and does not condemn him. They have given the interpretation that sorcery in the Egypt of those days was held as a very respectable art, and when they addressed Moses as “O

sorcerer” they did not condemn him, but honored him because it amounted to calling him as “O Learned man” But this interpretation is absolutely wrong on the ground that wherever at other places in the Quran Pharaoh’s sayings have been cited in which he had called the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) a sorcerer and the miracles presented by him sorcery, the sense of condemnation and contempt becomes apparent, and it becomes manifestly clear that sorcery was false in his sight, which he imputed to the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) so as to prove his claim to the Prophethood to be false! Therefore, it cannot be acceptable that suddenly at this time “sorcerer” became the title of an honorable and learned man in his sight. As for the question: Why did the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) accede to his request at all when even while requesting him for the prayer, Pharaoh insulted him publicly, the answer is that the object before the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was to strengthen the case against those people by Allah’s command. Their request to him to pray for the removal of the torment by itself proved that in their hearts they had come to know why the torments were occurring, who was sending them and who could avert them. In spite of that, when they called him a “sorcerer” stubbornly, and went back on their word of following the right way as soon as the torment was averted, they in fact, did not do any harm to Allah’s Prophet, but only caused the case and argument to be strengthened against themselves, which Allah at last decided against them with their total destruction. When they called him a

sorcerer, this did not mean that they believed in their hearts as well that the torments against them were coming by the power of sorcery, but they realized it fully that those were Allah's signs and yet they denied them deliberately. The same thing has been said in Surah An-Naml, Ayat 14: They rejected those signs out of sheer injustice and vanity, whereas in their hearts they were convinced.

**51.** And Pharaoh called out among his people,<sup>\*45</sup> he said: "O my people, Is not mine the dominion of Egypt, and these rivers flowing underneath me. See you not then."<sup>\*46</sup>

وَنَادَى فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ  
يَقَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ  
وَهَذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي  
أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ

**\*45** Pharaoh probably sent heralds to the cities and towns throughout the country to proclaim what he said in his address to his ministers and courtiers in the capital. Pharaoh could not have availed of the services of a sycophantic press, controlled news agencies and official radio.

**\*46** The words of the proclamation clearly show that ground was slipping from under the Pharaoh's feet. The miracles performed one after the other by the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had caused the common people's beliefs in their gods to waver and the Pharaoh's spell under which their dynasty was ruling over Egypt as representatives of the gods, was shattered. Thereupon, Pharaoh cried out: O wretched people, can't you see who is

ruling over this land and under whose control are the canals which have been dug out from the Nile, upon which depends your whole economy? All these developments in this country have been brought about by me and my predecessors, but you are being devoted, charmed and fascinated by this pauper!

**52.** “Or am I not better than this one, who is despicable,<sup>\*47</sup> and can hardly express himself clearly.”<sup>\*48</sup>

أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ  
مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ



**\*47** Who is despicable: the person who has neither wealth, nor power, nor authority. This same objection had been raised by the disbelieving Quraish against the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

**\*48** Some commentators have expressed the opinion that Pharaoh referred to the impediment of speech from which the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) suffered since childhood. But this is not a correct opinion. As has been mentioned in Surah TaHa above, when the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was being appointed to Prophethood, he had implored Allah Almighty to remove the defect from his tongue so that the people might understand his speech and at that very time his request had also been granted along with his other requests (verse 27-36). Moreover, orations of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) that have been cited at different places in the Quran, point to his perfect eloquence and fluency. Therefore, the basis of Pharaoh's objection was not any impediment of speech from which Moses (peace be upon him) might be suffering

but what he meant was: This person talks confusedly, at least I have never been able to understand what he says.

53. “Then why have not been bestowed upon him bracelets of gold, or come with him the angels in conjunction.”\*49

فَلَوْلَا أُلْقِيَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوِرَةٌ مِّنْ  
ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ  
مُقْتَرِنِينَ

\*49 In the ancient times when a person was appointed to be governor of a land or sent as an ambassador to a foreign country, a robe of honor was conferred on him by the king, which also included bracelets of gold, and he was also accompanied by a contingent of soldiers and servants for over-awing the people and for showing the glory and grandeur of the king who had appointed him. What Pharaoh meant to say was: If the King of the heavens had really sent Moses (peace be upon him) as His ambassador to His counterpart on the earth, he should have been dressed in a robe of honor and come with several contingents of angels in attendance. How strange that a poor man should appear with a staff in his hand and say that he was the messenger of the Lord of the worlds!

54. Then he persuaded his people to make light (of Moses), so they obeyed him. Indeed, they were a people disobedient.\*50

فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَاَطَاعُوهُ  
إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَسِيقِينَ

\*50 A tremendous reality has been expressed in this brief sentence. When a person wishes to become autocratic in a

country and contrives every plan openly to achieve his object, he practices every deception and trick. He buys and sells consciences and persecutes and crushes ruthlessly those who cannot be purchased. He, in fact, shows by his actions, whatever he may say to the contrary, that he takes the people of the country to be light as regards to their intellect, morals and manliness, and has formed the impression that he can drive the foolish, unscrupulous and cowardly people wherever he likes. Then, when he has succeeded in his designs and the people have become his obedient servants, they prove by their conduct and behavior that they are actually what the wicked man had taken them to be, and the main cause of their depravity is that they are basically a sinful people. They are not in the least concerned as to what is the truth and what is falsehood, what is justice and what is injustice, whether the noble traits of character are truthfulness and honesty or falsehood and dishonesty and meanness. Instead of this, only their personal interests are of real importance to them, for the sake of which they remain ever ready to cooperate with every wicked person, to yield to every tyrant, to accept every falsehood and to suppress every protest that is voiced in favor of the truth.

**55.** So when they angered Us, We took vengeance on them and drowned them all.

فَلَمَّا ءَاسَفُونَا اَنْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ  
فَاَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ اَجْمَعِينَ

**56.** Then We made them a precedent and an example

فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا وَمَثَلًا

for those after (them).<sup>\*51</sup>

لِلَّذِينَ خَرِيتَ  
٥٦

**\*51** That is, they are a precedent for those who do not learn any lesson from their example, and an object lesson for those who are keen to learn a lesson.

**57.** And when the son of Mary is quoted as an example. Behold, your people laugh out thereat.

وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا  
٥٧ إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ

**58.** And they say: “Are our gods better, or is he (Jesus).<sup>\*52</sup> They quoted not it to you except for argument. But they are a quarrelsome people.

وَقَالُوا ءَأَلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا  
ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ  
٥٨ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ

**\*52** In verse 45 above, it was said: You may ask all other Messengers whom We sent before you whether We had appointed any other gods to be worshiped beside the Merciful God. When this discourse was being presented before the people of Makkah, a person called Abdullah ibn az-Zibara in the traditions, put forward the objection: Well, is it not a fact that the Christians regard the son of Mary as the son of God and worship him? What is then wrong with our gods? This caused much laughter among the crowd of the disbelievers and they started clamoring for an answer to this objection. But at this foolish behavior, the continuity of the revelation was not broken, but was first completed and then the objection of the questioner was taken up. (It should be borne in mind that this incident has



been reported in the books of commentaries in different ways which contain great variations, but after a study of the context and the traditions the real incident in our view is the same as we have mentioned above).

**59.** He was not but a slave. We bestowed Our favor upon him, and We made him an example for the Children of Israel.<sup>\*53</sup>

إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ  
وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ



**\*53** “We made him an example” implies causing the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) to be born without a father, and then granting him such miracles as had not been granted to anyone before him nor to anyone after him. He would make a bird of clay and then breathe into it and it would become a living bird; he would give sight to those born blind; he would cure the lepers; so much so that he would raise the dead back to life. What Allah means to say is: It is wrong to worship him as son of God and regard him as above servitude only because of his extraordinary birth and the great miracles granted to him. He was no more than a mere servant, whom We had blessed and made an example of Our power. (For details, see Surah Aal-Imran, Ayats 42-49, 59; Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 156; Surah Al-Maidah, Ayats 17, 110; Surah Maryam, Ayats 17-35; Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayat 91; Surah Al-Muminun, Ayat 50).

**60.** And if We willed, We could have made among you angels<sup>\*54</sup> to be viceroys on the earth.

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً  
فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُفُونَ



**\*54** Another translation can be: make some of you angels.

**61.** And indeed, he will be a known (sign) of the Hour.<sup>\*55</sup> So have no doubt about it, and follow Me. This is the straight way.

وَإِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَاتَّبِعُونِ ۚ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ



**\*55** Another translation of this sentence can be: He is a means of the knowledge of Resurrection. Here the question arises: What is implied by “he”? According to Hasan Basri and Saeed bin Jubair it implies the Quran. That is, one can learn from the Quran that Resurrection will come. But this commentary is irrelevant to the context. There is nothing in the context on the basis of which it may be said that it refers to the Quran. Other commentators almost unanimously have expressed the opinion that it implies the prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), and this is suitable to the context. Now the question is: In what sense has Jesus Christ been called a sign or a means of the knowledge of Resurrection? Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Ikrimah, Qatadah, Suddi, Dahhak, Abul Aliyah and Abu Malik say that this refers to the second coming of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) as has been foretold in a large number of the traditions, and the verse means that when he comes the second time to the world, it will become known that Resurrection is not far behind. But in spite of the great authority that these scholars hold it is difficult to believe that in this verse the second advent of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) has been called a sign of Resurrection,

or a means of its knowledge. For it is contradicted by the next verse. His second advent, indeed, can be a means of the knowledge of Resurrection only for those people who will be living in that future period or will be born after that. How could he be regarded as a means of the knowledge for the pagans of Makkah, who are being asked not to have any doubt about it? Therefore, the correct interpretation in our opinion is the one that has been given by some other commentators, according to which the Prophet Jesus' (peace be upon him) birth without a father and his making a bird out of clay and his raising the dead back to life has been presented as a proof of the possibility of Resurrection. So, the divine words would mean: Why do you think it is impossible for God to raise you and all mankind from death when He can create a child without a father and a servant of His can breathe life into an image of clay and raise the dead back to life by His permission?

**62.** And let not Satan hinder you. <sup>\*56</sup> Indeed, he is a clear enemy for you.

وَلَا يَصُدَّنْكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

**\*56 Hinder you:** hinder you from believing in Resurrection.

**63.** And when Jesus came with clear proofs, he said: "I have come to you with wisdom, and to make clear for you some of that in which you differ. So fear Allah, and obey me."

وَلَمَّا جَاءَ عِيسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا

64. “Indeed Allah, He is my Lord and your Lord. So worship Him. This is the straight path.”\*57

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَأَعْبُدُوهُ  
هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

\*57 That is, the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) himself had never claimed that he was God or son of God, and that the people should worship him, but, on the contrary, his message was the same as of all other Prophets, the same as was now being conveyed to you through Muhammad (peace be upon him). (For explanation, see Surah Aal-Imran, Ayats 50-51; Surah An-Nisa, Ayats 171-172; Surah Al-Maidah, Ayats 72, 116-117; Surah Maryam, Ayats 30-36).

65. But the factions from among them differed.\*58 So woe to those who have wronged from the punishment of a painful day.

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ  
فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ  
عَذَابِ يَوْمِ أَلِيمٍ

\*58 That is, one group of the people denied him and in their antagonism went to the extent of accusing him of illegitimate birth and got him crucified as they thought. The other group believed in him but owing to exaggerated reverence made him son of God, and then the question of man’s being God became such a riddle for it that every effort to resolve it caused it to be divided into countless sects. (For explanation, see Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 171, Surah Al-Maidah, Ayats 17, 77, 116-117 and the corresponding E.Ns).

66. Are they waiting except for the Hour that it shall come upon them suddenly while they do not perceive.

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ  
تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ



67. Friends, that day, will be enemies one to another, except for the righteous.\*59

الْأَخِلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ  
لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ



\*59 In other words, only those friendships will remain unaffected which are based on righteousness and piety in the world. All other friendships will turn into enmities, and those who are cooperating with one another in deviation, tyranny and wickedness today, will on the Day of Resurrection, put the blame on others and try to escape. This subject has been treated repeatedly at many places in the Quran so that every person in this very world may fully realize with whom it would be beneficial for him to cooperate and with whom it is harmful.

68. (Allah will say): “O My slaves, no fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve.”

يَعْبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ  
وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ



69. “(You) who believed in Our verses and surrendered.”

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا  
مُسْلِمِينَ



70. “Enter the Garden, you and your wives,<sup>\*60</sup> you will be delighted.”

أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ  
تُحِبُّونَ

\*60 The word *azwaj* as used in the original can be used both for the wives and for those people who are a person's close associates, friends and peers. This comprehensive word has been used so as to cover both the meanings. The believers will be accompanied both by their believing wives and by their believing friends in Paradise.

71. (Therein) are brought round for them trays of gold and goblets, and therein is whatever the souls desire and eyes find delight. And you will abide forever therein.

يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِنْ  
ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا  
تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ  
الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا  
خَالِدُونَ

72. And that is the Garden which you are made to inherit because of what you used to do.

وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا  
كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

73. For you therein is fruit in plenty from which you will eat.

لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ كَثِيرَةٌ مِنْهَا  
تَأْكُلُونَ

**74.** Indeed, the criminals will be in the punishment of Hell to abide (therein) forever.

إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ  
خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

**75.** It will not be relaxed for them, and they will despair therein.

لَا يُفْتَرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ  
﴿٧٥﴾

**76.** We wronged them not, but they themselves were the wrongdoers.

وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ  
الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

**77.** And they will call: “O Malik (Keeper of Hell),<sup>\*61</sup> let your Lord make an end of us.” He will say: “Indeed, you will remain.”

وَنَادَوْا يَمَلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا  
رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَكِثُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

**\*61 Malik:** a keeper of Hell as is evident from the context.

**78.** Indeed, We brought to you the truth, but most of you were averse to the truth.<sup>\*62</sup>

لَقَدْ جِئْنَاكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَكِنَّ  
أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَرِهُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

**\*62** That is, We made the reality plain to you, but you were fond of the imaginary, and you had an aversion to the truth. Now, why do you lament at the fate of your foolish choice? It may be a part of the Hell-keeper’s answer, and it may also be that his answer ended with: Here you must remain, and this second sentence as an addition by Allah. In the first case, the keeper’s saying: We had brought the

Truth to you, is just like an official's using the word "we" on behalf of his government, when he wants to say: Our government did this or gave such and such an order.

79. Or have they devised a plan.\*63 Then indeed, We are devising.

أَمْ أَبْرَمُوا أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

\*63 The allusion is to the plans that the chiefs of the Quraish were devising in their secret assemblies in order to take a decisive action against the Prophet (peace be upon him).

80. Or do they think that We hear not their secrets and their private conversations. Yes, and Our messengers (angels) are with them recording.

أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ ۚ بَلَىٰ وَرُسُلْنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81. Say (O Muhammad): "If the Beneficent had a son, then I would be the first of the worshippers."\*64

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَابِدِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

\*64 It means: My rejection of somebody's being God's offspring and my refusal to worship those whom you regard as His offspring is not due to any stubbornness and obduracy. My reason for the refusal is only this that God has no son or daughter, and your such beliefs are against the reality; otherwise I am such a faithful servant of my Lord that if at all the reality had been the same as you state I would have submitted myself in worship before you.



**82.** Glorified be the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne, above that which they ascribe (unto Him).

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا  
يَصِفُونَ

**83.** So leave them flounder (in their talk) and play until they meet their Day which they are promised.

فَذَرَهُمْ خَوْضًا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّى  
يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ

**84.** And He it is who in the heaven is God, and in the earth God. And He is the All Wise, the All Knower. <sup>\*65</sup>

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌُ وَفِي  
الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌُ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ  
الْعَلِيمُ

**\*65** That is, the gods of the heavens and the earth are not separate, but there is only One God of the entire universe. It is His wisdom that is working in the whole system of the universe and only He has the knowledge of all realities.

**85.** And blessed be He to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. <sup>\*66</sup> And with whom is knowledge of the Hour. And unto whom you will be returned. <sup>\*67</sup>

وَتَبَارَكَ الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا  
وَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَإِلَيْهِ  
تُرْجَعُونَ

\*66 That is, He is far above it that another should be His associate in Godhead and may have any share whatsoever in ruling this great universe. Whatever is there in the earth and the heavens, whether the Prophets, the saints, the angels, jinn, spirits, stars or planets, they are His servants and slaves and subjects. It is impossible for them to be characterized with a divine attribute or be possessed with a divine power.

\*67 That is, you may have taken anyone as your helper and patron in the world, but after death you will have to face only One God and render an account of your deeds before Him alone.

86. And those whom they call besides Him, do not possess (power of) intercession, except those who bear witness to the truth and they know.\*68

وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ  
مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ  
بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ



\*68 This sentence has several meanings:

- (1) Those whom the people have made their deities in the world, will not at all be their intercessors before Allah. Those of them who were wicked, will themselves be presented as culprits there. However, those who had borne witness to the truth by virtue of knowledge (and not unconsciously) will certainly be able to intercede for others.
- (2) Those who will be permitted to intercede, will be able to do so only for those who had testified to the truth consciously (and not heedlessly). They will neither intercede of their own will, nor will have the permission to intercede

for anyone who had gone and been led astray from the truth in the world, or had been affirming the faith in Allah as the only Deity unconsciously as well as serving other deities at the same time

(3) If a person says that those whom he has made gods necessarily possess the powers of intercession, and they wield such an influence with Allah that they can have anyone they like forgiven, irrespective of his beliefs and deeds, is totally wrong. No one enjoys such a position with Allah. If the one who claims that another has such powers of intercession can testify to the truth of this matter by virtue of knowledge, one should have the courage to say so. But if one is not in a position to bear such a testimony, and he is certainly not, it would be sheer folly to invent such a creed on the basis of mere hearsay or conjecture and risk his life Hereafter relying only on an imaginary support.

Incidentally, this verse also gives two important principles: First, it shows that bearing a testimony to the truth without knowledge may be reliable in the world, but it is not so before Allah. In the world, whoever affirms the faith verbally will be regarded as a Muslim and treated as such unless he openly commits an act expressly contradictory to belief. But as before Allah only such a one will be counted as a Muslim, who has uttered *Lailaha illAllah* consciously, with full understanding of what he is denying and what he is affirming according to his best knowledge.

Secondly, it gives this principle of the law of evidence that knowledge is a pre-requisite of bearing the evidence. If the bearer of an evidence has no knowledge of the event to

which he is bearing evidence, his evidence is meaningless. The same is borne out by a decision given by the Prophet (peace be upon him). He said to a witness: If you saw what happened with your own eyes as you are seeing the sun, then you may bear the witness, otherwise not. (Ahkam al-Quran by al Jassas).

87. And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: “Allah.”\*69 How then are they turned away.

وَلَيْنِ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ  
لَيَقُولَنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ

\*69 This verse has two meanings:

- (1) If you ask them who has created them, they will say: Allah.
- (2) If you ask them who is the Creator of their gods, they will say: Allah.

88. And (Allah acknowledges) his saying: “O my Lord, indeed these are a people who do not believe.”\*70

وَقِيلِهِ يَرْبِّ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَّا  
يُؤْمِنُونَ

\*70 This is one of the most difficult verses of the Quran as it involves the complicated syntactic question of the kind of *waw* that has been used in *wa qili-hi*. From the translation of Shah Abdul Qadir it appears that the *waw* here is not conjunctive but for taking oath, and is related to *fa-anna yu-fakun*, and the pronoun in *qili-hi* turns to the Prophet (peace be upon him) of Allah. Therefore, the verse means this: By this saying of the Messenger: O my Lord, these are a people who would not believe. They are so utterly deluded that although they themselves admit that Allah alone is

their Creator and Creator of their gods, yet they abandon the Creator and persist in worshiping His creatures.

The object of swearing by this saying of the Messenger is that the conduct of the people clearly shows that they are, in fact, stubborn, for the foolishness of their attitude is apparent from their own admission, and such an irrational attitude can be adopted only by such a person, who is resolved not to believe. In other words, the oath implies: The Messenger has rightly said so: indeed these people would not believe.

**89.** Then bear with them (O Muhammad) and say: “Peace.”<sup>\*71</sup> They will come to know.

فَأَصْفَحْ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلَامٌ  
فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ



**\*71** That is, you should neither curse them for their scornful words and attitude of mockery and derision, nor respond with harsh words, just wish them well and take your leave.

