

18.  
Soorat al-Kahf  
(Makki)



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 ﴿١﴾ قِيمًا لِيُنذِرَ بَأْسًا  
شَدِيدًا مِمَّنْ لَدُنْهُ وَيُبَشِّرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا  
حَسَنًا ﴿٢﴾ مَتَّكِينَ فِيهِ أَبَدًا ﴿٣﴾ وَيُنذِرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا ﴿٤﴾  
مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا لِآبَائِهِمْ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ إِنْ يَقُولُونَ  
إِلَّا كَذِبًا ﴿٥﴾ فَلَعَلَّكَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ تَفْسَلُ عَلَى آثَرِهِمْ إِنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِذَا الْحَدِيثِ  
أَسَفًا ﴿٦﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١-٦)

- 18:1. Praise be to Allah Who has sent down the Book to His slave,  
and has not allowed any crookedness therein,  
18:2. a straightforward Book to warn of a severe punishment from  
Him, and to give glad tidings to the believers who do righteous  
deeds, that theirs will be a goodly reward,  
18:3. wherein they will abide forever;  
18:4. and to warn those who say: Allah has begotten a son.

18:5. They have no knowledge of such a thing, nor did their forefathers. Monstrous is the word that comes out of their mouths. What they say is nothing but a lie.

18:6. Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with grief over them, because they do not believe in this message?

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Praising Allah is extolling Him for His attributes which are all attributes of perfection, and for His blessings both apparent and hidden, spiritual and worldly. The greatest of all His blessings is His sending down of this great Book to His slave and Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ). So Allah praises Himself, which is an implicit instruction to people to praise Him for sending the Messenger (ﷺ) to them and sending down the Book to them.

Then He describes this Book as having two attributes which imply that it is perfect in all aspects. Firstly He states that there is no crookedness in it, and secondly He affirms that it is straightforward. Stating that there is no crookedness in it implies that there are no lies or falsehoods in its stories, no injustice in its commands and prohibitions, and nothing in it is without purpose.

Affirming that it is straightforward implies that it does not enjoin anything but that which is good, and it does not speak of anything but the most sublime issues, which are the issues that fill the heart with knowledge, faith and wisdom, such as when it tells us of the names, attributes and actions of Allah, and stories of the unseen, future and past. Its commands and prohibitions purify and cleanse souls, make them grow and perfect them, because they are based on perfect justice, fairness, sincerity and true servitude to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, alone, with no partner or associate. With regard to a Book that is described in such terms, it is very appropriate that Allah should praise Himself for having sent it down and that He should remind His slaves of this favour.

﴿to warn of a severe punishment from Him﴾ that is, to warn by means of this Holy Qur'an of the consequences that will result, by His will and decree, for those who go against his command. This includes punishment in this world and punishment in the hereafter. This is also one of His blessings, that He alarms His slaves and warns them of that which will cause them harm and destroy them. This is like the verse in which He, after giving a description of the fire, says: ﴿...Thus Allah instills fear in His slaves: O My slaves, then fear Me!﴾ (az-Zumar 39: 16)

By His mercy towards His slaves, He has decreed severe punishments for those who go against His command, and He has explained it to them and described the causes that lead to that.

﴿and to give glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds, that theirs will be a goodly reward﴾ that is, and Allah has sent down to His slaves the Book, to give glad tidings to those who believe in Him and in His Messengers and Books, those whose faith is complete. And He enjoined upon them righteous deeds, both obligatory and encouraged, on the basis of both sincerity and following the teachings of the Sunnah.

﴿that theirs will be a goodly reward﴾ – this is the reward that Allah has made dependent on faith and righteous deeds, the greatest and most significant of which is attaining the pleasure of Allah and admittance to paradise, in which there is that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man.

The fact that the reward is described as goodly indicates that the reward will not be interrupted by anything that could cause annoyance or undermine its joy in any way. If there had been any such element in the reward, it would not have been described as goodly.

Moreover, this goodly reward is one in which ﴿they will abide forever﴾ and it will never leave them and they will never leave it. Rather it is a life of ever-increasing bliss. These glad tidings require

a mention of the deeds that may lead to that of which the glad tidings speak, therefore this Qur'an refers to every good deed that leads to that which will bring joy to the heart.

﴿and to warn those who say: Allah has begotten a son﴾ namely the Jews, Christians and polytheists who utter such monstrous words. They are not speaking on the basis of certain knowledge, or knowledge that they or their forefathers whom they imitate and follow possessed; rather they followed nothing but conjecture and whims and desires.

﴿Monstrous is the word that comes out of their mouths﴾ that is, it is something extremely abhorrent that deserves the severest punishment. What could be worse than to describe Allah as taking a child, which implies imperfection and shortcomings, and suggests that someone other than Him has a share with Him in the attributes of Lordship and divinity, and is a lie against Him? ﴿Who does greater evil than he who fabricates lies against Allah?﴾ (18: 15) Hence Allah says here: ﴿What they say is nothing but a lie﴾ that is, a pure lie in which there is no element of truth. See how He proves this notion to be false, gradually moving from one thing to another that is even more wrong. So first of all He says: ﴿They have no knowledge of such a thing, nor did their forefathers﴾, for speaking about Allah without knowledge is undoubtedly prohibited and wrong. Then, secondly, He tells us that it is a reprehensible and abhorrent notion, as He says: ﴿Monstrous is the word that comes out of their mouths﴾. And, thirdly, He states that it is a lie and is contrary to the truth.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was keen for people to be guided and he strove hard to achieve that; he would rejoice and be happy when people were guided and he would feel sad and be filled with sorrow for the misguided disbelievers, out of compassion and pity towards them. Therefore Allah instructed him not to be distracted by worry or sorrow for these people who did not believe in this Qur'an, as He said later in this passage: ﴿Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with

grief over them, because they do not believe?﴾ (18: 6). And He says elsewhere:

﴿...So do not let yourself waste away in sorrow for them...﴾ (Fâtir 35: 8)

﴿Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with grief over them﴾ that is, with sorrow over them? For your reward is due from Allah, and if Allah knew of any good in these people, He would have guided them, but He knows that they are fit for nothing but the fire. Therefore He has forsaken them, and they were not guided, so distracting yourself with worry and sorrow for them will not benefit you.

There is a lesson in this and similar verses: the one who is instructed to call people to Allah must convey the message and strive by all possible means to guide them and block the path of misguidance as much as he can, whilst putting his trust in Allah. Then if they are guided, all well and good, otherwise he should not grieve or feel sad, for that weakens one's resolve and saps one's strength, and there is no benefit in it. Rather he should carry on and persist in doing what he is instructed to do and is already doing, for anything other than that is beyond his means. Allah says to His Prophet (ﷺ):

﴿...you [O Muhammad] cannot guide whomever you like...﴾ (al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 56)

Moosâ (ﷺ) said:

﴿...O my Lord, I have control only over myself and my brother...﴾ (al-Mâ'idah 5: 25)

In the case of people other than the Prophets it is even more appropriate to note that they have no control over the guidance of others. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿So admonish [O Muhammad], for you are but sent to admonish; you have no power over them.﴾ (al-Ghâshiyah 88: 21-22)



﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴾ (٧) وَإِنَّا  
لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا ﴿٨﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٧-٨)

18:7. Verily We have made all that is on earth as an adornment for it, in order to test them [humankind] and see which of them are best in conduct.

18:8. And verily We will reduce all that is on it to a barren wasteland.

Here Allah tells us that He has made all that is on the face of the earth, delicious food and drink, fine dwellings, trees, rivers, crops, fruits, beautiful scenery, elegant gardens, enchanting voices, delightful images, gold and silver, horses and camels, and so on – all of that Allah has made as an adornment for this realm, and as a trial and test.

﴿in order to test them [humankind] and see which of them are best in conduct﴾ that is, the most sincere and correct in deeds. Yet despite that, Allah will cause all the things mentioned here to diminish, vanish and come to an end, and the earth will become a barren wasteland, all its pleasures gone, its rivers cut off, all traces of goodness disappeared and its delights vanished. This is the reality of this world, which Allah has made clear to us as if we could see it with our own eyes. He warns us against being deceived by it, and encourages us to seek the realm where delights will last forever and the one who reaches it will be blessed; all of that is out of mercy towards us. Those who look at this world as it appears to be, without looking at its reality, will be deceived by its adornments and finery, so they will live in this world like animals, enjoying it like grazing cattle, not paying any attention to the rights of their Lord or caring to know Him; rather their main focus is pursuit of worldly pleasures, regardless of how they attain them or indulge in them. When death approaches such a person, he

feels anxious because he is going to vanish and will no longer enjoy its pleasures, and not because of his deeds of negligence and sin.

But the one who looks at the reality of this world, and understands the purpose of it and of his own creation, will take from it that which will help him to fulfil the purpose for which he was created, and he will make the most of the valuable life that he has been given. So he will regard this world as a place through which he passes, not a place to settle down and have fun, for it is a place through which to travel, not a place of final abode. So he strives hard to know his Lord, obey His commands and do good deeds. This is the best status before Allah, and he deserves from Allah all honour, pleasure and joy. He looks at the reality of this world, whereas the one who is deceived looks only at its outward appearance, and He strives for the sake of his hereafter, whereas the one who wastes his time strives for worldly gain. What a great difference there is between the two.



﴿ أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا ﴾ (٩) إِذْ أَوَى  
الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آئِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا  
﴿ فَضْرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا ﴾ (١١) ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَى  
الْحَزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا ﴾ (١٢) (سورة الكهف: ٩-١٢)

18:9. Do you think that the people of the cave and the inscription<sup>34</sup> were more wondrous than Our other signs?

18:10. When the young men took refuge in the cave, they said: Our Lord, bestow upon us mercy from Yourself, and guide us through our ordeal.

<sup>34</sup> The inscription (*ar-raqeem*) was a tablet or plaque on which were written the names and lineage of the people of the cave. (*al-Jalālayn*)

18:11. Then We caused them to fall into a deep sleep in the cave for many years.

18:12. Then We awoke them so that We might see which of the two parties would best calculate the length of their stay [in the cave].

﴿Do you think that the people of the cave and the inscription were more wondrous than Our other signs?﴾ This appears in the form of a question, but what is meant is a negatory statement and instruction not to think that the story of the people of the cave and what happened to them was something unprecedented among the signs of Allah, or that it was a brilliant sign of His wisdom that was unique and unparalleled. Rather Allah (ﷻ) has sent many wondrous and amazing signs that were akin to the signs of the people of the cave, and even greater than that. And Allah is still showing His slaves signs in the universe and in their own selves, through which truth becomes distinct from falsehood, and guidance from misguidance. This negatory statement does not mean that the story of the people of the cave was not a wonder, for it is one of the wondrous signs of Allah; rather what is meant is that there are many such wonders, therefore limiting our amazement and wonder to this story only, to the exclusion of others, is a sign of lack of knowledge and reason. Rather the believer should think of all the signs of Allah that Allah calls people to reflect upon, for that is the key to faith and the way to attain knowledge and certainty.

Allah describes them as ﴿people of the cave and the inscription﴾ – which was a plaque on which their names and their story were written – because they stayed in that cave for a long time.

Then Allah tells us their story in brief, followed by more details.

﴿When the young men took refuge in the cave﴾ with the aim of seeking protection for themselves and keeping away from the persecution of their own people,

﴿they said: Our Lord, bestow upon us mercy from Yourself﴾ that is, make us steadfast, protect us from evil and help us to do good.

﴿and guide us through our ordeal﴾ that is, make easy for us that which is best for us, and put right all our affairs, both spiritual and worldly. Thus they combined striving and fleeing from persecution to a place where they could hide, with beseeching Allah and asking Him to help them in their ordeal, and demonstrating that they were not relying on themselves or on other people.

Hence Allah answered this supplication and saved them by means of something they never reckoned on.

﴿Then We caused them to fall into a deep sleep in the cave for many years﴾, that is, three hundred and nine years. By means of the sleep mentioned, their hearts were protected from confusion and fear, and they were also protected from their people, so that they might become a clear sign.

﴿Then We awoke them﴾ from their sleep

﴿so that We might see which of the two parties would best calculate the length of their stay [in the cave]﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿Similarly [as We caused them to sleep], We awoke them so that they might question one another﴾ (18: 19). Learning how long they stayed there and reaching the right figure will lead one to acknowledge the perfect might, wisdom and mercy of Allah (ﷻ), for if they had remained asleep, their story would not have been known to anyone.



﴿ تَحْنُ نَفْسٌ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ ءَامَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى  
 ﴿١٣﴾ وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوَ  
 مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطًا ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٣-١٤)

18:13. We recount to you their story in truth: they were young men who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance.

18:14. We strengthened their hearts when they stood up and declared: Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will never call upon any god besides Him; if we did, we would then have uttered an abomination.

The details of the story begin here. Allah recounts the story to His Prophet (ﷺ) in truth, and there can be no doubt or confusion concerning it.

«they were young men who believed in their Lord» the word translated here as «young men» appears in a plural form which indicates that they were few, that is, less than ten in number. They believed in Allah alone, with no partner or associate, unlike their people.

«and We increased them in guidance». In other words, because they took the initiative and were guided to faith in the first place, Allah increased them in guidance, which is beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, as He says elsewhere:

«Allah increases in guidance those who are guided...» (*Maryam 19: 76*)

«We strengthened their hearts» that is, We gave them patience and make them steadfast, and We instilled reassurance in their hearts in that alarming situation. This was by Allah's kindness towards them: He enabled them to believe and be guided, and He granted them patience, steadfastness and reassurance.

«when they stood up and declared: Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth» that is, the One Who created us and granted us provision, Who controls us and cares for us, is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the only One Who could create these mighty creations, not those idols and images that do not create or grant provision, and have no power to bring benefit or cause harm, or to cause death, give life or bring about resurrection. They quoted the

oneness of divine Lordship as evidence for the oneness of divinity, hence they said:

﴿We will never call upon any god besides Him﴾ that is, from among created beings

﴿if we did﴾ that is, if we called upon other gods besides Him, after we have come to know that He is the Lord God and it is not permissible or appropriate to worship any but Him

﴿we would then have uttered an abomination﴾ that is, something that is far removed from truth. Thus they combined affirmation of the oneness of Lordship and the oneness of divinity, and adherence to that, with the declaration that He is true and all others besides Him are false. This is indicative of their perfect knowledge of their Lord and increased guidance from Allah.



﴿هَتُوْلَآءِ قَوْمَنَا اَتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِهِ ءَالِهَةً لَّوْ لَا يَأْتُوْنَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطٰنٌ بَيِّنٌ  
فَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ اَفْتَرٰى عَلٰى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا ﴿١٥﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٥)

18:15. These people of ours have taken for worship gods other than Him; why do they not bring any clear authority for what they do? Who does greater evil than he who fabricates lies against Allah?

Having mentioned what Allah had bestowed upon them of faith and guidance, they then mentioned what their people were following, of taking gods besides Allah. They resented them for that, and stated that their people had no proof for that; rather they were extremely ignorant and misguided.

﴿why do they not bring any clear authority for what they do?﴾ that is, proof and evidence for what they are following of falsehood, but they can never do that; rather that is a fabrication against Allah

on their part, and telling lies about Him, and this is the worst type of wrongdoing. Hence Allah says: «Who does greater evil than he who fabricates lies against Allah?»



﴿وَإِذِ اعْتَرَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأَوْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيُهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَقًا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٦)

18:16. Now that you have withdrawn from them and all that they worship, except Allah, take refuge in the cave; your Lord will shower His mercy upon you and will make fitting provision for you in your situation.

They said to one another: As you have withdrawn from your people both physically and in religious terms, there is nothing left but to be saved from their evil and to take measures that will lead to that. That is because they had no way of fighting them and they could not remain among them when they were following a religion other than theirs.

«take refuge in the cave» that is, go and hide there  
«your Lord will shower His mercy upon you and will make fitting provision for you in your situation».

As stated above, Allah tells us that they called upon Him, saying: «Our Lord, bestow upon us mercy from Yourself, and guide us through our ordeal» (18: 10). Thus they combined the declaration that they had no power or strength, turning to Allah to take care of them and praying for that, with trusting that Allah would do that. So it is no wonder that Allah showered His mercy upon them and made fitting provision for them in that situation. He preserved their religious commitment and physical well-being, made them a sign to His creation and made their name renowned, which was part of His mercy towards them. He made

things easy for them, so that even the place where they slept was the most appropriate for their situation. Hence He says:



﴿ وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَاوَرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا ﴿١٧﴾ وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ آتِقَاطًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ وَنَقَلْنَاهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمَلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعبًا ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٧-١٨)

18:17. You would 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 were in the spacious part of it. That was one of the signs of Allah. He whom Allah guides is rightly guided; but he whom Allah causes to go astray, for him you will find no guardian to guide him.

18:18. You would have thought they were awake, although they were sleeping. We caused them to turn over, onto their right and left sides, while their dog lay at the cave's entrance with legs outstretched. If you had seen them, you would certainly have turned and fled, filled with fear of them.

Allah protected them from the sun by making available to them a cave where, when the sun rose, it declined to the right away from it, and when it set, it turned away from it to the left, so its heat did not touch them and cause damage to their bodies.

﴿while they were in the spacious part of it﴾ that is, of the cave, namely a wide part of it. That was so that fresh air and breezes could reach them, thus taking away any staleness and protecting them from such discomfort as would exist in a narrow space, especially as they stayed

there for a long time. This is one of the signs of Allah that point to His power and His mercy towards them, and how He answered their prayers and guided them, even in this situation. Hence He says:

﴿He whom Allah guides is rightly guided﴾ that is, there is no way to attain guidance except from Allah, for He guides to all that is best in both realms (this world and the hereafter).

﴿but he whom Allah causes to go astray, for him you will find no guardian to guide him﴾ that is, you will not find anyone to care for him or control his affairs in a way that is good for him, or to show him the way to goodness and success, for Allah has decreed misguidance for him, and none can put back His decree.

﴿You would have thought they were awake, although they were sleeping﴾ that is, if you had seen them, you would have thought they were awake, when in fact they were asleep. The commentators said: that is because their eyes were open, so that they would not be damaged, so the one who looked at them would have thought that they were awake, although they were asleep.

﴿We caused them to turn over, onto their right and left sides﴾ this was also to protect their bodies, for the earth naturally consumes bodies that are in direct contact with it. But by the decree of Allah, He caused them to turn over onto their right and left sides, as much as was needed to prevent the earth causing damage to their bodies. Allah (ﷻ) was able to protect them from the earth without turning them over, but He is Most Wise, and He wanted His universal laws to be consistent and for causes and effects to remain in place.

﴿while their dog lay at the cave's entrance with legs outstretched﴾ that is, the dog that was with the people of the cave experienced the same as they did of sleep, as he was guarding them, lying at the entrance to the cave with his legs outstretched. This has to do with their protection from the earth. As for their protection from other people, Allah tells us that He protected them by means of fear, as He surrounded them with an atmosphere of fear so that if anyone had

come across them, his heart would have been filled with fear, and he would have turned and fled. This is what helped them to remain there for so long without anyone coming to know of them, even though they were very close to the city. The evidence that they were so close is that when they woke up, they sent one of their number to buy some food for them from the city, whilst they stayed there and waited for him. This indicates that they were very close to the city.



﴿كَذَلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِئْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا  
يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِئْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ  
هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِّنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ  
وَلَا يُسْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿١٩﴾ إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ  
يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُوا إِذَا أَبَدًا ﴿٢٠﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٩-٢٠)

18:19. Similarly [as We caused them to sleep], We awoke them so that they might question one another. One of them said: How long have you been here? They said: We have been here for a day, or part of a day. They said: Your Lord knows best how long you have been here. Let one of you go to the city with this silver of yours, and find out which is the best food [to be had] and bring some to you. But let him be cautious and not let your presence be known.

18:20. For if they find out about you, they will stone you or force you to return to their religion, and in that case you will never prosper.

﴿Similarly [as We caused them to sleep], We awoke them﴾ from their lengthy sleep

﴿so that they might question one another﴾ that is, so that they might discuss how long they had actually stayed there.

﴿One of them said: How long have you been here? They said: We have been here for a day, or part of a day﴾. This was based on speculation on the speaker's part. It is as if they were confused and uncertain about the length of their stay, hence ﴿They said: Your Lord knows best how long you have been here﴾. Thus they referred knowledge of the matter to the One Whose knowledge encompasses all things, in general terms and in detail.

Perhaps after that Allah (ﷻ) informed them of how long they had remained there, because He awoke them so that they might question one another, and He tells us that they did question one another and give their answers to the best of their knowledge, but at the end of their discussion they were still uncertain. But Allah must have told them the certain answer, and we know that because of the reason why He awoke them, for He would not have done that with no purpose. By His mercy towards the one who seeks the truth in matters that he should learn about and strive for that purpose as much as he can, Allah will clarify matters for him. Moreover we know this from a subsequent verse in which Allah says: ﴿Thus We caused them to be discovered, so that the people might know that the promise of Allah is true and that there can be no doubt about the Hour﴾ (18: 21). If knowledge concerning the length of their stay was not certain, there would not have been a sign or evidence for what is mentioned (in 18: 21, namely the Hour).

Moreover, when they questioned one another, and there happened that of which Allah tells us, they sent one of their number with their silver – that is, the dirhams that they had with them – to buy some food for them to eat from the city that they had left, and they instructed him to choose the best and most delicious food, and to be cautious and exercise stealth when going there, buying it and coming back, so that no one would be aware of his presence or that of his brothers.

They also mentioned what they feared if people were to find out about them, for one of two things would happen to them: either they

would stone them and kill them in the worst manner, because of their resentment towards them and their religion, or they would force them to give up their religion and go back to the people's religion, in which case they would never prosper; rather they would lose their religion and would lose out in this world and the hereafter.

From these two verses we learn a number of things:

- It is encouraged to seek knowledge and discuss it, because Allah awoke them for that purpose.
- The proper etiquette to follow in the event of being uncertain about an issue of knowledge; it should be referred to someone who knows about it, and we should not go beyond what we know.
- It is valid to delegate someone to buy and sell on behalf of another person, and to have partners in doing so.
- It is permissible to eat good and delicious food, so long as that does not go to the extent of extravagance that is prohibited, because Allah tells us that they said: ﴿and find out which is the best food [to be had] and bring some to you﴾ (18: 19). This applies especially if a person is used to that and nothing else will suit him. Perhaps this is the evidence for many of the commentators who suggested that these people were the sons of kings, because they told him to bring the best food, that is usually eaten by rich and prominent people.
- It is encouraged to be cautious and keep a low profile, and to keep away from places where one could be persecuted for religious reasons, using discretion and concealing any information about oneself and one's fellow believers. These young men were very devoted to their religion and they fled from religious persecution, leaving their homeland for the sake of Allah.
- Allah tells us how evil could lead to harm and corruption, that should make one hate it and keep away from it. This is the way

of the believers of earlier and later generations, because they said (if the disbelievers forced them to recant their faith): ﴿and in that case you will never prosper﴾ (18: 20).



﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْرَضْنَا عَنْهُمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ وَعدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَزَّعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِم بُنْيَانًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمُ قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا ﴿٢١﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢١)

18:21. Thus We caused them to be discovered, so that the people might know that the promise of Allah is true and that there can be no doubt about the Hour, at a time when they were disputing among themselves concerning the matter [of resurrection]. Some said: Build a structure over them; their Lord knows best about them. Those who prevailed in the matter said: We will surely build a place of worship over them.

Here Allah tells us that He caused the people to find out about the people of the cave. That – and Allah knows best – came about after they had woken up and sent one of their number to buy food for them, and they instructed him to be cautious and keep a low profile. But Allah willed something that was in the people’s best interests, and would increase the reward (of the people of the cave), which was that the people would see in them a visible sign of Allah, to show that the promise of Allah is true, beyond any shadow of doubt, and it is not something far-fetched or unlikely, after the people had been disputing about the matter, some of them believing in the promise of resurrection and requital, whilst others denied it. Thus Allah caused their story to increase the believers in insight and certainty, and to establish proof against those who denied it, and the people of the cave attained reward for that.

Allah caused the story to become well known, and He raised them in status until they were held in high esteem by those who discovered them, who said: ﴿Build a structure over them﴾. Allah knows best about them and what their ultimate fate will be.

﴿Those who prevailed in the matter﴾ – who were the people in authority – ﴿said: We will surely build a place of worship over them﴾ where we will worship Allah and remember their story and what happened to them. This is something that is not allowed, as the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade it and criticised those who do it. The fact that it is mentioned here does not mean that it is not blameworthy. Rather the context here has to do with veneration of the people of the cave and praise for them, and tells us that the respect of those who found out about them reached such a level that they decided to build a place of worship over them, after the people of the cave had been so afraid of their own people and had taken precautions to avoid being discovered, then matters turned out as you see.

This story tells us that whoever flees from persecution for the sake of his religion, Allah will protect him from that; whoever strives to maintain his well-being, Allah will grant him that; whoever seeks refuge with Allah, Allah will grant him refuge and cause him to be a means of guidance for others; whoever puts up with humiliation for His sake, seeking His pleasure, the ultimate consequences will be high status for him that will be achieved in a manner that he does not expect.

﴿...and that which is with Allah is best for the righteous.﴾ (Āl 'Imrân 3: 198)



﴿سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا  
بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا

قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَاءً ظَهْرًا وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾ (سورة  
الكهف: ٢٢)

18:22. Some will say: There were three of them, their dog being the fourth. Others will say: There were five of them, their dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen. And others will say: There were seven of them, their dog being the eighth. Say [O Muhammad]: My Lord knows best their number. None but a few have any real knowledge of them. So do not enter into discussion with them about them except in a brief and polite manner, or ask any one of them concerning them.

Here Allah tells us of the differences of opinion among the People of the Book regarding the number of the people of the cave. This difference stemmed from guesswork about a matter of the unseen, and their speaking about something of which they had no knowledge. There were three views among them:

Some of them said that there were three of them, with their dog being the fourth. Others said that there were five of them, with their dog being the sixth. After mentioning these two views, Allah tells us that they were guessing at the unseen, which indicates that they were incorrect.

And some of them said that there were seven of them, with their dog being the eighth. This – and Allah knows best – is the correct view, because Allah stated that the first two were wrong, but He did not state that this was wrong, which indicates that it is correct.

This is a kind of dispute which is of no benefit, because knowing how many they were does not serve any interest for people, whether spiritual or worldly, hence Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿My Lord knows best their number. None but a few have any real knowledge of them﴾ and they are the ones who got it right and knew that they got it right. ﴿So do not enter into discussion﴾ that is, do not argue or debate

﴿with them about them except in a brief and polite manner﴾ that is, based on knowledge and certainty, which should also serve a purpose. As for arguing that is based on ignorance and guesswork at the unseen, in which there is no benefit – either because the person arguing is stubborn, or the issue is unimportant and there is no religious benefit in knowing about it, such as the number of the people of the cave, and so on – then arguing a great deal about it or discussing it on an ongoing basis is a waste of time and could damage relationships among people for no good reason.

﴿or ask any one of them﴾ namely the People of the Book ﴿concerning them﴾ namely the people of the cave. That is because what they say about them is based on guessing at the unseen and speculation that does not serve any real purpose or lead to any certainty. This indicates that it is not allowed to seek fatwas from one who is not fit to issue fatwas, either because he does not have sufficient knowledge concerning the issue asked about, or because he is careless in his talk and may give any answer, as he has no fear of Allah to deter him from doing so. As it is forbidden to ask questions of such a person, it is more appropriate that the person himself should be forbidden to answer questions (because he is ignorant).

This verse also indicates that it may be forbidden to ask a person about some things and not others, so he may be asked about that of which he has knowledge, but not other matters, because Allah did not forbid us to ask them questions in all cases; rather He only forbade us to ask them about the story of the people of the cave and similar matters.



﴿وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَٰذَا رَشْدًا ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٣-٢٤)

18:23. Never say of anything: I will surely do that tomorrow,

18:24. without adding: If Allah wills. And remember your Lord if you forget,<sup>35</sup> and say: I hope that my Lord will guide me to something closer to right guidance than this [matter concerning which I forgot to say: If Allah wills].

This prohibition is like others; although it was addressed to the Messenger (ﷺ) for a specific reason, it is also applicable to all accountable individuals. Allah forbade the individual to say, concerning matters in the future, ﴿I will surely do that﴾ without also mentioning the will of Allah. This is so as to avoid falling into error, which is speaking of the unseen future without being certain as to whether he will do it or not, or whether it will happen or not. That is because failing to say “if Allah wills” is attributing the action to the will of the individual, independently of Allah, and that is not allowed, because the will is all Allah’s.

﴿But you cannot will it unless Allah, the Lord of the worlds, so wills it.﴾ (at-Takweer 81: 29)

Moreover, mentioning the will of Allah makes things easier, brings *barakah* (blessing) and is a means of seeking the help of one’s Lord.

But because people are only human, they will inevitably sometimes forget this and not mention the will of Allah (by saying “if Allah wills”). Therefore Allah instructs the individual to say it after that, when he remembers, so as to do what is required and ward off what one seeks to avoid.

From the general meaning of the words ﴿And remember your Lord if you forget﴾ we understand that it is enjoined to remember Allah when one forgets, because that will alleviate forgetfulness and

<sup>35</sup> What is meant is that if you realise that you said something you wanted to do in the future without saying “if Allah wills (in shâ’ Allâh)”, you should say this phrase when you realise that, even if that is after a while.

cause the individual to remember what he forgot. Similarly, the one who forgets to remember Allah is instructed to remember his Lord, and not to be among the negligent.

Because the individual needs Allah to help him and guide him to what is right, and protect him from falling into error in word and deed, Allah instructs him to say: ﴿I hope that my Lord will guide me to something closer to right guidance than this [matter concerning which I forgot to say: If Allah wills]﴾. Thus He instructs him to call upon Allah and put his hopes in Him, and trust Him to guide him to that which is closer to right guidance. No wonder that if a person is like this, then he does his utmost and tries hard to seek guidance and the right path, he deserves to be helped and guided, and to receive divine aid that will help him to do the right thing in all his affairs.



﴿وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا﴾ ٢٥ قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا  
لَهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَبْصَرَ بِهِ، وَأَسْمِعُ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ، مِنْ وَلِيِّ وَلَا  
يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٥-٢٦)

18:25. They remained in their cave for three hundred years, plus nine.

18:26. Say: Allah knows best how long they remained there. To Him belongs [knowledge of] all that is unseen in the heavens and on earth. How well He sees and how well He hears! Besides Him they have no protector, and He allows none to share in His decree.

Having forbidden the Prophet (ﷺ) to ask the People of the Book about the issue of the people of the cave – because they have no knowledge of that, but Allah is the Knower of the unseen and the seen,

the Knower of all things – He now tells him how long they stayed there, and states that the knowledge of that is with Him alone, for this is a matter of the unseen of the heavens and the earth, and only He has knowledge of the unseen thereof. What He has told us about it on the lips of His Messengers is the certain truth concerning which there is no doubt, and whatever He did not inform His Messengers of, no one in creation can know it.

﴿How well He sees and how well He hears!﴾ This is an expression of admiration of the perfection of His hearing and seeing, which encompass all that can be heard and seen. This comes after the statement that His knowledge encompasses all that can be known.

Then Allah tells us that He alone is the protector in a general sense and in a specific sense, for He is the only One Who takes care of and is in control of all of creation, and Who protects His believing slaves, bringing them forth from the depths of darkness to the light, guiding them to that which is easy and protecting them from that which is difficult and hard. Hence He says: ﴿Besides Him they have no protector﴾ that is, it is He Who protected and took care of the people of the cave, by His kindness and generosity, and He did not leave them to the care of any of His creation.

﴿and He allows none to share in His decree﴾ this includes His universal decree and His religious decree. He is the One Who is in control of His creation, in terms of His will and decree, creation and control, and He is the One Who rules over them in terms of commands and prohibitions, reward and punishment.

Having stated that the unseen of the heavens and the earth belong to Him, so no created being has any way of knowing that except through the way in which He has informed His slaves of it – which is this Qur'an which tells a great deal about unseen matters – Allah (ﷻ) then instructs us to focus on the Qur'an:



﴿وَأَتْلُ مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ، وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُنْتَحِداً﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٧)

18:27. Recite [and follow] what has been revealed to you [O Muhammad] of the Book of your Lord; none can change His words, and none will you find as a refuge other than Him.

Recitation requires following; in other words, follow what Allah has revealed to you by knowing and understanding its meanings, believing the stories mentioned therein, and complying with its commands and prohibitions, for it is a great Book of which no one can change the words. It does not change because it is true and just, and because it reached the utmost level of beauty and eloquence.

﴿The word of your Lord is perfect in truth and justice...﴾ (*al-An'âm* 6: 115)

Because it is perfect, it is impossible for it to change. If it were imperfect, it would be exposed to change, to a greater or lesser extent. This is a commendation of the Qur'an and implicit encouragement to focus on it.

﴿and none will you find as a refuge other than Him﴾ that is, you will never find any other than your Lord to whom you may turn. Once it has become clear that He is the only One to turn to in all one's affairs, this indicates that there is no other option but to worship Him alone and pray to Him at times of ease and of hardship, for He is the only One Who is needed in all situations and the only One to be asked for all one's needs.



﴿وَأَصْبِرْ 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﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٨)

18:28. Content yourself with [the company of] those who call upon their Lord every morning and afternoon, seeking His Countenance, and do not turn your eyes away from them, desiring the adornment of the life of this world. And do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who follows his own whims and desires, and is reckless in his deeds.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) – and others who are also subject to divine commands and prohibitions – to content themselves with the believers who are obedient and always remember Allah.

﴿those who call upon their Lord every morning and afternoon﴾ that is, at the beginning and end of the day, seeking thereby the Countenance of Allah. He describes them as worshipping Him sincerely, which implies that one should keep company with good people and strive to make oneself content with their company and mix with them, even if they are poor, because there are many benefits in keeping company with them.

﴿and do not turn your eyes away from them﴾ that is, do not overlook them and turn your gaze away from them.

﴿desiring the adornment of the life of this world﴾, for that is harmful and is of no benefit, and it may undermine one's religious interests, because it leads to being attached to this world and focusing one's ideas and thoughts on it, which leads to the heart losing interest in the hereafter. That is because the adornment of this world is pleasing to the onlooker and bewitches the mind, which in turn distracts the

heart from the remembrance of Allah and causes it to focus on pleasures and desires. This will cause him to waste his time and will cause his affairs to be in disarray, and it will lead to eternal loss and everlasting regret. Hence Allah says: ﴿And do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance﴾, so he becomes heedless of Allah, and He punishes him by making him heedless of His remembrance.

﴿who follows his own whims and desires﴾ that is, he becomes a follower of his own whims and desires and strives to get whatever he desires, even if that leads to his doom and loss, for he takes his own whims and desires as his god, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires as his god, whom Allah causes to go astray despite his knowledge...﴾  
(*al-Jāthiyah* 45: 23)

﴿and is reckless in his deeds﴾ that is, with regard to his own interests. Allah forbids obeying such a person, because he only calls to that which is bad.

This verse indicates that the one who should be obeyed and who should be a leader of people is the one whose heart is filled with love for Allah, and that is reflected in his speech, so he constantly remembers Allah and seeks the pleasure of his Lord, and he gives precedence to that over his whims and desires. By doing so he is making the most of his time; his affairs are in order, his deeds are righteous and he calls people to that which Allah has blessed him with. Thus he deserves to be followed and to be made a leader.

The contentment mentioned in this verse is contentment and patience in obeying Allah, which is the highest level of contentment and patience. By achieving that, other types of contentment and patience may also be achieved.

This verse indicates that it is encouraged to remember Allah, call upon Him and worship Him at both ends of the day, because Allah

praised people for doing that, and every time Allah praises the doer of an action, this indicates that Allah loves this action, and if He loves it, then He enjoins it and encourages people to do it.



﴿ وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۗ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ ۗ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا ۗ وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِثُوا بُعَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ ۗ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾ ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا ﴿٣٠﴾ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يُجْلُونَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَّكِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٩-٣١)

18:29. Say: This is the truth from your Lord. So let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve. For the wrongdoers We have prepared a fire which will encompass them like the walls of a pavilion. If they cry for help, they will be given water like boiling oil that will scald their faces. What a dreadful drink, and what a miserable resting-place!

18:30. As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, verily We will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost.

18:31. They will have gardens of perpetual abode through which rivers flow. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, reclining therein on couches. What an excellent reward, and what a pleasant resting-place!

That is, say to the people, O Muhammad (ﷺ): This is the truth from your Lord. In other words, guidance has become distinct from misguidance, and the attributes of those who are blessed have become

distinct from the attributes of those who are doomed, by means of what Allah has explained on the lips of His Messenger (ﷺ). Once the truth has become clear and there is no doubt or confusion left concerning it, then ﴿let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve﴾. In other words, there is no option left but to follow one of the two paths, according to whether one is guided or not. Allah has given man free will, by virtue of which he may either believe or disbelieve, and choose either good or evil. Whoever believes has been guided to that which is right, and whoever disbelieves, proof has been established against him. No one is to be compelled to believe, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Let there be no compulsion in religion; truth stands out clear from error...﴾ (al-Baqarah 2: 256)

The words ﴿So let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve﴾ are not to be understood as giving permission for both options; rather that is a threat and a warning to those who choose disbelief after the matter has been explained perfectly. By the same token, these words do not mean that the believers should give up fighting the disbelievers.

Then Allah (ﷻ) mentions the final destination of the two groups. ﴿For the wrongdoers﴾ because of their disbelief, evildoing and sin ﴿We have prepared a fire which will encompass them like the walls of a pavilion﴾ that has no windows or exit, and there is no way to escape from it, and they will be burned by the exceedingly hot fire.

﴿If they cry for help﴾ that is, if they ask for a drink to extinguish the severe thirst that they experience ﴿they will be given water like boiling oil﴾ or like molten lead, because of its extreme heat ﴿that will scald their faces﴾ so how about their innards? Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

«...and scalding water will be poured over their heads, which will cause their insides and their skins to melt. They will be lashed with rods of iron.» (al-Hajj 22: 19-21)

«What a dreadful drink» that they wanted to quench their thirst and reduce the punishment somewhat, but it will increase their thirst and make the punishment more severe

«and what a miserable resting-place» the fire will be. This is a negative description of the fire, highlighting what a bad place it is in which to rest, for there will be no rest there; rather it is a harsh and severe punishment that will not be reduced even for a short while. There they will lose all hope and will despair of all goodness, and the Most Merciful will forget them in their punishment, as they forgot Him.

Then Allah tells us about the other group: «As for those who believe and do righteous deeds» that is, they combined belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messenger, the Last Day and the divine decree, both good and bad, with righteous deeds, both obligatory and recommended

«verily We will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost». Good deeds are those which are intended for the sake of Allah, in accordance with the teachings of Islam. These are the good deeds which Allah will not cause to be lost in the slightest; rather He will preserve them for those who do them, and He will reward them in full, according to their deeds and by His grace and kindness. He describes their reward in the following verse: «They will have gardens of perpetual abode through which rivers flow. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, reclining therein on couches» that is, those who are described above as having faith and doing righteous deeds will have lofty gardens with many trees and rivers that flow beneath those elegant trees, and fine dwellings. Their adornment therein will be gold and their garments will be of green silk and heavy brocade of a soft type, and they will be reclining on adorned couches covered with

fine cloth. The fact that they will be reclining on couches is indicative of perfect relaxation and the absence of tiredness and exhaustion; they will have servants who will bring them whatever they desire, and to complete the blessing they will abide therein for ever and ever.

This splendid abode will be ﴿an excellent reward﴾ for those who strove hard, and ﴿a pleasant resting-place﴾ in which they will rest and enjoy all that it contains of whatever their hearts desire and their eyes delight in of happiness and joy, never-ending pleasure and blessing. What resting-place could be better than an abode in which the least of its inhabitants may walk in his domain and in what Allah has blessed him with of palaces and gardens, for two thousand years, never thinking that there is any bliss greater than this, as he was given all that he wished for and there was added to that other things that may never have crossed his mind. Moreover, their bliss will be eternal, constantly increasing in beauty and quality. We ask Allah, the Most Generous, not to deprive us of the best of what He has of bliss because of the negative consequences of our shortcomings and sins.

This and similar verses indicate that the adornment is for both males and females, as was mentioned in the ṣaḥeeḥ hadiths, because it is mentioned in general terms: ﴿They will be adorned﴾. The same also applies to silk and the like.



﴿ وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَحَفَفْنَاهُمْ بِنَخْلِ  
وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زَرْعًا ﴿٣٣﴾ كَلَّا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ ءَأَنْتَ أَكْلُهُمَا وَلَمْ تَنْظُرْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلْفَاهُمَا

نَهْرًا ﴿٣٣﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٣٢-٣٣)

- 18:32. Present to them the example of two men: to one of them We gave two gardens of grapevines and surrounded them with date palms, with a cornfield lying in between.

18:33. Each garden brought forth its produce and did not fail to yield its best, and We caused a stream to flow through them.

Here Allah says to His Prophet (ﷺ): Present to the people the example of these two men, the one who was grateful for the blessings of Allah and the one who was ungrateful, and their conduct, words and deeds, and what resulted from that of punishment and reward in this world and the hereafter, so that they may pay heed and learn a lesson from them and what happened to them. There is no benefit in knowing the identity of the two men, or the time or place in which they lived, and that does not help one to reach the right conclusion. The lesson may be learned from their story alone, and mentioning other details would be superfluous. One of these two men was the one who was ungrateful for the immense blessings of Allah. Allah gave him two beautiful gardens of grapevines,

﴿and surrounded them with date palms﴾ that is, in these two gardens there were all kinds of fruits, especially the noblest of trees and plants, namely the grapevine and the date palm. The grapevines were in the middle of the garden, with the date palms surrounding them; this gave the gardens a beautiful and elegant look, and exposed the trees and date palms to the sun and wind, which enabled the fruit to reach maturity, ripening and taking shape. In addition to that, between the two gardens there was a cornfield. There is nothing left to know about them except to say: how were the fruits of these two gardens and did they have sufficient water for irrigation?

Allah (ﷻ) tells us that each of the gardens ﴿brought forth its produce﴾ that is, its fruits and crops, in abundance and ﴿did not fail to yield its best﴾. In addition to that, there was a stream running freely through them, bringing a lot of water.



﴿وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا ﴿٣٤﴾  
 وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا ﴿٣٥﴾ وَمَا أَظُنُّ  
 السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِن رُّدِدْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا ﴿٣٦﴾﴾ (سورة

الكهف: ٣٤-٣٦)

- 18:34. So he was a man of wealth. He said to his companion, as he was conversing with him: I am wealthier than you and have a greater entourage.
- 18:35. He went into his garden, having thus wronged himself, and said: I do not think that this will ever perish,
- 18:36. Nor do I think that the Hour will ever come. Even if I am brought back to my Lord, I will surely find a better place than this.

So that man ﴿was a man of wealth﴾. The word translated here as ﴿wealth﴾ appears (in the original Arabic) in the indefinite form, which implies a great deal of wealth. His two gardens produced their full potential of fruits and crops; their trees began to bend under their load and never suffered from any blight or problem. This is the ultimate in worldly adornments and pleasure with regard to agriculture, therefore this man was deceived by it; he began to boast insolently and he forgot about the hereafter.

As the owner of the two gardens was conversing about some ordinary matters with his companion, who was a believer, he began to boast to him, saying:

﴿I am wealthier than you and have a greater entourage﴾. He was proud of his great wealth and the power of his supporters, including his slaves, servants and relatives. This was ignorance on his part, for what pride can there be in external matters that are not indicative of any virtue, whether psychological or moral? Rather it is more like the pride of a young boy in wishes that have no basis in reality.

Moreover, he did not stop at boasting in this manner to his companion, until he showed his ignorance and wrongdoing, as he went into his garden, ﴿and said: I do not think that this will ever perish﴾ that is, diminish and come to an end. He was content and pleased with this world, and he denied the resurrection and said:

﴿Nor do I think that the Hour will ever come. Even if I am brought back to my Lord﴾, let us suppose for the sake of argument, ﴿I will surely find a better place than this﴾ that is, He will give me something better than these two gardens. This can only have been one of two things: either he knew the reality of the matter, so he said these words by way of mockery and ridicule, which further increased his disbelief and ingratitude, or this is what he really thought, in which case he was the most ignorant of people, with the least share of reasoning and intellect. What connection can there be between what one is given in this world and what one will be given in the hereafter, such that one might think, on the basis of ignorance, that the one who is given bounty in this world will necessarily be given bounty in the hereafter? Rather what is usually the case is that Allah keeps worldly gains away from His close friends and chosen ones, whilst granting such things in abundance to His enemies, who have no share in the hereafter. What appears to be the case here is that this man knew the reality of the matter, but he said these words by way of mockery and ridicule, based on the fact that Allah says: ﴿He went into his garden, having thus wronged himself﴾. The fact that he is described as having wronged himself when he went into his garden, as a result of what he had said (to his companion), indicates that he was stubborn and obstinate.



﴿ قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَكَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَكَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ رَجُلًا ﴿٣٧﴾ لَنَكُنَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٣٧-٣٨)

- 18:37. His companion said to him, in the course of his conversation with him: Do you disbelieve in the One Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then fashioned you into a man?
- 18:38. But as for me, [I say that] He is Allah, my Lord, and I will not associate anyone with my Lord.

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His believing companion said to him, advising him and reminding him of his original state, as Allah has created him in this world: ﴿Do you disbelieve in the One Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then fashioned you into a man?﴾ For it is He Who has blessed you by bringing you into existence and providing for you, and He continued to shower you with His blessings and caused you to develop and grow until you became a man, in perfect physical shape and with complete mental faculties. Thus He made the means available to you and bestowed upon you the blessings of this world. So what you possess of worldly wealth was not gained by means of your own strength and power; rather it was by the blessings that Allah (ﷻ) has bestowed upon you. So how can it be fitting for you to disbelieve in and be ungrateful to Allah Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then He fashioned you into a man? How can you deny His blessings and claim that He will not resurrect you, and that if He does resurrect you, He will give you a better garden than this? This is not appropriate and it is not right.

Hence, when his believing companion saw his attitude and how he was persisting in disbelief, ingratitude and transgression, he told him about himself, by way of expressing his gratitude to his Lord and announcing his belief, at a time when he was hearing specious arguments and doubts: ﴿But as for me, [I say that] He is Allah, my Lord, and I will not associate anyone with my Lord﴾. So he affirmed His Lordship and that He is the only Lord, and he committed himself to obeying and worshipping Him alone, and pledged that he would not associate any created being with Him.

Then he told his companion that the blessing that Allah had bestowed upon him of faith and Islam – even though he had little wealth and few children – was the true blessing and that anything other than that was liable to diminish and vanish, then the punishment would come upon him, as he said:



﴿ وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ تَرَنِّ أَنَا أَقَلُّ مِنكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴾ (٣٩) فَعَسَى رَبِّي أَنْ يُؤْتِيَنِي خَيْرًا مِّنْ جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُصْبِحُ صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا ﴿٤٠﴾ أَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَأْوَاهَا غَوْرًا فَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُ، طَلَبًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَأُحِيطَ بِشَمْرِهِ، فَاصْبِحْ يَظْلِمُ كَفَيْهِ عَلَى مَا أَنْفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا ﴿٤٢﴾ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ، فِتْنَةٌ يَنْصُرُونَهُ، مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مُنْصِرًا ﴿٤٣﴾ هُنَالِكَ الْوَلِيَّةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقِّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴿ (سورة الكهف: ٣٩-٤٤) ﴾

- 18:39. Why could you not have said, when you entered your garden: Whatever Allah wills [will come to pass]; there is no power but with Allah? Although you see me less than you in wealth and children,
- 18:40. Yet my Lord may well give me something better than your garden, and send upon [your garden] thunderbolts from heaven, leaving it barren and slippery.
- 18:41. Or its water may disappear under the ground, so that you will never be able to find it again.
- 18:42. And so all his produce was destroyed, and he began to wring his hands in sorrow at the loss of what he had spent on it, as it lay in ruins with all its trellises fallen in, saying: Would that I had never associated anyone with my Lord!
- 18:43. He had none to support him against [the punishment of] Allah, nor was he able to help himself.

18:44. In that case, the only protection is that of Allah, the True God. He gives the best reward and the best outcome.

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That is, the believer said to his disbelieving companion: Although you boasted to me about your great wealth and many children, and you see that I have less wealth than you and fewer children, that which is with Allah is better and more lasting, and what is hoped for of His goodness and kindness is superior to everything in this world for which people compete.

«Yet my Lord may well give me something better than your garden, and send upon [your garden]», because of which you transgressed and were deceived

«thunderbolts from heaven» that is, as a punishment, with heavy rain or otherwise

«leaving it» as a result of that

«barren and slippery» that is, with its trees uprooted, its fruits destroyed, its crops drowned and its benefits disappeared.

«Or its water» that is essential to its survival

«may disappear under the ground, so that you will never be able to find it again» that is, it may disappear in such a way that it cannot be reached by digging with pickaxes or by any other means. The believer prayed against his garden in anger for the sake of his Lord, because it had deceived its owner and caused him to transgress and be content with it. He did this in the hope that his companion would turn back to his Lord, come to his senses and realise where he stood.

Allah answered his supplication, «so all his produce was destroyed» that is, the punishment destroyed it and wiped it out, so that there was nothing left of it. All the trees and their fruits, and all his crops, were destroyed, and he regretted it deeply and was very sad.

«and he began to wring his hands in sorrow at the loss of what he had spent on it» that is, because he had spent a great deal of his worldly wealth on it, but when it was destroyed and vanished, he had nothing

to compensate for it. He also regretted his ascription of partners to Allah and his evil deeds, therefore he said: ﴿Would that I had never associated anyone with my Lord!﴾.

﴿He had none to support him against [the punishment of] Allah, nor was he able to help himself﴾ that is, when the punishment befell his garden, he lost that which he had boasted about to his companion when he said: ﴿I am wealthier than you and have a greater entourage﴾ (18: 34). They did not ward off this punishment from him at all, at the time when he needed them most, and he could not help himself. How could he have helpers against the decree of Allah that He ordained and brought to pass? For if the inhabitants of heaven and earth were to come together to ward off anything of the decree of Allah, they would not be able to do that.

It is not far-fetched to say that by the mercy and kindness of Allah, the situation of this owner of the garden that was destroyed later improved, and Allah enabled him to turn back to Him and come back to his senses, and give up his rebellion and transgression. That is based on the fact that he expressed regret for his ascription of partners to his Lord, and that Allah took away from him that which had caused him to transgress, and He punished him in this world. If Allah wills good for a person, He hastens to punish him in this world. The grace of Allah cannot be encompassed by human minds, and no one can deny it except one who is an ignorant wrongdoer.

﴿In that case, the only protection is that of Allah, the True God. He gives the best reward and the best outcome﴾ that is, in that case – when Allah sends His punishment upon those who transgressed and gave precedence to the life of this world – and He honours those who believed, did righteous deeds and gave thanks to Allah, and called others to do likewise – it becomes clear that the only protection is that of our True God. Whoever believes in Him and fears Him will be protected by Allah, Who will bestow all kinds of honour upon him and ward off all kinds of punishment and evil from him. But whoever does

not believe in his Lord or take Him as an ally and protector will be a loser in both spiritual and worldly terms. The reward of Allah in this world and the hereafter is the best reward that anyone may hope for.

From this great story we learn a number of lessons, including the following:

- We learn a lesson from the one on whom Allah had bestowed worldly blessings, but that distracted him from the hereafter and caused him to transgress and disobey Allah; those blessings will ultimately vanish and disappear, and even if he enjoys them for a little while, he will be deprived of them for a long time.
- If a person likes something of his wealth or offspring, he should attribute this blessing to the One Who bestowed it upon him and he should say, “*Mâ shâ' Allâh, lâ quwwata illâ billâh* (Whatever Allah wills [will come to pass]; there is no power but with Allah)”. Thus his giving thanks to Allah will be a means for the blessing of Allah to remain with him, because the believer said to his companion: ﴿Why could you not have said, when you entered your garden: Whatever Allah wills [will come to pass]; there is no power but with Allah?﴾ (18: 39).
- A person may console himself for missing out on the pleasures and desires of this world by reminding himself of the good things that are with Allah, because that believer said: ﴿Although you see me less than you in wealth and children, yet my Lord may well give me something better than your garden﴾.
- Wealth and children are of no benefit if they do not help one to obey Allah, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere: ﴿It is not your wealth or your children that bring you nearer to Us; but those who believe and do righteous deeds – it is they who will have a multiple reward for their deeds...﴾ (Saba' 34: 37)
- One may pray for destruction of the wealth of one who is wealthy if it is the cause of his transgression, disbelief and loss, especially if he thinks that because of his wealth he is superior to the believers, and he boasts to them of that.

The consequences of Allah's protection or the absence thereof will only become clear when the dust settles and recompense becomes due. ﴿In that case, the only protection is that of Allah, the True God. He gives the best reward and the best outcome﴾ (18: 44).



﴿وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا كَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْلَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتٍ  
الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيْحُ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقَدِّرًا ﴿٤٥﴾ الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ  
زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

(سورة الكهف: ٤٥-٤٦)

- 18:45. Present to them the likeness of the life of this world: it is like the rain that We send down from the heavens; by means of it, all kinds of plants are brought forth from the earth, but soon they become dry stubble scattered about by the wind. Allah has power over all things.
- 18:46. Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. But righteous deeds of lasting merit bring a better reward with your Lord and are a better source of hope.

Here Allah says to His Prophet (ﷺ) first of all, and subsequently to those who take up his position of teaching and calling people to Allah: Present to the people the likeness of the life of this world, so that they may understand its nature and know it properly, inside and out, and then compare it with the hereafter, and give precedence to that which is most deserving of being given precedence. For the likeness of this world is that of rain that is sent down upon the earth and it brings forth all kinds of beautiful plants at a time when their beauty gladdens the hearts of onlookers and catches the eye of the heedless. Then suddenly they become dry stubble scattered about

by the winds, and those fresh green plants and blossoming flowers disappear, and that splendid view vanishes, and the earth becomes dusty and dry, causing the onlookers to lose interest in it and creating alienation in their hearts.

This is how this world is: whilst the one who focuses on this world is enjoying his youth, surpassing his peers, acquiring wealth, indulging in physical pleasures, fulfilling his desires at all times and thinking that this will continue for the rest of his life, suddenly death comes upon him or he loses his wealth, and his happiness disappears and his joy and pleasure vanish; he is faced with pain and anguish at the loss of his youth, strength and wealth, and he is left with nothing except his deeds, good or bad. At that time the wrongdoer will bite on his hand with regret, when he realises the reality with which he is faced, and he will wish to go back to this world, not to carry on fulfilling his desires, but to make up for what he missed out on at the time of negligence, by repenting and doing righteous deeds.

But the wise and prudent person who is rightly guided imagines himself in this situation and says to himself: Imagine that you have died, for you must inevitably die: which of the two situations would you prefer? To be deceived by the adornment of this realm and enjoying it in the manner of grazing animals, or to strive for that realm where food and shade are always available, in which one will have all that one desires and will enjoy all that delights the eye? Thus a person may know whether he is guided or forsaken, winning or losing.

Hence Allah (ﷻ) tells us that wealth and sons are the adornment of the life of this world, and they are no more than that; what will remain and benefit a person, bringing him joy, are righteous deeds of lasting merit. That includes all acts of obedience, both obligatory and recommended, having to do with the rights of Allah and the rights of His slaves, such as prayer, zakâh, charity, Hajj, 'umrah, *tasbeeh*, *tahmeed*, *tahleel*, *takbeer*, reading Qur'an, seeking beneficial knowledge, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong,

upholding ties of kinship, honouring one's parents, fulfilling the rights of wives, slaves and animals, and all acts of kindness towards people. All of these are righteous deeds of lasting merit, and they bring a better reward with Allah and are a better source of hope. Their reward will remain and be multiplied for ever and ever, and that reward and benefit are hoped for at the time of need. This is what people should compete for and strive to attain.

Reflect on how Allah gives this likeness for this world and how it will diminish, and He tells us that in it there are two types of things:

The first type is adornment that is enjoyed for a short while, then it diminishes without bringing any benefit; rather it may in fact bring harm – this refers to wealth and sons.

The second type will remain and bring eternal benefit; this is the righteous deeds of lasting merit.



﴿ وَيَوْمَ نُسِرُّ الْجِبَالَ وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ بَارِزَةً وَحَشَرْتَهُمْ فَلَمْ نُغَادِرْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٧﴾ وَعَرَضُوا  
عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ صَفًّا لَقَدْ حِشْتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ بَلْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَلَّنْ نَجْعَلَ لَكُمْ مَوْعِدًا  
﴿٤٨﴾ وَوَضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يُؤْتِلَنَّا مَالِ هَذَا  
الْكِتَابِ لَا يَغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَيْنَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا  
يَظُنُّ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٤٧-٤٩)

18:47. And [remember] the day when We will remove the mountains and you will see the earth as a levelled plain; We will gather them all together and not leave any one of them behind.

18:48. They will be presented before your Lord in rows, [and He will say]: Now you have come to Us as We created you the first time, even though you claimed that We had not made any such appointment for you.

18:49. And the record of deeds will be placed [in their hands] and you will see the evildoers filled with dread at what it contains. They will say: Woe to us! What sort of record is this, that leaves no deed, small or great, unaccounted for? They will find all they did recorded there, and your Lord will not wrong anyone.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the Day of Resurrection and what it will bring of great terrors and dreadful hardship.

﴿And [remember] the day when We will remove the mountains﴾ that is, He will remove them from their places and make them like sand-hills, then He will make them like carded wool (*cf. 101: 5*), then they will diminish and vanish, becoming like scattered dust, and the earth will be levelled, becoming a smooth, flat plain in which there is no depression or elevation (*cf. 20: 106-107*). Allah will gather together all creatures on that earth, and He will not leave anyone but He will gather him.

Indeed, He will gather together the first and the last from the remotest deserts and the depths of the sea; He will bring them back together after they were scattered and will restore them after they had disintegrated, as a new creation, then they will be presented before him in rows, so that He may check them, examine their deeds and judge between them on the basis of His justice in which there is no unfairness or injustice, and He will say to them: ﴿Now you have come to Us as We created you the first time﴾ that is, without wealth, without family, without tribe. They will have nothing with them except the deeds that they did and whatever they earned of good or evil, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Now you have come to Us alone, as We created you the first time, and you have left behind all that We had bestowed on you. We do not see with you your intercessors who you claimed were entitled to a share of your worship and devotion...﴾ (*al-An'ām 6: 94*)

And here Allah will say, addressing those who denied the resurrection, now that they have seen it with their own eyes: ﴿even though you claimed that We had not made any such appointment for you﴾ that is, you denied the requital for deeds, and you rejected the promises and warnings of Allah, but now you have seen it and tasted it. At that point, the books of deeds that were written by the noble angels will be brought, and people will feel a sense of alarm and distress, and the evildoers will be filled with apprehension. When they see their deeds written down, and their words and actions listed, they will say:

﴿Woe to us! What sort of record is this, that leaves no deed, small or great, unaccounted for?﴾ That is, no mistake, small or great, has been omitted without being written down and recorded; no deed, whether it was done in private or in public, at night or by day, has been omitted.

﴿They will find all they did recorded there﴾ and they will not be able to deny it

﴿and your Lord will not wrong anyone﴾. At that time they will be requited and will be made to admit their deeds, and they will be subjected to disgrace and punishment. That is because of what their own hands sent on ahead of them, for Allah does not wrong His slaves; rather they are not beyond His justice or grace.



﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ بِئْسَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا

(سورة الكهف: ٥٠) ﴿٥٠﴾

18:50. And [remember] when We said to the angels: Prostrate before Adam, and they [all] prostrated except Iblees. He was one of the jinn, so he rebelled against the command of his Lord. Will you then take him and his progeny as allies instead of Me, even

though they are enemies to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrongdoers!

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the enmity of Iblees towards Adam and his progeny. Allah instructed the angels to prostrate to Adam as a sign of honour and respect, and in obedience to the command of Allah, and they obeyed, «except Iblees. He was one of the jinn, so he rebelled against the command of his Lord». He said:

«...Should I prostrate before one whom You have created from clay?»  
(*al-Isrâ' 17: 61*)

– and:

«...I am better than he...» (*al-A'râf 7: 12*)

Thus he manifested his enmity towards Allah and towards your father and you, so how could you take him and his progeny, namely the devils, «as allies instead of Me, even though they are enemies to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrongdoers!» That is, what a bad choice they made for themselves by taking the Shayṭān – who does not enjoin anything upon them but obscenity and evil – as an ally, instead of the Most Gracious, in alliance with Whom all happiness, prosperity and success are to be found.

This verse encourages us to take the Shayṭān as an enemy and mentions that no one takes the Shayṭān as an ally except a wrongdoer, and what wrongdoing could be greater than that of one who takes his real enemy as an ally and turns away from the Most Praiseworthy Protector?

«Allah is the Protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light. As for those who disbelieve, their protectors are the false gods; from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness...» (*al-Baqarah 2: 257*)

And Allah (ﷻ) says:

«...they will have taken the devils as friends and allies instead of Allah...» (*al-A'râf 7: 30*)



﴿ مَا أَشْهَدُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذَ  
الْمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدًا ﴿٥١﴾ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ نَادُوا شُرَكَاءِيَ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ  
يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَوْبِقًا ﴿٥٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥١-٥٢)

18:51. I did not call them [Iblees and his progeny] to witness [or assist in] the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor even the creation of their own selves; I do not seek the assistance of those who lead people astray.

18:52. And [remember] the day when He will say: Call on My [so-called] partners, as you claimed. They will call on them, but they will not respond to them. And We will place between them a barrier.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says: I did not call on these devils and these people who have gone astray to witness ﴿the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor even the creation of their own selves﴾ that is, I did not cause them to be present at that time, or consult them concerning it, so how can they be creators of any of that? The Only One Who has the power of creation and control, and Who has perfect wisdom in governing creation, is Allah, the Creator of all things, Who controls them according to His wisdom. So how could partners be ascribed to Him from among the devils, who are taken as allies and obeyed as Allah should be obeyed, when they did not create anything or witness the creation of anything, and they did not assist Allah (ﷻ) in that? Hence He says: ﴿I do not seek the assistance of those who lead people astray﴾ that is, I do not seek their help, for Allah does not need any help in any matter. It is not appropriate or befitting for Allah to give them any measure of control, for they are striving to mislead people and oppose their Lord. Therefore what is appropriate is that they should be kept far away and not be brought close.

Having mentioned the situation of those who ascribe partners to Him in this world, and declared that to be utterly invalid and those who do such a thing to be ignorant and foolish, Allah now tells us about their situation with their so-called partners on the Day of Resurrection. Allah will say to them:

﴿Call on My [so-called] partners﴾ that is, according to your false claim; otherwise, in fact, Allah has no partner on earth or in heaven. He will say: Call them and let them benefit you and save you from troubles.

﴿They will call on them, but they will not respond to them﴾ because all power and sovereignty on that day will belong to Allah, and no one will possess the slightest power to benefit himself or anyone else.

﴿And We will place between them﴾ namely the polytheists and the so-called partners they ascribed to Allah

﴿a barrier﴾ to separate them and keep them apart from one another.

At that point the enmity of the so-called partners towards those who described them as such will become apparent, and they will reject them and disavow them, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿When humankind are gathered [on the Day of Resurrection], they [the so-called partners] will become their enemies and will reject their worship of them.﴾ (al-Ahqaf 46: 6)



﴿وَرَاءَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ النَّارَ فَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مُوَافِعُوهَا وَلَمْ يَجِدُوا عَنْهَا مَصْرِفًا﴾ (سورة

الكهف: ٥٣)

18:53. The evildoers will see the fire and will realise that they are bound to fall into it, and will find no escape from it.

That is, on the Day of Resurrection, when the reckoning is complete and each group of people becomes distinct on the basis of their deeds,

and the punishment becomes due on the evildoers, they will see hell before they enter it, and they will panic and become very anxious, when they realise for certain that they will enter it.

﴿and will find no escape from it﴾ that is, no way out and no one to intercede for them without Allah's permission. This is aimed at scaring them in such a way that causes hearts to tremble.



﴿وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَكْثَرِ شَيْءٍ  
جَدَلًا ﴿٥٤﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٤)

18:54. We have explained [the truth] to man in this Qur'an, discussing different issues in various ways, but man is more than anything argumentative.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the greatness and majesty of the Qur'an and how it encompasses all issues, explaining different matters in different ways, highlighting all types of beneficial knowledge and ways that lead to eternal bliss, and every way that protects against evil and doom. It contains explanations of what is lawful and what is prohibited, requital of deeds, encouragement and deterrents, true stories that benefit the heart by strengthening faith and giving reassurance and light. This dictates that one should surrender to this Qur'an, accept it, follow it, obey the instructions contained therein, and not dispute with it in any issue. Yet despite that, many people argue about the truth after it has become clear, and they debate on the basis of falsehood, seeking to undermine the truth. Hence Allah says: ﴿but man is more than anything argumentative﴾ that is, in debates and disputes concerning the Qur'an, even though that is not appropriate and is not fair on his part. What makes man like that and causes him not to believe in Allah is nothing other than wrongdoing and

stubbornness; it is not due to any shortcomings in the proof and evidence set out in the Qur'an.



﴿ وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ سُنَّةٌ الْأُولَىٰ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ قُبُلًا ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٥)

18:55. Nothing prevents people from believing, now that guidance has come to them, or from seeking the forgiveness of their Lord, except [their demand] that the fate of the earlier peoples should come to them or that the punishment should appear before their eyes.

That is, nothing prevents the people from believing, at a time when guidance has reached them by means of which one may see the difference between guidance and misguidance, truth and falsehood, and proof is established against them, so that it is not lack of clarity that is preventing them from believing, rather wrongdoing and transgression are preventing them from believing so that there is nothing left except for their demand to be fulfilled, for such is the way of Allah, in which He dealt with the earlier peoples: if they did not believe then the punishment should be hastened for them or they should see that the punishment is coming, and behold it face-to-face. In other words, they should fear it and repent from their disbelief before there comes the punishment that cannot be put back.



﴿ وَمَا تُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ ۚ وَمُجَادِلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِالْبَطْلِ لِيُدْحِضُوا بِهِ الْحَقَّ ۚ وَاتَّخَذُوا آيَاتِي وَمَا أُنذِرُوا هُزُوًا ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٦)

18:56. We sent the Messengers only as bearers of good news and as warners. Yet with false arguments those who disbelieve seek to undermine the truth, and they make a mockery of My revelations and of the warning they were given.

That is, We did not send the Messengers in vain, or for people to take them as lords, or so that they might call people to themselves; rather We sent them so that they might call the people to all that is good, and forbid all that is evil, and so that they might give glad tidings, if people paid heed, of reward in this world and in the hereafter, and so that they might warn them, if they disobeyed, of punishment in this world and in the hereafter. Thus the proof of Allah was established against people. Yet despite that, the wrongdoers and disbelievers insisted on arguing on the basis of falsehood so as to refute the truth, and they strove to support falsehood as much as they could and to refute and undermine the truth. They ridiculed the Messengers and revelations of Allah, and they revelled in whatever knowledge they had (*cf.* 40: 83), but Allah insisted on perfecting His light, even though the disbelievers hate it (*cf.* 9: 32) and that the truth should prevail over falsehood.

«Nay, rather We hurl the truth against falsehood, and it crushes it, whereupon it perishes. Woe to you for what you ascribe [falsely, to Allah].» (*al-Anbiyā' 21: 18*)

By the wisdom and mercy of Allah, allowing those who argue against the truth on the basis of falsehood to continue is one of the primary means of making the truth clear and making its evidence manifest, and showing falsehood to be evidently false and corrupt. Thus things become clearer by means of this contrast between opposites.



﴿ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن ذُكِّرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ، فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا وَنَسِيَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا وَإِنْ نَدَعُهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى فَلَنْ يَهْتَدُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا ﴿٥٧﴾ وَرَبُّكَ الْغَفُورُ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ لَوْ يُؤَاخِذُهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا لَعَجَلَهُمْ الْعَذَابَ بَلْ لَهُمْ مَوْعِدٌ لَنْ يَجِدُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ مَوْيلاً ﴿٥٨﴾ وَتِلْكَ الْقُرَىٰ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ لَمَّا ظَمَمُوا وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَهْلِكِهِمْ مَوْعِدًا ﴿٥٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٧-٥٩)

- 18:57. And who does greater wrong than one who is reminded of the revelations of his Lord, but turns away from them, forgetting the [deeds] that his hands have wrought? We have placed covers on their hearts so that they will not understand it, and deafness in their ears. Even if you call them to guidance, they will never be guided.
- 18:58. But your Lord is Oft-Forgiving, full of mercy. If He were to take them to task for what they have earned, He would indeed have hastened their punishment; but they have an appointed time, from which they will find no escape.
- 18:59. And those cities did We destroy when they did wrong; We set an appointed time for their destruction.

Here Allah tells us that there is no greater wrongdoing or evil than that of a person who is reminded of the revelations of Allah, to whom truth is made distinct from falsehood, and guidance from misguidance, and he is warned of a punishment and reminded of the reward, but he turns away and does not pay heed to that of which he was reminded, he does not give up what he was following, he forgets what his hands have sent on ahead of sins, and he fails to remember that the Knower of the unseen is always watching him. His wrongdoing is greater than that of the heedless one whom the revelations of Allah did not reach, and he was not reminded of them. Even though the latter is

also a wrongdoer, his wrongdoing is less serious than that of the former, because the one who commits sin despite his awareness and knowledge is worse than one who is not like that.

But Allah will punish him because of his turning away from His revelations, his forgetting about his sins and his being content to follow the path of evil, even though he is aware of that, by closing to him the doors of guidance and placing a cover over his heart that will prevent him from understanding the revelations, so that even if he hears them, he will be unable to understand them in a way that may reach his heart.

﴿and deafness in their ears﴾ that is, deafness that will prevent the revelations from reaching them, and will prevent them from hearing the revelations in such a way that could benefit them. If this is their situation, then there is no way they can be guided.

﴿Even if you call them to guidance, they will never be guided﴾ because the one for whom there is hope of a response to the one who calls him to guidance is the one who has no knowledge. As for these people, who saw then became blind, and they saw the path of truth as true but they shunned it, and they saw the path of misguidance as misguided but they followed it, and Allah punished them by closing their hearts and placing a seal upon them, there is no way at all that they could be guided.

This verse is aimed at scaring the one who shuns the truth after having known it: for a barrier could be set up between him and it, so that he would not be able to follow it after that. Nothing is more alarming or a greater deterrent than that.

Then Allah tells us of the vastness of His forgiveness and mercy, for He forgives sins and accepts the repentance of the one who repents, showering him with His mercy and enfolding him in His kindness. If He were to take people to task for what their hands have wrought of sins, He would hasten the punishment for them. But He is forbearing

and does not hasten the punishment; rather He always gives respite, but He does not forget. The consequences of sin are inevitable, even if they are delayed for a long time. Hence Allah says:

﴿but they have an appointed time, from which they will find no escape﴾ that is, they have an appointed time when they will be requited for their deeds; it is inevitable and they cannot escape it or find any refuge from it or steer clear of it.

This is His way of dealing with the earlier and later generations: He does not hasten the punishment for them; rather He calls them to repent and turn to Him. Then if they repent and turn to Him, He forgives them and has mercy upon them, and He removes the punishment from them. Otherwise, if they persist in their wrongdoing and stubbornness, and the time that He has appointed comes, He sends His punishment down upon them. Hence He says:

﴿And those cities did We destroy when they did wrong﴾ that is, because of their wrongdoing; it was not wrongdoing on Our part. ﴿We set an appointed time for their destruction﴾ that is, a preordained time that they cannot bring forward or put back.



﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِفَتَاهُ لَا أَبْرَحُ حَتَّىٰ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا ﴿٦٠﴾ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنَهُمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا ﴿٦١﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَاهُ إِنَّا غَدَاءٌ نَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِنْ سَفَرِنَا هَذَا نَصَبًا ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِذْ أَوَيْنَا إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ الْحُوتَ وَمَا أَنسَنِيهِ إِلَّا الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُ وَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿٦٣﴾ قَالَ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغُ فَارْتَدَّ عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا ﴿٦٤﴾﴾

(سورة الكهف: ٦٠-٦٤)

18:60. And [remember] when Moosâ said to his servant: I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas, even if it takes me years [of travel].

- 18:61. But when they reached the junction between them, they forgot about their fish, which made its way into the sea and swam away.
- 18:62. When they had travelled further on, Moosâ said to his servant: Bring us our morning meal; truly this journey of ours has exhausted us.
- 18:63. [The servant] said: Do you remember when we rested by the rock? I did indeed forget [to tell you about] the fish; it was none but the Shaytân who caused me to forget. It made its way into the sea in an amazing manner.
- 18:64. [Moosâ] said: That is what we were looking for. So they turned back, retracing their footsteps.

Here Allah tells us about His Prophet Moosâ (ﷺ) and his great eagerness to pursue goodness and seek knowledge. He said to his servant, who was constantly by his side at home and when travelling, whose name was Yoosha' ibn Noon, to whom Allah subsequently granted prophethood:

«I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas» that is, I will carry on travelling, even if that leads to lengthy hardship and I become exhausted, until I reach the junction of the two seas. That was the place at which, as Allah had revealed to him, he would find one of the knowledgeable slaves of Allah who possessed knowledge that Moosâ did not possess.

«even if it takes me years» and I have to travel a long distance. What is meant is that longing and eagerness prompted Moosâ to say these words to his servant. This is indicative of his unwavering resolve and that is why he fulfilled it.

«But when they» namely he and his servant «reached the junction between them, they forgot about their fish». They had with them a fish which was their provision and from which they used to eat. He had been promised that when he lost the fish, that is where they would find that slave of Allah for whom they were

looking. That fish made its way into the sea, and this was one of the signs.

The commentators said that when they reached that place, some of the sea water splashed onto that fish, which was their provision, then it made its way, by Allah's leave, into the sea and came to life with the other sea creatures.

When Moosâ and his servant passed beyond the junction between the two seas, Moosâ said to his servant: ﴿Bring us our morning meal; truly this journey of ours has exhausted us﴾ that is, we have become tired. That tiredness only began when they travelled beyond that point, otherwise the lengthy travel that had brought them to the junction between the two seas had not caused them to feel tired before that. This was one of the signs that indicated to Moosâ that what he sought was there. Their longing to reach that place had made the journey easy for them, but when they went beyond that point, they began to feel tired. When Moosâ said these words to his servant, the servant said:

﴿Do you remember when we rested by the rock? I did indeed forget [to tell you about] the fish﴾ that is, did you not know that when we stopped for the night beside that well-known rock, which was between the two seas, ﴿I did indeed forget [to tell you about] the fish; it was none but the Shaytân who caused me to forget. It made its way into the sea in an amazing manner﴾ that is, when it moved towards the sea and leapt into it, that was something amazing.

The servant said this to him, and Moosâ had a promise from Allah that when he lost the fish, he would find al-Khiḍr. So Moosâ said:

﴿That is what we were looking for﴾ that is, seeking ﴿So they turned back, retracing their footsteps﴾ and went back to the place where they had forgotten the fish. When they reached that place, they found one of the slaves of Allah, namely al-Khiḍr; he was a righteous slave, but he was not a Prophet, according to the correct view.



﴿ فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ عِبَادِنَا ءَاتَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِن لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا ﴾ (٦٥)  
 قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُعَلِّمَني مِمَّا عَلَّمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴿٦٦﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ  
 مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ، خَبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾ قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ  
 صَابِرًا وَلَا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالَ فَإِنِ اتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ أُحَدِّثَ  
 لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٧٠﴾ فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا قَالَ أَخَرَقَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ  
 أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا ﴿٧١﴾ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٢﴾ قَالَ لَا  
 تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرًا ﴿٧٣﴾ فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ  
 قَالَ أَقْتَلْتَنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرًا ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴿سورة الكهف: ٦٥-٧٤﴾

18:65. There they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us and to whom We had taught knowledge of Our own.

18:66. Moosâ said to him: May I follow you so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught?

18:67. The man said: You will never be able to have patience with me,

18:68. for how can you have patience with something that you cannot fully comprehend?

18:69. Moosâ said: You shall find me, if Allah wills, patient; and I will not disobey you in any matter.

18:70. The man said: Then if you follow me, do not ask me about anything until I mention it to you myself.

18:71. So they set out until, when they had boarded a boat, he scuttled it. Moosâ said: Have you scuttled it in order to drown its passengers? You have certainly done a dreadful thing!

18:72. The man said: Did I not say: You will never be able to have patience with me?

18:73. Moosâ said: Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten, and do not make it too difficult for me to follow you.

18:74. So they set out until, when they met a boy, he killed him. Moosâ said: Have you killed an innocent soul who killed no one? You have done a terrible thing!

«There they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us» that is, Allah had granted him special mercy, by virtue of which his knowledge increased and he did righteous deeds «and to whom We had taught knowledge of Our own». He was given knowledge that had not been given to Moosâ, although Moosâ (ﷺ) was more knowledgeable than him in most matters, especially matters of faith and the fundamentals of laws and regulations, because he was one of the Messengers of strong resolve, whom Allah favoured over all creation (of his own time) in terms of knowledge, righteous deeds and other things. When Moosâ met him, he presented his request to him, politely seeking his consent:

«May I follow you so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught?» That is, may I follow you on the basis that you teach me some of that sound knowledge that Allah has taught you, by which I may be guided and know the truth with regard to these matters? For Allah had given al-Khiḍr a great deal of inspiration and intuition, through which he could see into the hidden depths of many things that could even be hidden from Moosâ (ﷺ). Al-Khiḍr said to Moosâ: I will not refuse your request, but «You will never be able to have patience with me» that is, you will not be able to follow me and stay by my side, because you will see things that you will not be able to have patience with, things that outwardly appear to be evil, but inwardly are otherwise. Hence he said:

«for how can you have patience with something that you cannot fully comprehend?» that is, how can you be patient with a matter when you have no knowledge of either its hidden or apparent aspects and you do not know the purpose behind it or how it will unfold?

Moosâ said: «You shall find me, if Allah wills, patient; and I will not disobey you in any matter». This was resolve on his part, before he was put to the test; resolve is one thing and actually having patience is another matter altogether. Therefore Moosâ (ﷺ) was not able to be patient when he was put to the test.

At that point al-Khidr said to him: «Then if you follow me, do not ask me about anything until I mention it to you myself» that is, do not ask any question or raise any objection, until I am the one who tells you about it, at the time when it is appropriate to tell you. So he forbade him to ask him, but he promised to explain to him the reality of things.

«So they set out until, when they had boarded a boat, he scuttled it» that is, al-Khidr pulled out a plank of it, and he had a reason for doing that which he was going to explain, but Moosâ (ﷺ) could not be patient, because it appeared outwardly to be something bad, for it was damage to the boat which could have caused its passengers to drown. Hence Moosâ said:

«Have you scuttled it in order to drown its passengers? You have certainly done a dreadful thing!» That is, something serious and awful. This was due to lack of patience on his part, so al-Khidr said to him: «Did I not say: You will never be able to have patience with me?» That is, it has happened as I said it would. This was due to forgetfulness on Moosâ's part, so he said: «Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten, and do not make it too difficult for me to follow you» that is, do not be too hard on me, and be easy-going with me; this came about because of forgetfulness, so do not take me to task the first time. Thus he both admitted his error and asked for forgiveness for it, as if he was saying: you should not be harsh with your companion, O Khidr. So al-Khidr forgave him.

«So they set out until, when they met a boy, he» that is, al-Khidr «killed him». Moosâ became very angry and was overtaken by

religious zeal, when his companion killed a small boy who had done no wrong.

﴿Moosâ said: Have you killed an innocent soul who killed no one? You have done a terrible thing!﴾ For what evil could be greater than killing a small child who had done nothing wrong and had not killed anyone? The first time Moosâ had forgotten, but this was not forgetfulness; rather it was a lack of patience.



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## 18. Soorat al-Kahf

(continued)

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﴿ قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ لَكَ إِنَّا لَن نَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴾ ﴿٧٥﴾ قَالَ إِن سَأَلْتُكَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّن بَعْدِهَا  
فَلَا تُصَاحِبْنِي قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِن لَدُنِّي عُذْرًا ﴿٧٦﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٧٥-٧٦)

18:75. The man said: Did I not say to you: You will never be able to have patience with me?<sup>1</sup>

18:76. Moosâ said: If I ever ask you about anything after this, do not keep me in your company, for then you will have good reason [to part company].

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After al-Khiḍr killed the boy, and Moosâ (‘*alayhi as-salâm* – peace be upon him) had objected vehemently to what appeared to be a heinous act, al-Khiḍr said to him:

﴿Did I not say to you: You will never be able to have patience with me?﴾

Moosâ said to him: ﴿If I ever ask you about anything after this, do not keep me in your company﴾ that is, you will be justified for not keeping me in your company

﴿for then you will have good reason [to part company]﴾ and you will have done your best to keep me in your company.

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<sup>1</sup> The meanings of the verses of the Qur’an in this book (with some minor changes to the punctuation) have been translated by the translator. (Editor)



﴿فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَنِيَا أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ اسْتَطَعَمَا أَهْلَهَا فَأَبْوَأَ أَن يُضَيِّقُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْقُضَ فَأَقَامَهُ. قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ﴿٧٧﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف:

(٧٧)

18:77. So they set out until, when they came to the people of a town, they asked its people for food, but they refused to offer them hospitality. They found there a wall that was about to fall down, but he repaired it. Moosâ said: If you wished, you could have obtained some payment for it!

That is, they requested hospitality but the people did not welcome them.

﴿They found there a wall that was about to fall down﴾ that is, it was in poor repair and was about to collapse

﴿but he﴾ namely al-Khidr

﴿repaired it﴾ that is, he fixed it and restored it. Moosâ said to him:

﴿If you wished, you could have obtained some payment for it!﴾

That is, the people of this town did not give us any hospitality, even though that was required of them, but you restored this wall without any payment, when you were able to take payment for it! On this occasion Moosâ did not fulfil the promise he had made, so al-Khidr had good reason to part ways with him.



﴿قَالَ هَذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِمَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٨﴾﴾ أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسْكِينٍ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا ﴿٧٩﴾﴾ وَأَمَّا الْغُلَامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنِينَ فَخَشِينَا أَنْ يُرْهَقَهُمَا طُغْيَانًا

وَكَفَرًا ﴿٨٠﴾ فَأَرَدْنَا أَنْ يُبْدِلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِمَّا كَفَرُوا وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴿٨١﴾ وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ  
فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ  
رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنْزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۗ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ، عَن أَمْرِي  
ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾ ﴿سورة الكهف: ٧٨-٨٢﴾

- 18:78. The man said: This is the parting of the ways between me and you. Now I will explain to you the significance of that which you were unable to bear with patience.
- 18:79. As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who made their living on the sea; I wanted to damage it because [I knew that] there was a king ahead of them who was seizing every [sound] boat by force.
- 18:80. As for the boy, his parents were believers, and we feared that he would grieve them with his rebellion and ingratitude.
- 18:81. So we desired that their Lord should grant them another in his place, [a child] more righteous and more tender-hearted.
- 18:82. As for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them. Their father had been a righteous man, so your Lord willed that they should come of age and then extract their treasure – as a mercy from your Lord; I did not do it of my own accord. This is the significance of that which you were unable to bear with patience.

Al-Khidr said to Moosā: ﴿This is the parting of the ways between me and you﴾ for you had committed yourself to that, and now you have no excuse left and there is no way that you can continue to keep company with me.

﴿Now I will explain to you the significance of that which you were unable to bear with patience﴾ that is, I shall tell you about those things that you objected to me doing, and I will inform you of the reasons I had for what I did, for I have knowledge of how matters will unfold.

«As for the boat» that I scuttled, «it belonged to some poor people who made their living on the sea» which would prompt one to show kindness and compassion towards them.

«I wanted to damage it because [I knew that] there was a king ahead of them who was seizing every [sound] boat by force» that is, their route would take them past that unjust king, and he would seize unlawfully any sound boat, free of defect, that passed by him. So I wanted to scuttle it in order to make it defective, so that they would be safe from that wrongdoer.

«As for the boy» whom I killed, «his parents were believers, and we feared that he would grieve them with his rebellion and ingratitude». It had been decreed that if that boy had grown up, he would have grieved his parents with his rebellion and ingratitude; that is, he would have put pressure on them which could have led them to transgress and disbelieve, either because of their love for him, or because of their need for him, or because he would force them to do that. But I killed him, because I had knowledge of that, so as to protect the religious commitment of his believing parents. What benefit can be greater than this? Although it was hard for them to be deprived of their offspring, Allah (*Subhānahu wa Ta'ālā* – Glorified and Exalted is He) would give them other offspring who would be better than him. Hence he said:

«So we desired that their Lord should grant them another in his place, [a child] more righteous and more tender-hearted» that is, a righteous child who would uphold ties of kinship, for if the boy who was killed had grown up, he would have been very disobedient and cruel to them, and he would have forced them to disbelieve and transgress.

«As for the wall» that I repaired, «it belonged to two orphan boys in the town, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them. Their father had been a righteous man» that is, the situation required that I show kindness and compassion towards them, because they were so young and had lost their father. Moreover, Allah protected them because of the righteousness of their father.

﴿so your Lord willed that they should come of age and then extract their treasure﴾ that is, therefore I demolished the wall, took out their treasure that was beneath it, then I rebuilt it for them for free.

﴿as a mercy from your Lord﴾ that is, what I did was a mercy from Allah, that Allah bestowed upon His slave al-Khidr.

﴿I did not do it of my own accord﴾ that is, I did not do anything on my own initiative or just because I wanted to do it; rather that was by the mercy of Allah and at His command.

﴿This﴾ that I have explained to you ﴿is the significance of that which you were unable to bear with patience﴾.

From this amazing story we learn a number of lessons, rulings and principles, some of which we will note here:

- The virtue of knowledge and travelling to seek it. This is the most important thing, for Moosâ (ﷺ) travelled a great distance and went through hardship to seek it. He gave up his stay with the Children of Israel, whom he was teaching and guiding, and chose to travel in order to increase his knowledge.
- One should prioritise, starting with the most important matters, for increasing knowledge – for an individual – is more important than neglecting that and being preoccupied with teaching others, without increasing one’s own knowledge. But combining the two matters is better.
- It is permissible to hire a servant whether one is at home or travelling, so that the servant may take care of one’s needs and one may have time to rest and relax, as Moosâ did.
- With regard to the one who travels in pursuit of knowledge or for the purpose of jihad and the like, if there is a purpose to be served by telling about his aim and destination, telling about it is more appropriate than concealing it, because disclosing it brings benefits such as making full preparation for the journey, engaging in matters with proper understanding of what is involved, and manifesting the virtue of this great act

of worship, as Moosâ said: ﴿I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas, even if it takes me years [of travel]﴾ (18: 60). Similarly, the Prophet (ﷺ – blessings and peace be upon him) informed his Companions – when he went on the campaign to Tabook – where he was headed, even though his usual habit was to conceal his campaign plans. This is a matter that is to be done as dictated by interests.

- Evil and its causes may be ascribed to the Shayṭân, because of his temptation and making evil fair-seeming, although all things happen by the will and decree of Allah, because the servant of Moosâ said: ﴿it was none but the Shayṭân who caused me to forget﴾ (18: 63).
- It is permissible for a person to express what he feels as a result of human nature, such as exhaustion, hunger or thirst, so long as that is not by way of discontent, if it is true, because Moosâ said: ﴿truly this journey of ours has exhausted us﴾ (18: 62).
- It is recommended for a person's servant to be smart, alert and versatile, so that he may help him to achieve what he wants to do.
- It is recommended for a person to feed his servant the food that he himself eats, and for them to eat together, because the apparent meaning of Moosâ's words, ﴿Bring us our morning meal﴾ (18: 62), refers to both of them and suggests that they would eat together.
- Divine help may be granted to a person commensurate with the extent to which he is doing what is enjoined upon him, and the one who is doing something in accordance with the command of Allah will receive help in a way that others do not, because of the words: ﴿truly this journey of ours has exhausted us﴾ (18: 62). This refers to the journey beyond the junction of the two seas. Before that, he did not complain of exhaustion, even though he had travelled a long way, because that was travel in

a true sense. As for the subsequent travel, what appears to be the case is that it was part of a day, because they lost the fish when they got to the rock. It seems that they spent the night at the rock, then they set off the next day, until the time for the morning meal came, when Moosâ said to his servant: ﴿Bring us our morning meal﴾ (18: 62). At that point he remembered that he had forgotten the fish in the place that was the destination they had been seeking.

- The person whom they met was not a Prophet; rather he was a righteous slave of Allah, because he is described as being a true slave of Allah. Moreover, he mentioned what Allah had blessed him with of mercy and knowledge, but no mention is made of being a messenger or Prophet. If he had been a Prophet, that would have been mentioned as it was mentioned in the case of others.

With regard to his words at the end of the story, ﴿I did not do it of my own accord﴾ (18: 82), this does not indicate that he was a Prophet; rather it indicates that he was inspired, as may happen in the case of people other than Prophets, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿We inspired the mother of Moosâ, saying: Breastfeed him...﴾  
(*al-Qaşaş* 28: 7)

– and:

﴿And your Lord inspired the bee [saying]: Make your homes in the mountains...﴾ (*an-Nahl* 16: 68)

The knowledge that Allah teaches to His slaves is of two types: knowledge acquired through effort and striving, and knowledge received directly from Allah, without effort, which Allah bestows upon whomever He will of His slaves, because He says: ﴿to whom We had taught knowledge of Our own﴾ (18: 65).

- One should show proper etiquette towards teachers, and the seeker of knowledge should address his teacher in a gentle

manner, because Moosâ (ﷺ) said: ﴿May I follow you so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught?﴾ (18: 66). He spoke to him in a polite and gentle manner, asking permission, as if he was saying: Will you give me permission to do that or not? And he affirmed that he would learn from him. This is in contrast to those who address their teachers in a rough or arrogant manner, not highlighting their need of the teachers' knowledge; rather they claim to be working together with them. Indeed some may think that they are teaching the teachers, when in fact they are extremely ignorant. Showing humility towards the teacher and expressing one's need of his teaching is one of the most beneficial approaches for the student.

- One who is superior may show humility to learn from one who is of lower status than him. Moosâ (ﷺ) was undoubtedly of higher status than al-Khiḍr.
- A knowledgeable and virtuous person may learn a branch of knowledge that he does not know from one who does possess that knowledge, even if he is many degrees lower than him in terms of overall knowledge. Moosâ (ﷺ) was one of the Messengers of strong resolve to whom Allah had granted knowledge that He did not grant to others, but with regard to this particular branch of knowledge, al-Khiḍr possessed knowledge that Moosâ did not; therefore he was very keen to learn from him. Based on that, if a scholar of hadith or *fiqh* is lacking in knowledge of grammar or morphology or some other branch of knowledge, he should not refrain from learning it from one who is skilled therein, even if he is not a scholar of Hadith or *fiqh*.
- One should attribute knowledge and other virtues to Allah (ﷻ), and affirm them, and give thanks to Allah for them, because Moosâ said: ﴿so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught﴾ (18: 66), that is, that knowledge which Allah (ﷻ) has taught you.

- Beneficial knowledge is that which guides to good. Any knowledge in which there is guidance to the ways of goodness and warning against the ways of evil, or is a means of achieving that, is regarded as beneficial knowledge. All other knowledge is either harmful or of no benefit, because Moosâ said: ﴿so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught﴾ (18: 66).
- Whoever does not have the patience to accompany a scholar and learn from him, and is not able to be steadfast in that, will miss out, according to the degree of his lack of patience, on a great deal of knowledge. Whoever has no patience will not acquire any knowledge, but the one who resorts to patience and adheres to it will attain all that he strives for, because al-Khidr said – when he explained to Moosâ why he could not learn from him – that he would never be able to have patience with him (18: 67).
- The primary means of attaining patience is having full knowledge and understanding of the matter with which he is instructed to be patient. Otherwise if he is not aware of it or does not realise its purpose and consequences, or its benefit and outcome, he will have no reason to be patient, because al-Khidr said: ﴿for how can you have patience with something that you cannot fully comprehend?﴾ (18: 68). So he stated that the reason for his lack of patience was his lack of understanding of the matter.
- It is enjoined to be deliberate and certain, and not to be hasty in passing judgement concerning any matter until one knows what is the aim behind it and the goal that is sought.
- One should connect matters of the future – that have to do with what a person wants to do – to the divine will, and no one should say about anything, “I am going to do that in the future” without also saying “if Allah wills”.
- Resolving to do a thing is not the same as doing it, because Moosâ (ﷺ) said: ﴿You shall find me, if Allah wills, patient﴾ (18: 69). He prepared himself to be patient, but he did not do it.

- If the teacher sees that there is an interest to be served by instructing the student not to ask questions about some things until the teacher is the one who explains them to him, then there should be a reason for it such as the student not being able to understand it yet, or because he told the student not to ask about minor details when enquiring about matters because other questions may be more important, or because the student is not able to comprehend it, or because he is asking a question that has nothing to do with the topic under discussion.
- It is permissible to travel by sea, so long as there is no fear of drowning.
- The one who forgets is not called to account for his forgetfulness, whether with regard to the rights of Allah or the rights of people, because Moosâ said: ﴿Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten﴾ (18: 73).
- We should accept people as they are with regard to their attitude and behaviour, and accept what they are happy to give when dealing with them. We should not burden them with more than they can cope with, or put undue pressure on them, because that will put them off and make them feel fed up with us. Rather we should accept them as they are, so that dealing with them will be easy.
- People should be judged as they appear to be, and rulings on material matters, such as wealth, life and so on, should be based on what appears to be the case. Moosâ (ﷺ) denounced al-Khiḍr for scuttling the boat and killing the boy because these things appeared to be wrong, so Moosâ (ﷺ) should not have kept quiet about them, except in this case when he was accompanying al-Khiḍr. So he hastened to issue his ruling based on what is usually the case, and he did not pay attention to this extraordinary situation that required him to be patient and not be hasty in denouncing.

- The important and sublime ruling is that the greater evil may be warded off by a lesser evil, and a greater interest may be served by foregoing a lesser interest. Killing the boy was bad, but letting him live until he caused his parents to recant their religion was a greater evil. Letting the boy live and not killing him, and protecting his life, may have been regarded as something good, but what was better was to protect the religious commitment and faith of his parents. Therefore al-Khidr killed him. Many guidelines and benefits come under the heading of this general ruling, so when there are conflicting matters, they all come under this ruling.
- Another important principle with regard to one man handling the wealth of another is that if it is done in a manner that serves the latter's interests and wards off harm, it is permissible for him to do that, even without permission and even if that involves causing some damage to the property of the other person, such as when al-Khidr scuttled the boat in order to render it defective, so that it would be safe from being seized unlawfully by the unjust king. Based on that, if a fire or flood or the like occurs in the house or property of a man, then it is permissible to damage part of the property or demolish part of the house for the sake of saving the rest. In fact that is prescribed, so as to protect the wealth and property of the other person. Similarly, if a wrongdoer wants to take the property of that other person, so one gives him some of the wealth in order to ransom the rest, that is permissible, even without permission.
- It is permissible to make a living on the sea just as it is permissible on land, because al-Khidr said: ﴿who made their living on the sea﴾ (18: 79) and Allah did not denounce what they did.
- A poor person may have wealth that is not sufficient to meet his needs, and that does not cancel out the description of him as poor, because Allah tells us that these poor people had a boat.

- Killing is one of the worst of sins, because Moosâ said with regard to the killing of the boy: ﴿You have done a terrible thing!﴾ (18: 74).
- Killing in legal retribution (*qiṣâṣ*)<sup>2</sup> is not an evil deed, because he said: ﴿Have you killed an innocent soul who killed no one?﴾ (18: 74).
- Allah will protect the righteous person himself and will protect his offspring.
- Serving righteous people and anyone who is connected to them is better than serving others, because al-Khiḍr explained the reason why he extracted the treasure of the two boys and rebuilt their wall as being that the father had been a righteous man.
- One should use proper etiquette with Allah (ﷻ) by choosing the proper words. Al-Khiḍr attributed the act of damaging the boat to himself, when he said: ﴿I wanted to damage it﴾ (18: 79). But in the case of good, he attributed it to Allah (ﷻ), because he said: ﴿so your Lord willed that they should come of age and then extract their treasure – as a mercy from your Lord﴾ (18: 82). This is like when Ibrâheem (ﷺ) said:
 

﴿When I am sick He heals me.﴾ (*ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 80*)

– and when the *jinn* said:

﴿We do not know whether ill is intended for those on earth, or their Lord intends good for them.﴾ (*al-Jinn 72: 10*)

– even though everything happens by the will and decree of Allah.
- A person should not leave his companion under any circumstances unless he has made clear to him what he should not do, warns him against doing so and explains what he did wrong, as al-Khiḍr did with Moosâ.

<sup>2</sup> Wherever possible, Arabic terms have been translated into English. In cases where we have chosen to retain the Arabic, the transliterated word or phrase is shown in italics the first time it appears in the text. The term is also defined in the glossary found at the end of this book. (Editor)

- Going along with one's companions with regard to things that are not prohibited is a means of companionship lasting and becoming stronger, just as lack of such harmony leads to the end of companionship.
- These things that al-Khidr did were the result of the pure divine decree that Allah caused to occur at the hands of this righteous slave, so that by means of this story people may come to understand the subtlety of the divine decree, and that Allah may decree things that a person dislikes very much but they are good for his religious commitment, as in the case of the boy, or they are good for his worldly interests, as in the case of the boat. Thus He shows examples of His kindness and generosity, so that people may understand and be fully content with the divine decree that may hurt.



﴿وَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٨٣﴾ إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾ فَأَتْبَعَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَقْرِبَ السَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ وَوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا قَوْمًا قُلْنَا يَا ذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِمَّا أَنْ تُعَذِّبَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ تَتَّخِذَ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا ﴿٨٦﴾ قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ نُرِيدُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا ثَكْرًا ﴿٨٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُ جَزَاءُ الْحَسَنَىٰ وَسَنُقُولُ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا ﴿٨٨﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف:

(٨٨-٨٣)

- 18:83. They ask you [O Muhammad] about Dhul-Qarnayn. Say: I will tell you something about him.
- 18:84. Verily We established him in the land and gave him the means to achieve all things.
- 18:85. He pursued a certain course
- 18:86. until, when he reached the far west, he found the sun setting in a dark sea, and he found a people nearby. We said: O Dhul-

Qarnayn, [it is up to you] whether you punish them or treat them kindly.

18:87. He said: As for the one who does wrong [and persists therein], we will punish him; then he will be brought back to his Lord, and He will punish him with a terrible punishment.

18:88. But as for the one who believes and does righteous deeds, he will have the best reward, and we will command him to do what is easy for him.

The People of the Book or the polytheists had asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about the story of Dhul-Qarnayn, so Allah instructed him to say:

«I will tell you something about him», some useful information and amazing stories. In other words, I will tell you about him something that will be a reminder and a lesson for you. As for other things about him, he did not tell them that.

«Verily We established him in the land» Allah (ﷻ) gave him dominion and authority in different parts of the land, where people submitted to his leadership.

«and gave him the means to achieve all things. He pursued a certain course» that is, Allah gave him the means of achieving what he achieved, that enabled him to gain dominion in distant lands and enabled him to reach the furthest inhabited regions, and he used the means that Allah had given him in a proper manner. Not everyone who has means available to him uses those means, and not everyone is able to use the means available to him. If a person has the means of achieving something and uses them, he will attain his goal, but if both factors – or one of them – are absent, he will not attain it.

Allah does not tell us what these means that He gave him were, and His Messenger (ﷺ) does not tell us either. There are no reports that could give any information regarding that. Therefore we cannot but keep quiet about them and not pay any attention to what the narrators

of reports from Jewish sources and others mention. But we know in general terms that many strong means and measures were available to him, through which he acquired a great army, with huge numbers of men and equipment, and highly disciplined. By means of that he was able to suppress his enemies and it was made easy for him to reach the east and west of the earth and other regions thereof. Allah gave him the means of reaching the place where the sun sets, until he saw the sun with his own eyes as if it was setting in a dark – that is, black – sea. This is what a person would usually see if what is between him and the sun as it is setting is water; he would see it appearing to set into the water itself, although it is far away from the water. At that place – that is, the place where the sun set – he found a people.

﴿We said: O Dhul-Qarnayn, [it is up to you] whether you punish them or treat them kindly﴾. That is: either you may punish them, by killing them, beating them, taking them captive, and the like; or you may treat them kindly. He was given the choice between these two options, because what appears to be the case is that they were either disbelievers or evildoers, or among them there were some who were like that, because if they had been believers and not evildoers, he would not have been given the option of punishing them. Dhul-Qarnayn knew how to deal with people on the basis of *shar‘i* teachings, for which he deserves praise, because Allah guided him to that. So he said: I shall divide them into two groups:

﴿He said: As for the one who does wrong﴾ by disbelieving, ﴿[and persists therein], we will punish him; then he will be brought back to his Lord, and He will punish him with a terrible punishment﴾ that is, he will have two punishments, one in this world and one in the hereafter.

﴿But as for the one who believes and does righteous deeds, he will have the best reward﴾ that is, paradise will be his and he will be in good standing before Allah, as a reward on the Day of Resurrection.

﴿and we will command him to do what is easy for him﴾ that is, we will treat him kindly, speak gently to him and be easy going with him. This indicates that Dhul-Qarnayn was a righteous, knowledgeable and just king, as he dealt with each person according to his situation, which is in accordance with what is pleasing to Allah.



﴿ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿٨٩﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطَّلُعُ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ لَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهَا سِتْرًا ﴿٩٠﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ وَقَدْ أَحَطْنَا بِمَا لَدَيْهِ خُبْرًا ﴿٩١﴾ ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿٩٢﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ السَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا لَّا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ قَوْلًا ﴿٩٣﴾ قَالُوا يَنْذَا الْقَرْنَيْنَ إِنْ يَا جُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا ﴿٩٤﴾ قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا ﴿٩٥﴾ ءَأَتُونِي زُبُرَ الْحَدِيدِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ انْفُخُوا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ ءَأَتُونِي أُفْرِغَ عَلَيْهِ قَطْرًا ﴿٩٦﴾ فَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا أَن يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا ﴿٩٧﴾ قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّي فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا ﴿٩٨﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٨٩-٩٨)

18:89. Then he pursued another course

18:90. until, when he reached the far east, he found the sun rising on a people for whom We had provided no shelter from it.

18:91. And so it was; and We had full knowledge of all the means available to him.

18:92. Then he pursued another course

18:93. until, when he arrived between the two mountains, he found beyond them a people who could scarcely understand a word.

18:94. They said: O Dhul-Qarnayn, Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are spreading mischief in the land. May we give you some payment in return for your constructing a barrier between us and them?

- 18:95. He said: What my Lord has given me is better [than what you would give me]. But help me with manpower and equipment, and I will construct a fortified barrier between you and them.
- 18:96. Bring me blocks of iron. Then when he had filled the gap between the two mountain-sides, [he said]: Blow [with your bellows]. Then when he had made it glow like fire, he said: Bring me molten copper to pour over it.
- 18:97. Thus [Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj] were made powerless to scale it or bore their way through it.
- 18:98. Dhul-Qarnayn said: This is a mercy from my Lord. But when the time appointed by my Lord comes, He will level it. The promise of my Lord is ever true.

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When he reached the setting place of the sun, he turned around and came back, heading towards the place of its rising, using all the means that Allah had made available to him. Then he reached the place where the sun rises, where ﴿he found the sun rising on a people for whom We had provided no shelter from it﴾ that is, he found it rising upon a people who had no shelter from the sun, either because they did not have houses, because they were very primitive and wild, and were not civilised, or because the sun was always above them and never set completely, as happens in some parts of the world. So he arrived at a place of which the people of the earth had no knowledge and had never tried to reach it. All of that happened by the decree and knowledge of Allah. Hence He says:

﴿And so it was; and We had full knowledge of all the means available to him﴾ that is, We had full knowledge of the resources and great means that he had at his disposal, and We were with him by Our knowledge, wherever he went.

﴿Then he pursued another course until, when he arrived between the two mountains﴾. The commentators said that he went from the east, heading north, and he arrived between the two mountains. There

was a chain of mountains that was well known at that time, which formed a barrier between Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj and other people. Beyond the two mountains he found a people who could hardly understand any words because they spoke a foreign language, and because they were foreign in their way of thinking. Allah had given Dhul-Qarnayn knowledge by means of which he could understand the language of those people and they could talk to one another. They complained to him of the harm caused by Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj, who were two great nations among the sons of Adam. Those people said:

«Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are spreading mischief in the land» by killing, seizing wealth, and so on.

«May we give you some payment» that is, a fee or wages

«in return for your constructing a barrier between us and them?» This indicates that they were not able to build the barrier by themselves, but they realised that Dhul-Qarnayn was able to do it, so they offered him payment to build it, and told him the reason for it, which was that Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj were spreading mischief in the land. Dhul-Qarnayn was not a man who was greedy for money, and he had no desire for worldly gain, nor would he turn away from doing what was in the best interests of his subjects; rather his aim was to do what was right for them. Therefore he responded to their request, because it served the interests of these people, but he did not take any payment from them and he gave thanks to his Lord for enabling him to do it. He said to them:

«He said: What my Lord has given me is better» that is, better than what you are offering and what you would give me; but I ask you to help me with your physical strength and labour

«and I will construct a fortified barrier between you and them» to prevent them from crossing to you.

«Bring me blocks of iron» that is, pieces of iron, which they brought to him

«Then when he had filled the gap between the two mountain-sides» that is, the two mountains between which he built the barrier «[he said]: Blow [with your bellows]» on the fire, to let it reach the greatest intensity of heat. They used the bellows for that, so that the heat would become greater and melt the copper. When the copper had melted, which he wanted to pour between the blocks of iron, «he said: Bring me molten copper to pour over it». He poured the molten copper over it, and the barrier became extremely solid, and the people beyond it were protected by it from the harm of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj.

«Thus [Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj] were made powerless to scale it or bore their way through it» that is, they were not able and did not have the strength to climb it because it was so high, or to bore through it because it was so solid and strong. When he did this good deed and great favour, he attributed the blessing to the One Who bestowed it, and said:

«This is a mercy from my Lord» that is, it is by His grace and kindness to me.

This is how righteous rulers are: when Allah blesses them with great favours, it increases their gratitude and acknowledgement of the blessings of Allah. Likewise, Sulaymân (ﷺ) said, when the throne of the Queen of Saba' (Sheba) was brought to him despite the great distance:

«...This is a favour from my Lord, to test whether I will be grateful or ungrateful...» (*an-Naml* 27: 40)

This is in contrast to those who are arrogant and proud, and who want to prove themselves in the land; great blessings only increase them in insolence and arrogance, as happened in the case of Qâroon when Allah granted him treasure, the keys of which would weigh down a group of strong men (28: 76); he said:

«...This has been given to me only because of knowledge that I possess...» (*al-Qasas* 28: 78)

«But when the time appointed by my Lord comes» that is, the time for the emergence of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj,  
 «He will level it» that is, that well-built barrier; He will cause it to collapse and make it level with the earth.  
 «The promise of my Lord is ever true».



﴿ وَتَرْكَنَّا بَعْضُهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَهُمْ جَمْعًا ﴿٩٩﴾ وَعَرَضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرْضًا ﴿١٠٠﴾ الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَن ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا ﴿١٠١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٩٩-١٠١)

- 18:99. On that day We will leave them to surge like waves against one another. The Trumpet will be blown, then We will gather them all together.
- 18:100. On that day We will display hell, plain to see, for the disbelievers,
- 18:101. those whose eyes were blind to My signs and they could not bear to hear [the message of truth].

It may be that the pronoun (them) refers to Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj, and when they emerge against the people – because of their large numbers and their reaching all parts of the earth – they will surge like waves against one another, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

«Until, when Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj have been let loose and come rushing from all directions.» (al-Anbiya' 21: 96)

Or it may be that the pronoun refers to all creatures on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be gathered together in such great numbers that they will surge like waves against one another, because of their terror and the great earthquake, based on the fact that Allah says here:  
 «The Trumpet will be blown, then We will gather them all together. On that day We will display hell, plain to see, for the disbelievers,

those whose eyes were blind to My signs and they could not bear to hear [the message of truth]». That is, when Isrâfeel blows into the Trumpet, Allah will restore souls to bodies, then He will resurrect them and gather them together for the standing of the Day of Resurrection, the first and the last, disbelievers and believers, so that they may be questioned and brought to account, and be requited for their deeds. As for the disbelievers – of all kinds – hell will be their recompense, to abide therein forever.

Hence Allah says: «On that day We will display hell, plain to see, for the disbelievers». This is like the verse in which He says:

«And hell will be placed in full view of those who went astray.»  
(*ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 91*)

That is, it will be presented to them, to be their abode, and so that they might taste the pain of its chains, blaze, hot water and bitter cold, and taste the punishment that will stun and overwhelm them, and cause their ears to become deaf. This is the outcome of and requital for their deeds, for in this world their eyes «were blind to My signs» that is, they turned away from the wise reminder and the noble Qur'an, and said:

«...Our hearts are covered [and sealed] against that to which you call us...» (*Fuṣṣilat 41: 5*)

– and over their eyes there were covers which prevented them from seeing the beneficial signs of Allah, as He says elsewhere:

«...and over their eyes is a cover...» (*al-Baqarah 2: 7*)

«and they could not bear to hear» that is, they could not bear to hear the verses of Allah which lead to faith, because of their resentment towards the Qur'an and the Messenger (ﷺ), for the one who is filled with resentment cannot bear to hear the words of the one whom he resents. Once the ways of knowledge and goodness are blocked to them, they have no way to hear or see, and no reasoning that could benefit them. They had disbelieved in Allah, denied His

revelations and rejected His Messengers, so they deserved hell and a hapless journey's end.



﴿أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِنْ دُونِي أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنَّا أَعَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ تَرَا﴾  
 ﴿١٠٢﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٠٢)

18:102. Do the disbelievers think that they can take My slaves [whom they worship]<sup>3</sup> as allies instead of Me? Verily We have prepared hell as a dwelling place for the disbelievers.

This is proof and evidence of the falseness of the claim made by the disbelieving polytheists who regarded some of the Prophets and close friends of Allah as so-called partners of Allah whom they worshipped, and claimed that they were their allies who would save them from the punishment of Allah and enable them to attain His reward, when they had disbelieved in Allah and His Messengers.

Allah says to them, in the form of a question by way of denunciation, highlighting the falseness of their view on a rational basis:

﴿Do the disbelievers think that they can take My slaves [whom they worship] as allies instead of Me?﴾ That is, that cannot happen, for no close friend of Allah could ever take an enemy of Allah as an ally, for the close friends of Allah are in agreement with Allah, with regard to what He loves and is pleased with, and what He hates and is angered by. According to this meaning, this verse is akin to the passage in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿On the day when He gathers them all together He will say to the angels: Was it you that these people used to worship? They will say:

<sup>3</sup> It is not possible for one who opposes Allah to take as an ally any of His close friends whom they worship, such as 'Eesâ (Jesus), the angels or the righteous.

Glory be to You! You are our Close Friend, not they... ﴿Saba' 34: 40-41﴾

Whoever claims that he is taking a close friend of Allah as his friend and ally, when he is an enemy to Allah, is lying.

Or it may be – and this is more correct – that what is meant is: do those who disbelieve in Allah and oppose His Messengers think that they can take, instead of Allah, allies who will support them and benefit them instead of Allah, and ward off harm from them? This is wrong thinking, for no created being has any power to bring benefit or cause harm. This is like the verses in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Say: Call on those whom you claim [to be gods]<sup>4</sup> besides Him; they have no power to relieve you of harm or divert it from you.﴾  
(*al-Isrâ' 17: 56*)

– and:

﴿Those on whom they call besides Allah have no power of intercession...﴾ (*az-Zukhruf 43: 86*)

And there are similar verses in which it says that the one who takes any ally other than Him for support and protection is misguided and hopeless, and he will not attain any of that for which he hopes.

﴿Verily We have prepared hell as a dwelling place for the disbelievers﴾ – what a bad place of dwelling.



﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٣﴾ الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعِيَّهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٤﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ. فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ

<sup>4</sup> Those who are falsely worshipped, who are referred to in this and the following verse, are 'Eesâ, 'Uzayr and the angels; they have no power to benefit or harm in and of themselves, and are themselves devoted slaves of Allah.

﴿لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَزْنًا﴾ ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ مَن كَفَرَ وَأَتَّخَذُوا آيَاتِي وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

(سورة الكهف: ١٠٣-١٠٦)

- 18:103. Say: Shall we tell you who will be the greatest losers in terms of deeds,  
 18:104. those whose efforts in the life of this world are wasted, while they think that what they do is right?  
 18:105. They are the ones who reject the signs of their Lord and deny the Meeting with Him. Their deeds will come to nothing and on the Day of Resurrection, We will not give them any weight.<sup>5</sup>  
 18:106. That will be their recompense, hell, because they disbelieved and made a mockery of My signs and My Messengers.

That is: say, O Muhammad (ﷺ), to the people, by way of warning: shall I tell you who will be the greatest losers in terms of deeds?

«those whose efforts in the life of this world are wasted» that is, all the deeds that they did, thinking that they were doing good, will become worthless and be rendered invalid. So how about the deeds that they do, knowing that they are wrong, and that they are deeds of opposition and enmity towards Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ)? Who are these people whose deeds will come to nothing?

«...who lose their own souls and their families on the Day of Resurrection. That is indeed manifest loss.» (az-Zumar 39: 15)

«They are the ones who reject the signs of their Lord and deny the Meeting with Him» that is, they deny the Qur'anic verses and visible signs that point to the necessity of believing in Him, His angels, His Messengers, His Books and the Last Day.

«Their deeds will come to nothing» because of that

<sup>5</sup> That is, they will be of no significance and the Balance will not be set up for them because they will have no good deeds to be weighed. (al-Bayḍāwī)

﴿and on the Day of Resurrection, We will not give them any weight﴾ because the benefit of them having weight becomes apparent when good deeds are weighed against bad deeds to see which will outweigh the other. These people will have no good deeds to their credit, because they did not fulfil the necessary condition, which is having faith, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿But whoever does righteous deeds and is a believer need have no fear of being wronged or deprived [of his just recompense].﴾ (Tā Hâ 20: 112)

But their deeds will be counted and they will be made to admit to them, and they will be disgraced because of them before all the people, then they will be punished for them. Hence Allah says:

﴿That will be their recompense﴾ that is, their deeds will come to nothing and will not be given any weight on the Day of Resurrection, because they are insignificant and worthless as a result of their disbelief in the revelations of Allah, and because of their mockery and ridicule thereof, when what is required with regard to the revelations and Messengers of Allah is to believe in them completely, venerate them and act in accordance with them. But these people turned everything upside down, therefore they will find themselves in trouble, in a wretched position and subjected to punishment.

Having described the fate and deeds of the disbelievers, Allah now tells us of the deeds of the believers and their ultimate destination:



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّٰلِحٰتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا لَا يَبْغُوْنَ عَنْهَا حَوْلًا ﴿١٠٨﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٠٧-١٠٨)

18:107. But those who believe and do righteous deeds will have gardens of paradise as a dwelling place,

18:108. to abide therein forever, with no desire to leave.

That is, those who believe in their hearts and do righteous deeds with their physical faculties. This includes all of the religion, beliefs, actions, basic principles and minor issues, both outward and inward. These people, regardless of their varying levels of faith and righteous deeds, will have *Jannât al-Firdaws* (translated here as «gardens of paradise»).

It may be that what is meant by *Jannât al-Firdaws* is the highest part of paradise, the middle and best part, and that this reward is for those who perfected their faith and righteous deeds. They are the Prophets and those who are close to Allah.

Or it may be that what is meant is all the levels of paradise, so this reward includes people of faith of all levels, those who are close to Allah, the righteous, and the ordinary believers, each according to his status. This is the more likely of the two meanings to be correct, because the wording is general in meaning, and the word *jannât* (translated here as «gardens») appears in the plural, connected to *al-firdaws*, which refers to a garden containing grapevines or trees with many long, twisted branches, and this is applicable to all of paradise.

*Jannât al-Firdaws* (the gardens of paradise) are the dwelling places of those who believed and did righteous deeds, and what dwelling place could be better or greater than these dwellings which include everything that brings joy to hearts and souls, and physical pleasures? In it is that which will delight hearts and eyes, of elegant dwellings, verdant gardens, fruitful trees, singing birds, delicious food, refreshing drinks, beautiful women, plentiful servants, flowing rivers, splendid scenery, beauty of all types and eternal bliss.

The best and greatest of that, which will bring the greatest joy, is nearness to the Most Gracious and attaining His pleasure, which is the greatest of the delights of paradise, and the sublime joy of seeing His noble Countenance and hearing the words of the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

How beautiful, perfect and everlasting those dwellings will be, that are too great to be described by man and are more splendid than anything that could cross his mind. If people really knew even a little of these delights, they would be filled with longing, and their souls would feel the pain of homesickness for that place, and they would have rushed towards it in groups and singly; they would not have preferred to it this transient world with its tarnished, diminishing joys, and they would not have allowed any moment to be wasted and lost, when any moment of joy there is equal to millennia of joy in this world. But heedlessness prevailed, faith was weak, knowledge was lacking and willpower was absent, which is the reason for the status quo. There is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Most High, the Almighty.

﴿to abide therein forever﴾ this is the ultimate blessing, that joy and delight therein are perfect, and part of that perfection is that they will never cease.

﴿with no desire to leave﴾ that is, they will never want to depart or move from there, because they do not see anything but that which amazes and delights them, and gives them joy and happiness, and they cannot imagine any bliss greater than that in which they are.



﴿قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مَدَادًا لَكَلِمَتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ نُنْفِدَ كَلِمَتِ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا﴾

(سورة الكهف: ١٠٩) ﴿١٨﴾

18:109. Say [O Muhammad]: If the sea were ink for writing the words of my Lord, it would dry up before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even if We brought another sea like it to replenish it.

That is, tell them about the greatness of the Creator and the vastness and encompassing nature of His attributes, and that people can never fully comprehend any of them.

«If the sea» in this world  
 «were ink for writing the words of my Lord» that is, and the trees of this world, from the first to the last of them, all the trees in the cities and in the wilderness, were pens  
 «it would dry up» and the pens would break  
 «before the words of my Lord were exhausted». This is a great thing that no one can fully comprehend.

Elsewhere, Allah says:

«If all the trees on earth were pens, and the sea [was ink], replenished by seven more seas, the words of Allah would still not be exhausted. Verily, Allah is Almighty, Most Wise.» (*Luqmân* 31: 27)

This is by way of making the matter easier to understand, because these things are created and all created things will cease to be. As for the words of Allah, they are among His attributes, and His attributes are not created, and they have no limit and no end. Whatever greatness and vastness people can imagine, Allah is above that, and the same applies to all the attributes of Allah (ﷻ), such as His knowledge, His wisdom, His power and His mercy. If all the knowledge of created beings, from the first to the last, the inhabitants of the heavens and the inhabitants of earth, were put together, in comparison to the knowledge of the Almighty it would be less than the amount of water picked up by a bird that came to the shore and dipped its beak in the ocean, in comparison to the amount of water contained in that ocean. Allah is possessed of great and perfect attributes:

«That the final destination is with your Lord.» (*an-Najm* 53: 42)



﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَجِدْتُ مِنَ كَانِ يَرْجُو إِقْبَاءَ رَبِّهِ، فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١١٠)

18:110. Say [O Muhammad]: I am but a human being like yourselves, [except that] it has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and include no one else in the worship due to his Lord.

﴿Say﴾ O Muhammad (ﷺ), to the disbelievers and others

﴿I am but a human being like yourselves﴾ that is, I am not divine and I have no share in dominion, or any knowledge of the unseen, nor do I possess the treasures of Allah (cf. 11: 31).

﴿I am but a human being like yourselves﴾, one of the slaves of my Lord

﴿[except that] it has been revealed to me that your God is One God﴾ that is, I have been favoured over you by means of the revelation that Allah has bestowed upon me, the main message of which is to tell you that your God is One God, with no partner or associate, and no one deserves an atom's worth of worship but He. And I call you to do deeds that will bring you closer to Him, earn you His reward and ward off His punishment from you. Hence Allah says:

﴿So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds﴾ that are in accordance with the laws of Allah, both obligatory and recommended deeds.

﴿and include no one else in the worship due to his Lord﴾ that is, he should not show off in his deeds; rather he should do deeds sincerely for the sake of Allah (ﷻ). This refers to one who combines sincerity with following Islamic teachings; he is the one who will attain that which he hopes for and seeks. As for others, they will be losers in

this world and the hereafter, and they will miss out on drawing close to their Lord and attaining His pleasure.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat al-Kahf.

All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.

