In addition, At-Tirmidhi said that `Amin' means, "Do not disappoint our hope", while the majority of scholars said that it means, "Answer our invocation."

Also, in his Musnad, Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah said that when the Jews were mentioned to him, the Messenger of Allah said,

«إنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَحْسَدُونَا عَلَى شَيْءٍ كَمَا يَحْسَدُونَا
على الجُمُعةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللهُ لَهَا وَضَرَّلَوا عَنْهَا،
وَعَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللهُ لَهَا وَضَرَّلَوا عَنْهَا
وَعَلَى قُوْلِنَا خَلْفَ الْإِمَامِ: آمِينَ.»

(They will not envy us for anything more than they envy us for Friday which we have been guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for the Qiblah which we were guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for our saying `Amin' behind the Imam.)

Also, Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith with the wording,

«مَا حَسَّدْتَكُمُ الْيَهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مَا حَسَّدْتَكُمْ عَلَى
السَّلاَمِ وَالْأَمِينَ.»

(The Jews have never envied you more than for your saying the Salam (Islamic greeting) and for saying Amin.)

**Surat Al-Baqarah**

**Which was revealed in Al-Madinah**

The Virtues of *Surat Al-Baqarah*

In Musnad Ahmad, Sahih Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i, it is recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,
(Do not turn your houses into graves. Verily, Shaytan does not enter the house where Surat Al-Baqarah is recited.) At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih.

Also, `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "Shaytan flees from the house where Surat Al-Baqarah is heard." This Hadith was collected by An-Nasa'i in Al-Yawm wal-Laylah, and Al-Hakim recorded it in his Mustadrak, and then said that its chain of narration is authentic, although the Two Sahihs did not collect it. In his Musnad, Ad-Darimi recorded that Ibn Mas`ud said, "Shaytan departs the house where Surat Al-Baqarah is being recited, and as he leaves, he passes gas." Ad-Darimi also recorded that Ash-Sha`bi said that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "Whoever recites ten Ayat from Surat Al-Baqarah in a night, then Shaytan will not enter his house that night. (These ten Ayat are) four from the beginning, Ayat Al-Kursi (255), the following two Ayat (256-257) and the last three Ayat." In another narration, Ibn Mas`ud said, "Then Shaytan will not come near him or his family, nor will he be touched by anything that he dislikes. Also, if these Ayat were to be recited over a senile person, they would wake him up."

Further, Sahl bin S`a`d said that the Messenger of Allah said,
(Learn Al-Qur'an and recite it, for the example of whoever learns the Qur'an, recites it and adheres to it, is the example of a bag that is full of musk whose scent fills the air. The example of whoever learns the Qur'an and then sleeps (i.e. lazy) while the Qur'an is in his memory, is the example of a bag that has musk, but is closed tight.)

This is the wording collected by At-Tirmidhi, who said that this Hadith is Hasan. In another narration, At-Tirmidhi recorded this same Hadith in a Mursal manner, so Allah knows best.

Also, Al-Bukhari recorded that Usayd bin Hudayr said that he was once reciting Surat Al-Baqarah while his horse was tied next to him. The horse started to make some noise. When Usayd stopped reciting, the horse stopped moving about. When he resumed reading, the horse started moving about again. When he stopped reciting, the horse stopped moving, and when he resumed reading, the horse started to move again. Meanwhile, his son Yahya was close to the horse, and he feared that the horse might step on him. When he moved his son back, he looked up to the sky and saw a cloud radiating with light that looked like lamps. In the morning, he went to the Prophet and told him what had happened and then said, "O Messenger of Allah! My son Yahya was close to the horse and I feared that she might step on him. When I attended to him and raised my head to the sky, I saw a cloud with lights like lamps. So I went, but I couldn't see it." The Prophet said, "Do you know what that was?" He said, "No." The Prophet said,

(They were the angels, they came close hearing your voice (reciting Surat Al-Baqarah), and if you had kept reading, the people would have been able to see the angels when the morning came, and the angels would not be hidden from their eyes.)

This is the narration reported by Imam Abu Ubayd Al-Qasim bin Salam in his book Fada'il Al-Qur'an.

Virtues of Surat Al-Baqarah and Surat Al-Imran
Imam Ahmad said that Abu Nu`aym narrated to them that Bishr bin Muhajir said that `Abdullah bin Buraydah narrated to him from his father, "I was sitting with the Prophet and I heard him say,

«تَعَلَّمُوا سُورَةَ البقرَةِ فَإِنَّ أَخْذُهَا بَرَكَةٌ، وَتَرْكُهَا حَسْرَةٌ، وَلَا تَسْتَطِيعُهَا البَطْلَةَ»

(Learn Surat Al-Baqarah, because in learning it there is blessing, in ignoring it there is sorrow, and the sorceresses cannot memorize it.)

He kept silent for a while and then said,

«تَعَلَّمُوا سُورَةَ البقرَةِ وَآلٌ عَمْرانَ فَإِنَّهُمَا الزَّهْرَاءَ وَأُولَٰئِكَ صَاحِبُهُمَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كَأَنَّهُمَا غَمَامَتَانِ أوْ غَيْاَيْتَانِ أوْ فِرْقَانٌ مِنْ طَيْرٍ صَوَافٍ، وَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ يَلْقَى صَاحِبِهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حِينَ يَنْشُقُ عَنْهُ قُبُرُهُ كَالرَّجُلُ الشَّاهِبُ قَبْولٌ لَهُ: هَلْ تَعْرَفْنِي؟ قَبْولٌ: مَا أُعْرِفْكَ. قَبْولٌ: أَنَا صَاحِبُكُ الْقُرْآنُ الَّذِي أُظْمَانُكَ فِي الْهَوَارِجِ وَأَسْهَرَتْ لَيْلَكَ وَإِنَّ كُلَّ تَأْجُرٍ مِنْ وَرَاءِ تَجَارِيْتُهُ وَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ كُلَّ تَجَارِيْتُهُ قَبْولُكُ بِمَيْنِهِ وَالْخَلْدُ بِشَمَالِهِ وَيُوضَعُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ نَاحٌ الْوَقَارِ، وَيَكْسِبُ وَالْدَاهُ حُلْتَانِ لَا يَقْوُمُ لَهُمَا أَهْلُ الْذَّنْيَةِ، قَبْولٌ: مَا كَسِينَا هَذَا؟ قَبْولٌ: يَأْخُذُ وَلَدُكُمَا الْقُرْآنَ ثَمَّ يُقَالُ: اَقْرَأْ وَاصْنَعْ فِي ذَرَجَةِ
(Learn Surat Al-Baqarah and Al `Imran because they are two lights and they shade their people on the Day of Resurrection, just as two clouds, two spaces of shade or two lines of (flying) birds. The Qur'an will meet its companion in the shape of a pale-faced man on the Day of Resurrection when his grave is opened. The Qur'an will ask him, 'Do you know me?' The man will say, 'I do not know you.' The Qur'an will say, 'I am your companion, the Qur'an, which has brought you thirst during the heat and made you stay up during the night. Every merchant has his certain trade. But, this Day, you are behind all types of trade.' Kingship will then be given to him in his right hand, eternal life in his left hand and the crown of grace will be placed on his head. His parents will also be granted two garments that the people of this life could never afford. They will say, 'Why were we granted these garments?' It will be said, 'Because your son was carrying the Qur'an.' It will be said (to the reader of the Qur'an), 'Read and ascend through the levels of Paradise.' He will go on ascending as long as he recites, whether reciting slowly or quickly.)"

Ibn Majah also recorded part of this Hadith from Bishr bin Al-Muhajir, and this chain of narrators is Hasan, according to the criteria of Imam Muslim.

A part of this Hadith is also supported by other Hadiths. For instance, Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Umamah Al-Bahili said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say,

»اقرأوا القرآن فإنّه شافع لأهله يوم القيامة  
اقرأوا الزهراوي، البقرة وآل عمران، فإنّهُما يأتينان يوم القيامة كانّهما غمّماتان، أو كانّهما غيابتان أو كانّهما ضرقتان من طير صواف،  
يحاججان عن أهلهما يوم القيامة«

(Read the Qur'an, because it will intercede on behalf of its people on the Day of Resurrection. Read the two lights, Al-Baqarah and Al `Imran, because they will come in the shape of two clouds, two shades or two lines of birds on the Day of Resurrection and will argue on behalf of their people on that Day.)

The Prophet then said,
» اقرأوا البقرة فإنَّ أخذها بركة وتركها حسرة 
ولا تستطيعوا البطلة»

(Read Al-Baqarah, because in having it there is blessing, and in ignoring there is a sorrow and the sorceresses cannot memorize it.)

Also, Imam Muslim narrated this Hadith in the Book of Prayer.

Imam Ahmad narrated that An-Nawwas bin Sam`an said that the Prophet said,

«يُؤتَى بالقرآن يوُم القيامة وأهله الذين كأنوا يعمَلون به تقدمهم سورة البقرة وآل عمران»

(On the Day of Resurrection the Qur'an and its people who used to implement it will be brought forth, preceded by Surat Al-Baqarah and Al `Imran.)

An-Nawwas said, "The Prophet set three examples for these two Surahs and I did not forget these examples ever since. He said,

«كانهما عمامتان، أو ظلتان سوداوان بينهما شرقاً، أو كانهما فرقان من طير صواف، يحاججان عن صاحبهما»

(They will come like two clouds, two dark shades or two lines of birds arguing on behalf of their people.)

It was also recorded in Sahih Muslim and At-Tirmidhi narrated this Hadith, which he rendered Hasan Gharib.

**Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in Al-Madinah**

There is no disagreement over the view that Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in its entirety in Al-Madinah. Moreover, Al-Baqarah was one of the first Surahs to be revealed in Al-Madinah, while, Allah's statement,

(وأئذِّروا يومَ يُرِجُعونَ فيهِ إلى اللهِ)
(And be afraid of the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah.) (2:281) was the last Ayah to be revealed from the Qur’an. Also, the Ayat about usury were among the last Ayat to be revealed. Khalid bin Ma`dan used to call Al-Baqarah the Fustat (tent) of the Qur’an. Some of the scholars said that it contains a thousand news incidents, a thousand commands and a thousand prohibitions. Those who count said that the number of Al-Baqarah's Ayat is two hundred and eighty-seven, and its words are six thousand two hundred and twenty-one words. Further, its letters are twenty-five thousand five hundred. Allah knows best.

Ibn Jurayj narrated that `Ata' said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in Al-Madinah." Also, Khasif said from Mujahid that `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr said; "Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in Al-Madinah." Several Imams and scholars of Tafsir issued similar statements, and there is no difference of opinion over this as we have stated.

The Two Sahih recorded that Ibn Mas`ud kept the Ka`bah on his left side and Mina on his right side and threw seven pebbles (at the Jamrah) and said, "The one to whom Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed (i.e. the Prophet ) performed Rami (the Hajj rite of throwing pebbles) similarly." The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith.

Further, Ibn Marduwyah reported a Hadith of Shu`bah from `Aqil bin Talhah from `Utbah bin Marthad; "The Prophet saw that his Companions were not in the first lines and he said,

'O Companions of Surat Al-Baqarah.) I Think that this incident occurred during the battle of Hunayn when the Companions retreated. Then, the Prophet commanded Al-`Abbas (his uncle) to yell out,

'O Companions of Surat Al-Baqarah.) I Think that this incident occurred during the battle of Hunayn when the Companions retreated. Then, the Prophet commanded Al-`Abbas (his uncle) to yell out,

(O Companions of Surat Al-Baqarah.) I Think that this incident occurred during the battle of Hunayn when the Companions retreated. Then, the Prophet commanded Al-`Abbas (his uncle) to yell out,

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(O Companions of Surat Al-Baqarah.) I Think that this incident occurred during the battle of Hunayn when the Companions retreated. Then, the Prophet commanded Al-`Abbas (his uncle) to yell out,
The individual letters in the beginning of some Surahs are among those things whose knowledge Allah has kept only for Himself. This was reported from Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, ‘Ali and Ibn Mas‘ud. It was said that these letters are the names of some of the Surahs. It was also said that they are the beginnings that Allah chose to start the Surahs of the Qur’an with. Khasif stated that Mujahid said, “The beginnings of the Surahs, such as Qaf, Sad, Ta Sin Mim and Alif Lam Ra, are just some letters of the alphabet.” Some linguists also stated that they are letters of the alphabet and that Allah simply did not cite the entire alphabet of twenty-eight letters. For instance, they said, one might say, “My son recites Alif, Ba, Ta, Tha…” he means the entire alphabet although he stops before mentioning the rest of it. This opinion was mentioned by Ibn Jarir.

The Letters at the Beginning of Surahs

If one removes the repetitive letters, then the number of letters mentioned at the beginning of the Surahs is fourteen: Alif, Lam, Mim, Sad, Ra, Kaf, Ha, Ya, ‘Ayn, Ta, Sin, Ha, Qaf, Nun.

So glorious is He Who made everything subtly reflect His wisdom.

Moreover, the scholars said, “There is no doubt that Allah did not reveal these letters for jest and play.” Some ignorant people said that some of the Qur’an does not mean anything, (meaning, such as these letters) thus committing a major mistake. On the contrary, these letters carry a specific meaning. Further, if we find an authentic narration leading to the Prophet that explains these letters, we will embrace the Prophet’s statement. Otherwise, we will stop where we were made to stop and will proclaim,

(We believe in it; all of it (clear and unclear verses) is from our Lord) (3:7).

The scholars did not agree on one opinion or explanation regarding this subject. Therefore, whoever thinks that one scholar’s opinion is correct, he is obliged to follow it, otherwise it is better to refrain from making any judgment on this matter. Allah knows best.

These Letters testifying to the Miraculous Qur’an

The wisdom behind mentioning these letters in the beginning of the Surahs, regardless of the exact meanings of these letters, is that they testify to the miracle of the Qur’an. Indeed, the servants are unable to produce something like the Qur’an, although it is comprised of the same letters with which they speak to each other. This opinion was mentioned by Ar-Razi in his Tafsir who related it to Al-Mubarrid and several other scholars. Al-Qurtubi also related this opinion to Al-Farra’ and Qutrub. Az-Zamakhshari agreed with this opinion in his book, Al-Kashshaf. In addition, the Imam and scholar Abu Al-‘Abbas Ibn Taymiyyah and our Shaykh Al-Hafiz Abu Al-Hajjaj Al-Mizzi agreed with this opinion. Al-Mizzi told me that it is also the opinion of Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah. Kaz-Zamakhshari said that these letters, “Were not all mentioned once in the beginning of the Qur’an. Rather, they were repeated so that the challenge (against the creation) is more daring. Similarly, several stories were mentioned repeatedly in the Qur’an,
and also the challenge was repeated in various areas (i.e., to produce something like the Qur'an). Sometimes, one letter at a time was mentioned, such as Sad, Nun and Qaf. Sometimes two letters were mentioned, such as

(ح م) (Ha Mim) (44:1) Sometimes, three letters were mentioned, such as,

(الم) (Alif Lam Mim (2:1)) and four letters, such as,

(المر) (‘ Alif Lam Mim Ra) (13:1), and

(المص) (Alif Lam Mim Sad) (7:1).

Sometimes, five letters were mentioned, such as,

(كهيّ بص) (Kaf Ha Ya ‘ Ayn Sad) (19:1), and;


This is because the words that are used in speech are usually comprised of one, two, three, four, or five letters."

Every Surah that begins with these letters demonstrates the Qur'an's miracle and magnificence, and this fact is known by those well-versed in such matters. The count of these Surahs is twenty-nine. For instance, Allah said,
(Alif Lam Mim) This is the Book (the Qur'an), wherein there is no doubt (2:1-2),

الم - ذلك الكتاب لا يريب فيه هدى للمتقين

نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقًا لمن بيين يديه

(Alif Lam Mim. Allah! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), Al-Hayyul-Qayyum (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists). It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur'an) to you (Muhammad ) with truth, confirming what came before it.) (3:1-3), and,

المص كنتب أنزل إليك فلا يكن في صدرك

حراج منه

(Alif Lam Mim. Allah! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), Al-Hayyul-Qayyum (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists). It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur'an) to you (Muhammad ) with truth, confirming what came before it.) (3:1-3), and,

Also, Allah said,

الر كتاب أنزلتة إليك ليخرج الناس من

الظلمت إلى النور بإذن ربيهم

(Alif Lam Ra. (This is) a Book which We have revealed unto you (O Muhammad ) in order that you might lead mankind out of darkness (of disbelief and polytheism) into the light (of belief in the Oneness of Allah and Islamic Monotheism) by their Lord's leave) (14:1),

الم - ذلك الكتاب لا يريب فيه هدى للمتقين

(Alif Lam Mim. The revelation of the Book (this Qur'an) in which there is no doubt, is from the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists!)) (32:1-2),

حم - تنزيل الكتاب من الله العزيز العليم

(Ha Mim. A revelation from (Allah) the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) (41:1-2), and,
There is no Doubt in the Qur'an

The Book, is the Qur'an, and Rayb means doubt. As-Suddi said that Abu Malik and Abu Salih narrated from Ibn `Abbas, and Murrah Al-Hamadani narrated from Ibn Mas`ud and several other Companions of the Messenger of Allah that,

(لا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(In which there is no Rayb), means about which there is no doubt. Abu Ad-Darda', Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Malik, Nafi` `Ata', Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Muqatil bin Hayyan, As-Suddi, Qatadah and Isma`il bin Abi Khalid said similarly. In addition, Ibn Abi Hatim said, "I do not know of any disagreement over this explanation." The meaning of this is that the Book, the Qur'an, is without a doubt revealed from Allah. Similarly, Allah said in Surat As- Sajdah,

(الْمَ - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هَدَى لِلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Alif Lam Mim). The revelation of the Book (this Qur'an) in which there is no doubt, is from the Lord of all that exists) (32:1-2).

Some scholars stated that this Ayah - 2:2 - contains a prohibition meaning, "Do not doubt the Qur'an." Furthermore, some of the reciters of the Qur'an pause upon reading,

(لا رَيْبٌ)
(there is no doubt) and they then continue;

فيه هدى للمتقين

(in which there is guidance for the Muttaqin (the pious and righteous persons)). However, it is better to pause at,

لا ريب فيه

(in which there is no doubt) because in this case,

هدى

(guidance) becomes an attribute of the Qur'an and carries a better meaning than,

فيه هدى

(in which there is guidance).

Guidance is granted to Those Who have Taqwa

Hidayah - correct guidance - is only granted to those who have Taqwa - fear of Allah. Allah said,

قل هو للذين آمنوا هدى وشفاء ودلائل لا يؤمنون في عذابهم وقره وهو عليهم عمى أوئلك ينادون من مكان بعيد

(Say: It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears, and it (the Qur'an) is blindness for them. They are those who are called from a place far away (so they neither listen nor understand)) (41:44), and,

وتنزل من القرءان ما هو شفاء ورحمة للمؤمنين ولا يزيد الظلمين إلا خسارة

(And it is sent down from the Qur'an what is a healing and mercy for the believers, while it is a transgressor's Throwing away of the religion)
(And We send down of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism and act on it), and it increases the Zalimin (wrongdoers) in nothing but loss) (17:82).

This is a sample of the numerous Ayat indicating that the believers, in particular, benefit from the Qur'an. That is because the Qur'an is itself a form of guidance, but the guidance in it is only granted to the righteous, just as Allah said,

(毅毅ِها النَّاسُ قدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ مَوَعِظَةً مَّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءً لَّمَّا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهَدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِلمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord (i.e. the Qur'an, enjoining all that is good and forbidding all that is evil), and a healing for that (disease of ignorance, doubt, hypocrisy and differences) which is in your breasts, a guidance and a mercy (explaining lawful and unlawful things) for the believers) (10:57).

Ibn `Abbas and Ibn Mas`ud and other Companions of the Messenger of Allah said,

(هُدَى لِلمُتَّقِينِ)

(guidance for the Muttaqin (the pious and righteous persons), means, a light for those who have Taqwa.

The Meaning of Al-Muttaqin

Ibn `Abbas said about,

(هُدَى لِلمُتَّقِينِ)

(guidance for the Muttaqin) that it means, "They are the believers who avoid Shirk with Allah and who work in His obedience." Ibn `Abbas also said that Al-Muttaqin means, "Those who fear Allah's punishment, which would result if they abandoned the true guidance that they recognize and know. They also hope in Allah's mercy by believing in what He revealed." Further, Qatadah said that,

(للِلمُتَّقِينَ)

(Al-Muttaqin), are those whom Allah has described in His statement;
(Who believe in the Ghayb and perform the Salah) (2:3), and the following Ayat. Ibn Jarir stated that the Ayah (2:2) includes all of these meanings that the scholars have mentioned, and this is the correct view. Also, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah narrated that ‘Atiyah As-Sadi said that the Messenger of Allah said,

» لا يَبْلُغُ العَبْدُ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُتَقِينِ حَتَّى يَدْعَ مَالًا
بَأَسٍ يَهُ حَذَرًا مِمَّا يَهِ بَأَسٌ«

(The servant will not acquire the status of the Mu'ttaqin until he abandons what is harmless out of fear of falling into that which is harmful.) At-Tirmidhi then said "Hasan Gharib."

There are Two Types of Hidayah (Guidance)

Huda here means the faith that resides in the heart, and only Allah is able to create it in the heart of the servants. Allah said,

(إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِى مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ)

(Verily, you (O Muhammad) guide not whom you like) (28:56),

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا هُمُ)

(Not upon you (Muhammad) is their guidance) (2:272),

(مَنْ يُضَلِّلُ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيٌّ لَهُ)

(Whomsoever Allah sends astray, none can guide him) (7:186), and,

(مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ المُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضَلِّلُ فَلَنَ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُّرْسَدًا)

(He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the right path)) (18:17).
Huda also means to explain the truth, give direction and lead to it. Allah, the Exalted, said,

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِى إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

(And verily, you (O Muhammad) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the straight path (i.e. Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism)) (42: 52),

إِنَّمَا أَنتُ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

(You are only a warner, and to every people there is a guide) (13:7), and,

وَإِمَا نَمَوْذُ فَهَدَيْنِهِمْ فَأَسْتَحْبَّوْا العَمَّى عَلَى الْهُدَى

(And as for Thamud, We showed and made clear to them the path of truth (Islamic Monotheism) through Our Messenger (i.e. showed them the way of success), but they preferred blindness to guidance) (41:17).

testifying to this meaning.

Also, Allah said,

وَهَدَيْنِهِ الْبَنِيَّةَ النَّجْدُينَ

(And shown him the two ways (good and evil).) (90:10)

This is the view of the scholars who said that the two ways refer to the paths of righteousness and evil, which is also the correct explanation. And Allah knows best.

**Meaning of Taqwa**

The root meaning of Taqwa is to avoid what one dislikes. It was reported that `Umar bin Al-Khattab asked Ubayy bin Ka`b about Taqwa. Ubayy said, "Have you ever walked on a path that has thorns on it" `Umar said, "Yes." Ubayy said, "What did you do then" He said, "I rolled up my sleeves and struggled." Ubayy said, "That is Taqwa."
The Meaning of Iman

Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi said that Al-`Ala` bin Al-Musayyib bin Rafi` narrated from Abu Ishaq that Abu Al-Ahwas said that `Abdullah said, "Iman is to trust.". `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said,

(who have faith) means they trust. Also, Ma`mar said that Az-Zuhri said, "Iman is the deeds." In addition, Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi said that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that, `They have faith', means, they fear (Allah).

Ibn Jarir (At-Tabari) commented, "The prefered view is that they be described as having faith in the Unseen by the tongue, deed and creed. In this case, fear of Allah is included in the general meaning of Iman, which necessitates following deeds of the tongue by implementation. Hence, Iman is a general term that includes affirming and believing in Allah, His Books and His Messengers, and realizing this affirmation through adhering to the implications of what the tongue utters and affirms."

Linguistically, in the absolute sense, Iman merely means trust, and it is used to mean that sometimes in the Qur'an, for instance, Allah the Exalted said,

(He trusts (yu`minu) in Allah, and trusts (yu`minu) in the believers.) (9: 61)

Prophet Yusuf's brothers said to their father,

(But you will never believe us even when we speak the truth) (12:17).

Further, the word Iman is sometimes mentioned along with deeds, such as Allah said,

(Save those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds) (95:6).

However, when Iman is used in an unrestricted manner, it includes beliefs, deeds, and statements of the tongue. We should state here that Iman increases and decreases.
There are many narrations and Hadiths on this subject, and we discussed them in the beginning of our explanation of Sahih Al-Bukhari, all favors are from Allah. Some scholars explained that Iman means Khashyah (fear of Allah). For instance, Allah said;  

(إنَّ الَّذِينَ يَحْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ)  

(Verily, those who fear their Lord unseen (i.e. they do not see Him, nor His punishment in the Hereafter)) (67:12), and,  

(مَنْ حَشَى الرَّحْمَن بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ يُقَلِّبُ مُنِيبٍ)  

(Who feared the Most Gracious (Allah) in the Ghayb (unseen) and brought a heart turned in repentance (to Him and absolutely free from every kind of polytheism)) (50:33).  

Fear is the core of Iman and knowledge, just as Allah the Exalted said,  

(إِنَّمَا يَحْشَى اللَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ العَلْمَاءُ)  

(It is only those who have knowledge among His servants that fear Allah) (35:28).  

The Meaning of Al-Ghayb  

As for the meaning of Ghayb here, the Salaf have different explanations of it, all of which are correct, indicating the same general meaning. For instance, Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi quoted Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, reporting from Abu Al-` Aliyah about Allah's statement, i  

(يَؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ)  

((Those who) have faith in the Ghayb), "They believe in Allah, His angels, Books, Messengers, the Last Day, His Paradise, Fire and in the meeting with Him. They also believe in life after death and in Resurrection. All of this is the Ghayb." Qatadah bin Di`amah said similarly.  

Sa`id bin Mansur reported from `Abdur-Rahman bin Yazid who said, "We were sitting with `Abdullah bin Mas`ud when we mentioned the Companions of the Prophet and their deeds being superior to our deeds. `Abdullah said, `The matter of Muhammad was clear for those who saw him. By He other than Whom there is no God, no person will ever acquire a better type of faith than believing in Al-Ghayb.` He then recited,
(Alif Lam Mim. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(الْمُفْلِحُونَ)

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(Al-Fatiha. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,
between two covers (the Qur'an), and they will believe in it and implement its commands. They have a greater reward than you, even twice as much.

(وَيَقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ)

(And perform Salah, and spend out of what we have provided for them)

**Meaning of Iqamat As-Salah**

Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَيَقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ)

(And perform the Salah), means, "Perform the prayer with all of the obligations that accompany it." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Iqamat As-Salah means to complete the bowings, prostrations, recitation, humbleness and attendance for the prayer." Qatadah said, "Iqamat As-Salah means to preserve punctuality, and the ablution, bowings, and prostrations of the prayer." Muqatil bin Hayyan said Iqamat As-Salah means "To preserve punctuality for it, as well as completing ones purity for it, and completing the bowings, prostrations, recitation of the Qur'an, Tashahhud and blessings for the Prophet. This is Iqamat As-Salah."

**The Meaning of "Spending" in this Ayah**

Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said,

(وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ)

(And spend out of what We have provided for them) means, "The Zakah due on their wealth." As-Suddi said that Abu Malik and Abu Salih narrated from Ibn `Abbas, as well as Murrah from Ibn Mas'ud and other Companions of the Messenger of Allah , that,

(وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ)

(And spend out of what We have provided for them) means, "A man's spending on his family. This was before the obligation of Zakah was revealed." Juwaybir narrated from Ad-Dahhak, "General spending (in charity) was a means of drawing nearer to Allah, according to one's discretion and capability. Until the obligation of charity was revealed in the seven Ayat of Surat Bara'ah (chapter 9), were revealed. These abrogated the previous case."

In many instances, Allah mentioned prayer and spending wealth together. Prayer is a right of Allah as well as a form of worshipping Him. It includes singling Him out for one's devotion, praising Him, glorifying Him, supplicating to Him, invoking Him, and it displays one's dependence upon Him. Spending is form of kindness towards creatures by giving them what will benefit them, and those people most deserving of this charity are the relatives, the wife, the
servants and then the rest of the people. So all types of required charity and required spending are included in Allah's saying,

(وَمِمَّا رَزَقَنَّهُمْ يُؤْقِفُونَ)

(And spend out of what we have provided for them). The Two Sahihs recorded that Ibn `Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«بَنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةً أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَإِيَتَاءَ الزَّكَاةَ، وَصَدَّقَانِ رَمَضَانَ، وَحَجَّ الْبَيْتَ»

(Islam is built upon five (pillars): Testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the prayer, giving Zakah, fasting Ramadan and Hajj to the House.)

There are many other Hadiths on this subject.

The Meaning of Salah

In the Arabic language, the basic meaning of Salah is supplication. In religious terminology, Salah is used to refer to the acts of bowing and prostration, the remaining specified acts associated with it, specified at certain times, with those known conditions, and the characteristics, and requirements that are well-known about it.

(وَالَّذِينَ يَوْمِنُونَ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أَنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُؤْقِفُونَ)

(4. And who have faith in what is revealed to you and in what was revealed before you, and in the Hereafter they are certain.)

Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَالَّذِينَ يَوْمِنُونَ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أَنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ)
(And who have faith in what is revealed to you and in what was revealed before you.) means, "They believe in what Allah sent you with, and in what the previous Messengers were sent with, they do not distinguish between (believing) them, nor do they reject what they brought from their Lord."

(And in the Hereafter they are certain) that is the resurrection, the standing (on the Day of Resurrection), Paradise, the Fire, the reckoning and the the Scale that weighs the deeds (the Mizan). The Hereafter is so named because it comes after this earthly life.

Attributes of the Believers

The people described here (2:4) are those whom Allah described in the preceding Ayah,

(Those who have faith in the Ghayb and perform Salah, and spend out of what we have provided for them.)

Mujahid once stated, "Four Ayat at the beginning of Surat Al-Baqarah describe the believers, two describe the disbelievers, and thirteen describe the hypocrites." The four Ayat mentioned in this statement are general and include every believer, whether an Arab, non-Arab, or a person of a previous Scripture, whether they are Jinns or humans. All of these attributes complement each other and require the existence of the other attributes. For instance, it is not possible that one believes in the Unseen, performs the prayer and gives Zakah without believing in what the Messenger of Allah and the previous Messengers were sent with. The same with certainty in the Hereafter, this is not correct without that, for Allah has commanded the believers,

(O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and His Messenger, and the Book (the Qur'an) which He has revealed to the Messenger, and the Book which He sent own to those before (him)) (4:136),
(And argue not with the People of the Book, unless it be in (a way) that is better, except with such of them as do wrong; and say (to them): "We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you; our Ilah (God) and your Ilah (God) is One (i.e. Allah)') (29:46),

(أيَأْتِيْهَا الَّذِينَ أوُلِّيْتُوا الْكِتَابُ عَامِنُهُمْ بِمَا نَزَّلَنَا)

(مُصَدِّقًا لَّمَآ مَعْكُمُ)

(O you who have been given the Book (Jews and Christians)! Believe in what We have revealed (to Muhammad) confirming what is (already) with you) (4:47), and,

(قُلْ يَآ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ حَتَّى نُقِيمَ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ)

(Say (O Muhammad): "O People of the Book (Jews and Christians)! You have nothing until you act according to the Tawrah (Torah), the Injil (Gospel), and what has (now) been revealed to you from your Lord (the Qur'an).") (5:68).

Also, Allah the Exalted described the believers;

(عَمَنِ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلِيهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ)

(وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ عَمَنِ يَأْمُنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلِيَّكَتِهِ وَكُنْتُهُ وَرُسُلُهُ لَا نُقْرِفُ بِيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ)

(The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) "We make no distinction between any of His Messengers") (2: 285), and,
(And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and make no distinction between any of them (Messengers)) (4:152),

This is a sample of the Ayat that indicate that the true believers all believe in Allah, His Messengers and His Books.

The faithful among the People of the Book, have a special significance here, since they believe in their Books and in all of the details related to that, so when such people embrace Islam and sincerely believe in the details of the religion, then they will get two rewards. As for the others, they can only believe in the previous religious teachings in a general way. For instance, the Prophet stated,

«إِذَا حَدَّثَكُمْ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ فَلَا تُكْتَبِوهُمْ وَلَا تُصَدِّقُوهُمْ وَلَكُنْ فَوْلُوا أَمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ»

(When the People of the Book narrate to you, neither reject nor affirm what they say. Rather, say, 'We believe in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to you.')

However, the faith that many Arabs have in the religion of Islam as it was revealed to Muhammad might be more complete, encompassing and firmer than the faith of the People of the Book who embraced Islam. Therefore, if the believers in Islam among the People of the Book gain two rewards, other Muslims who have firmer Islamic faith might gain an equal reward that compares to the two the People of the Book gain (upon embracing Islam). And Allah knows best.

(أُولِئِكَ عَلَى هَدَىٰ مَنْ رَبَّهُمْ وَأُولِيَّ الْكَهْنَةِ هُمُ المَفْلِحُونَ)

(5. They are on guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful.)

Guidance and Success are awarded to the Believers

Allah said,
(They are) refers to those who believe in the Unseen, establish the prayer, spend from what Allah has granted them, believe in what Allah has revealed to the Messenger and the Messengers before him, believe in the Hereafter with certainty, and prepare the necessary requirements for the Hereafter by performing good deeds and avoiding the prohibitions. Allah then said,

(On guidance) meaning, they are (following) a light, guidance, and have insight from Allah,

(And they are the successful) meaning, in this world and the Hereafter. They shall have what they seek and be saved from the evil that they tried to avoid. Therefore, they will have rewards, eternal life in Paradise, and safety from the torment that Allah has prepared for His enemies.

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

Allah said,

(Verily, those who disbelieve) meaning, covered the truth and hid it. Since Allah has written that they would do so, it does not matter if you (O Muhammad) warn them or not, they would still have disbelieved in what you were sent with. Similarly, Allah said,
(Truly, those against whom the Word (wrath) of your Lord has been justified, will not believe. Even if every sign should come to them, until they see the painful torment) (10:96-97).

About the rebellious People of the Book, Allah said,

وَلَن يَشْعُرُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ عَالِيَةٍ مَّا (And even if you were to bring to the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) all the Ayat, they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction)) (2:5).

These Ayat indicate that whomever Allah has written to be miserable, they shall never find anyone to guide them to happiness, and whomever Allah directs to misguidance, he shall never find anyone to guide him. So do not pity them - O Muhammad - deliver the Message to them. Certainly, whoever among them accepts the Message, then he shall gain the best rewards. As for those who turn away in rejection, do not feel sad for them or concerned about them, for

قَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ (Your duty is only to convey (the Message) and on Us is the reckoning) (13: 40), and,

إِنَّمَا أنتَ نَذِيرُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ (But you are only a warner. And Allah is a Wakil (Disposer of affairs, Trustee, Guardian) over all things) (11:12).

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said about Allah's statement,

إِنَّ الْذِّينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ عَذَارَتِهِمْ أَمْ لَمْ نَنْذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (Verily, those who disbelieve, it is the same to them whether you (O Muhammad) warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe) "That the Messenger of Allah was eager for all the people to believe and follow the guidance he was sent with. Allah informed him that none would believe except for those whom He decreed happiness for in the first place, and none would stray except those who Allah has decreed to do so in the first place."
(7. Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes there is a covering. Theirs will be a great torment).

**Meaning of Khatama**

As-Suddi said that,

(ğıltm nllh) means, "Allah has sealed." Qatada said that this Ayah means, "Shaytan controlled them when they obeyed him. Therefore, Allah sealed their hearts, hearing and sight, and they could neither see the guidance nor hear, comprehend or understand." Ibn Jurayj said that Mujahid said,

(ğıltm nllh) means, "Allah has set a seal on their hearts," "A stamp. It occurs when sin resides in the heart and surrounds it from all sides, and this submersion of the heart in sin constitutes a stamp, meaning a seal." Ibn Jurayj also said that the seal is placed on the heart and the hearing. In addition, Ibn Jurayj said, that `Abdullah bin Kathir narrated that Mujahid said, "The stain is not as bad as the stamp, the stamp is not as bad as the lock which is the worst type." Al-A` mash said, "Mujahid demonstrated with his hand while saying, 'They used to say that the heart is just like this - meaning the open palm. When the servant commits a sin, a part of the heart will be rolled up - and he rolled up his index finger. When the servant commits another sin, a part of the heart will be rolled up' - and he rolled up another finger, until he rolled up all of his fingers. Then he said, 'Then, the heart will be sealed.' Mujahid also said that this is the description of the Ran (refer to 83:14)."

Al-Qurtubi said, "The Ummah has agreed that Allah has described Himself with sealing and closing the hearts of the disbelievers, as a punishment for their disbelief. Similarly, Allah said,

(Nay, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts because of their disbelief) (4:155)."

He then mentioned the Hadith about changing the hearts, (in which the Prophet supplicated),
(O You Who changes the hearts, make our hearts firm on Your religion.)

He also mentioned the Hadith by Hudhayfah recorded in the Sahih, in which the Messenger of Allah said,

«تُعَرُّضُ الْفِئَنَّ عَلَى الْقُلُوبِ كَالْحَصِيرَ غُوُّدًا
عِيْدًا، فَأَيُّ قَلْبٍ أُشْرَبَهَا نُكِّتْ فِيهِ نِكْتَةٌ سَوْدَأٌ
وَأَيُّ قَلْبٍ أَنْكَرَهَا نُكِّتْ فِيهِ نِكْتَةٌ بَيْضَاءٌ حَتَّى
تَصِرَّ عَلَى قَلْبِينَ: عَلَى أَبْيَضَ مِثْلِ الصَّفَقَةِ، فَلا
تَضَرَّعَهُ فِئَتَهَا مَا دَامَتُ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَالآخَرُ
أَسْوَدُ مُرْبَادًا كَالْكَوْزُ مُجْحِيًا لَا يَعْرَفُ مَعْرُوفًا
وَلَا يَنْكِرُ مُنْكِرًا»

(The Fitan (trials, tests) are offered to the hearts, just as the straws that are sewn into a woven mat, one after another. Any heart that accepts the Fitan, then a black dot will be engraved on it. Any heart that rejects the Fitan, then a white dot will be engraved on it. The hearts will therefore become two categories: white, just like the barren rock; no Fitnah shall ever harm this category as long as the heavens and earth still exist. Another category is black, just as the cup that is turned upside down, for this heart does not recognize righteousness or renounce evil.)

Ibn Jarir said, “The truth regarding this subject is what the authentic Hadith from the Messenger of Allah stated. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا أَدْنُبْ ذَنَبًا كَانَتْ نِكْتَةٌ سَوْدَاءٌ فِي
قَلْبِهِ، فَإِنَّ نَابَ وَنَزَعَ وَاتَّعَنَّبَ سَقِيلٌ قَلْبُهُ وَإِنَّ
زَادَ زَادَتْ حَتَّى تَعْلَوْ قَلْبُهُ، فَذَلِكَ الرَّأْسُ الَّذِي قَالَ
اللَّهُ تَعَالَى:
(كَلَّا بَلْ رَأَنَّ عَلَى قَلْوِيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ)
(When the believer commits a sin, a black dot will be engraved on his heart. If he repents, refrains and regrets, his heart will be polished again. If he commits more errors, the dots will increase until they cover his heart. This is the Ran (stain) that Allah described,

(کَلَا بَلْ رَآئَنَ ۡعَلَى ۡقُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ)

(Nay! But on their hearts is the Ran (stain) which they used to earn") (83:14).

At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa’i and Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi said that it is Hasan Sahih.

The Meaning of Ghishawah

Reciting the Ayah,

(خَتَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى ۡقُلُوبِهِم وَۡعَلَى سَمَعٍهُمْ)

(Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing), then pausing, then continuing with,

(وَۡعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَوَةٌ)

(And on their eyes there is a Ghishawah (covering)) is accurate, for the stamp is placed on the heart and the hearing while the Ghishawah, the covering, is appropriately placed on the eyes. In his Tafsir, As-Suddi said that Ibn ‘Abbas and Ibn Mas’ud said about Allah’s statement,

(خَتَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى ۡقُلُوبِهِم وَۡعَلَى سَمَعٍهُمْ)

(Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing), “So that they neither understand nor hear. Allah also said that He placed a covering on their sight, meaning eyes, and so, they do not see.”

The Hypocrites

We mentioned that four Ayat in the beginning of Surat Al-Baqarah described the believers. The two last Ayat (2:6-7) describe the disbelievers. Afterwards, Allah begins to describe the hypocrites who show belief and hide disbelief. Since the matter of the hypocrites is vague and many people do not realize their true reality, Allah mentioned their description in detail. Each of the characteristics that Allah used to described them with is a type of hypocrisy itself. Allah revealed Surat Bara’ah (chapter 9) and Surat Al-Munafiqun (chapter 63) about the hypocrites. He also mentioned the hypocrites in Surat An-Nur (24) and other Surahs, so that their description would be known and their ways and errors could be avoided. Allah said,
(8. And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they do not believe). (9. They try to deceive Allah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!)

Meaning of Nifaq

Nifaq means to show conformity - or agreement - and to conceal evil. Nifaq has several types: Nifaq in the creed that causes its people to reside in Hell for eternity, and Nifaq in deed, which is one of the major sins, as we will explain soon, Allah willing. Ibn Jurayj said of the hypocrite that, "His actual deeds are different from what he publicizes, what he conceals is different from what he utters, his entrance and presence are not the same as his exit and absence."

The Beginning of Hypocrisy

The revelations about the characteristics of the hypocrites were revealed in Al-Madinah, this is because there were no hypocrites in Makkah. Rather the opposite was the situation in Makkah, since some people were forced to pretend that they were disbelievers, while their hearts concealed their faith. Afterwards, the Messenger of Allah migrated to Al-Madinah, where the Ansar from the tribes of Aws and Khazraj resided. They used to worship idols during the pre-Islamic period of ignorance, just as the rest of the Arab idolators. Three Jewish tribes resided in Al-Madinah, Banu Qaynuqa`-allies of Al-Khazraj, Banu An-Nadir and Banu Qurayzah-allies of the Aws. Many members of the Aws and Khazraj tribes embraced Islam. However, only a few Jews embraced Islam, such as `Abdullah bin Salam. During the early stage in Al-Madinah, there weren't any hypocrites because the Muslims were not strong enough to be feared yet. On the contrary, the Messenger of Allah conducted peace treaties with the Jews and several other Arab tribes around Al-Madinah. Soon after, the battle of Badr occurred and Allah gave victory to Islam and its people. `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul was a leader in Al-Madinah. He was Al-Khazraj’s chief, and during the period of Jahiliyyah he was the master of both tribes - Aws and Khazraj. They were about to appoint him their king when the Message reached Al-Madinah, and many in Al-Madinah embraced Islam. Ibn Salul's heart was filled with hatred against Islam and its people. When the battle of Badr took place, he said, "Allah's religion has become apparent." So he pretended to be Muslim, along with many of those who were just like him, as well as many among the People of the Book. It was then that hypocrisy began in Al-Madinah and among the surrounding nomad tribes. As for the Emigrants, none of them were hypocrites, since they emigrated willingly (seeking the pleasure of Allah). Rather, when a Muslim would emigrate from Makkah, he would be forced to abandon all of his wealth, offspring and land; he would do so seeking Allah's reward in the Hereafter.
The Tafsir of Ayah 2:8

Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَمَنَ النَّاسِ مِنْ يَقُولُ عَامِنًا بِاللهِ وَبَالَيْوَمِ الأَخَرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they do not believe) "This refers to the hypocrites among the Aws and Khazraj and those who behaved as they did."

This is how Abu Al-` Aliyah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and As-Suddi explained this Ayah. Allah revealed the characteristics of the hypocrites, so that the believers would not be deceived by their outer appearance, thus saving the believers from a great evil. Otherwise, the believers might think that the hypocrites were believers, when in reality they are disbelievers. To consider the sinners as righteous people is extremely dangerous, Allah said,

(وَمَنَ النَّاسِ مِنْ يَقُولُ عَامِنًا بِاللهِ وَبَالَيْوَمِ الأَخَرِ)

(And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they do not believe) meaning, they utter these false statements only with their tongues, just as Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ)

(When the hypocrites come to you (O Muhammad ), they say: "We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah." Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger) (63:1).

This Ayah means that the hypocrites utter these statements only when they meet you, not because they actually believe what they are saying. The hypocrites emphasize their belief in Allah and the Last Day with their words, when that is not the case in reality. Therefore, Allah stated that the hypocrites lie in their testimony of creed, when He said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَفِّقِينَ لَكَذِبُونَ)

(And Allah bears witness that the hypocrites are indeed liars.) (63:1), and,
(while in fact they believe not)

Allah said,

(They try to deceive Allah and those who believe). The hypocrites show belief outwardly while concealing disbelief. They think that by doing this, they will mislead Allah, or that the statements they utter will help them with Allah, and this is an indication of their total ignorance. They think that such behavior will deceive Allah, just as it might deceive some of the believers. Similarly, Allah said,

(On the Day when Allah will resurrect them all together; then they will swear to Him as they swear to you. And they think that they have something (to stand upon). Verily, they are liars!) (58:18). Hence, Allah refuted their way by saying,

(While they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!) Allah stated that the hypocrites only deceive themselves by this behavior, although they are unaware of this fact. Allah also said,

(Verily, the hypocrites try to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them) (4:142).

Also, Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Ibn Jurayj commented on Allah's statement,
Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. "The hypocrites pronounce, 'There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah' seeking to ensure the sanctity of their blood and money, all the while concealing disbelief." Sa`id said that Qatadah said,

ومَنْ النَّاسَ مَنْ يَقُولُ عَامِنًا بِاللَّهِ وَبِيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ - يُخَذَّعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالذِينَ عَامِنُوا وَمَا يُخَذَّعُونَ إِلَّا أنفسهم وَمَا يَشْعَرُونَ

(And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they believe not. They try to deceive Allah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!) "This is the description of a hypocrite. He is devious, he says the truth with his tongue and defies it with his heart and deeds. He wakes up in a condition other than the one he goes to sleep in, and goes to sleep in a different condition than the one he wakes up in. He changes his mind just like a ship that moves about whenever a wind blows."

في قلوبهم مرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ يَمَا كَانُوا يَكَذِّبُونَ

(10. In their hearts is a disease and Allah has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies.)

The Meaning of `Disease' in this Ayah

As-Suddi narrated from Abu Malik and (also) from Abu Salih, from Ibn `Abbas, and (also) Murrah Al-Hamdani from Ibn Mas`ud and other Companions that this Ayah,

في قلوبهم مرَضٌ (In their hearts is a disease) means, `doubt', and,

فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا (And Allah has increased their disease) also means `doubt'. Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah also said similarly. `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam commented on,
(In their hearts is a disease), "A disease in the religion, not a physical disease. They are the hypocrites and the disease is the doubt that they brought to Islam.

(And Allah has increased their disease) meaning, increased them in shameful behavior." He also recited,

(As for those who believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice. But as for those in whose hearts is a disease, it will add disgrace to their disgrace.) (9:124-125) and commented, "Evil to their evil and deviation to their deviation." This statement by `Abdur-Rahman is true, and it constitutes a punishment that is compatible to the sin, just as the earlier scholars stated. Similarly, Allah said,

(While as for those who accept guidance, He increases their guidance and grants them their piety) (47:17).

Allah said next,

(Because they used to tell lies). The hypocrites have two characteristics, they lie and they deny the Unseen.

The scholars who stated that the Prophet knew the hypocrites of his time have only the Hadith of Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman as evidence. In it the Prophet gave him the names of fourteen hypocrites during the battle of Tabuk. These hypocrites plotted to assassinate the Prophet during the night on a hill in that area. They planned to excite the Prophet's camel, so that she would throw him down the hill. Allah informed the Prophet about their plot, and the Prophet told Hudhayfah their names.
As for the other hypocrites, Allah said about them,

(وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُمْ مَنَّ الأُعْرَابِ مُنْفَقُونَ وَمِنْ أُهْلِ المَدِينَةِ مَرَّدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ نَعْلَمُهُمْ)

(And among the bedouins around you, some are hypocrites, and so are some among the people of Al-Madinah who persist in hypocrisy; you (O Muhammad) know them not, We know them) (9:101), and,

(إِنْ لَمْ يَبْتَهِ المُنْفَقُونَ وَالذِّينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ وَالمُرْجِفُونَ فِي المَدِينَةِ لِنَغْرِينَكَ بِهِمْ ثُمَّ لَا يُجَابُوْرُونَكَ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا - مَلِئُونَ أَيْنَما نَقْبُوا أُخَذُوا وَقَتَلُوا تَقْتِيلاً)

(If the hypocrites, and those in whose hearts is a disease, and those who spread false news among the people in Al-Madinah do not cease, We shall certainly let you overpower them, then they will not be able to stay in it as your neighbors but a little while. Accursed, they shall be seized wherever found, and killed with a (terrible) slaughter) (33:60-61).

These Ayat prove that the Prophet was not informed about each and everyone among the hypocrites of his time. Rather, the Prophet was only informed about their characteristics, and he used to assume that some people possessed these characteristics. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلَوْ نَشَأَ لَأَرَايْنَكُمُ فَلَعَرَقْتُهُم بِسِيْمَهُمْ وَلَتَعَرَّقْتُهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ القُولِ)

(Had We willed, We could have shown them to you, and you should have known them by their marks; but surely, you will know them by the tone of their speech!) (47:30).

The most notorious hypocrite at that time was `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul; Zayd bin Arqam - the Companion - gave truthful testimony to that effect. In addition, `Umar bin Al-Khattab once mentioned the matter of Ibn Salul to the Prophet, who said,
Yet, when Ibn Salul died, the Prophet performed the funeral prayer for him and attended his funeral just as he used to do with other Muslims. It was recorded in the Sahih that the Prophet said,

(I was given the choice (to pray for him or not), so I chose.)

In another narration, the Prophet said,

(If I knew that by asking (Allah to forgive Ibn Salul) more than seventy times that He would forgive him, then I would do that.)

Meaning of Mischief

In his Tafsir, As-Suddi said that Ibn `Abbas and Ibn Mas'ud commented,
(And when it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on the earth," they say: "We are only peacemakers.") "They are the hypocrites. As for,

(لا تَفْسِدُوا فِي الأَرْضِ)

("Do not make mischief on the earth"), that is disbelief and acts of disobedience." Abu Ja`far said that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that Abu Al-`Aliyah said that Allah's statement,

(وَإِذَا قُلُوكُمْ لَا تَفْسِدُوا فِي الأَرْضِ)

(And when it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on the earth.") means, "Do not commit acts of disobedience on the earth. Their mischief is disobeying Allah, because whoever disobeys Allah on the earth, or commands that Allah be disobeyed, he has committed mischief on the earth. Peace on both the earth and in the heavens is ensured (and earned) through obedience (to Allah)." Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah said similarly.

**Types of Mischief that the Hypocrites commit**

Ibn Jarir said, "The hypocrites commit mischief on earth by disobeying their Lord on it and continuing in the prohibited acts. They also abandon what Allah made obligatory and doubt His religion, even though He does not accept a deed from anyone except with faith in His religion and certainty of its truth. The hypocrites also lie to the believers by saying contrary to the doubt and hesitation their hearts harbor. They give as much aid as they can, against Allah's loyal friends, and support those who deny Allah, His Books and His Messengers. This is how the hypocrites commit mischief on earth, while thinking that they are doing righteous work on earth."

The statement by Ibn Jarir is true, taking the disbelievers as friends is one of the categories of mischief on the earth. Allah said,

(وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِغَضْبٍ مُّولَّيِّينَ بَغْضِهِمْ إِلَّا تَفَعَّلُواْ

(And those who disbelieve are allies of one another, if you do not do this (help each other), there will be turmoil and oppression on the earth, and great mischief.) (8:73). In this way Allah severed the loyalty between the believers and the disbelievers. Similarly, Allah said,
(O you who believe! Do not take disbelievers as Awliya’ (protectors or helpers or friends) instead of believers. Do you wish to offer Allah a manifest proof against yourselves) (4: 144).

Allah then said,

(Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth of the Fire; no helper will you find for them) (4:145).

Since the outward appearance of the hypocrite displays belief, he confuses the true believers. Hence, the deceitful behavior of the hypocrites is an act of mischief, because they deceive the believers by claiming what they do not believe in, and because they give support and loyalty to the disbelievers against the believers.

If the hypocrite remains a disbeliever (rather than pretending to be Muslim), the evil that results from him would be less. Even better, if the hypocrite becomes sincere with Allah and makes the statements that he utters conform to his deeds, he will gain success. Allah said,

(And when it is said to them: “Do not make mischief on the earth,” they say: “We are only peacemakers.”) meaning, “We seek to be friends with both parties, the believers and the disbelievers, and to have peace with both parties.” Similarly, Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said,
(And when it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on the earth," they say: "We are only peacemakers.") means, "We seek to make amends between the believers and the People of the Book." Allah said,

(Verily, they are the ones who make mischief, but they perceive not.). This Ayah means that the hypocrites' behavior, and their claim that it is for peace, is itself mischief, although in their ignorance, they do not see it to be mischief.

(13. And when it is said to them: Believe as the people believe," They say: "Shall we believe as the fools have believed" Verily, they are the fools, but they do not know.)

Allah said that if the hypocrites are told,

("Believe as the people believe,") meaning, `Believe just as the believers believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, Resurrection after death, Paradise and Hellfire, etc. And obey Allah and His Messenger by heeding the commandments and avoiding the prohibitions.' Yet the hypocrites answer by saying,

("Shall we believe as the fools have believed") they meant (may Allah curse the hypocrites) the Companions of the Messenger of Allah. This is the same Tafsir given by Abu Al-`Aliyah and As-Suddi in his Tafsir, with a chain of narration to Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud and other Companions. This is also the Tafsir of Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam. The hypocrites said, "Us and them having the same status, following the same path, while they are fools!" `The fool' is the ignorant, simple-minded person who has little knowledge in areas of benefit and harm. This is why, according to the majority of the scholars, Allah used the term foolish to include children, when He said,
(And do not give your property, which Allah has made a means of support for you, to the foolish) (4:5).

Allah answered the hypocrites in all of these instances. For instance, Allah said here,

(Verily, they are the fools). Allah thus affirmed that the hypocrites are indeed the fools, yet,

(But they know not). Since they are so thoroughly ignorant, the hypocrites are unaware of their degree of deviation and ignorance, and such situation is more dangerous, a severer case of blindness, and further from the truth than one who is aware.

(14. And when they meet those who believe, they say: "We believe," but when they are alone with their Shayatin (devils), they say: "Truly, we are with you; verily, we were but mocking.")
(15. Allah mocks at them and leaves them increasing in their deviation to wander blindly.)

The Hypocrites' Cunning and Deceit

Allah said that when the hypocrites meet the believers, they proclaim their faith and pretend to be believers, loyalists and friends. They do this to misdirect, mislead and deceive the believers. The hypocrites also want to have a share of the benefits and gains that the believers might possibly acquire. Yet,
(But when they are alone with their Shayatin), meaning, if they are alone with their devils, such as their leaders and masters among the rabbis of the Jews, hypocrites and idolators.

Human and Jinn Devils

Ibn Jarir said, "The devils of every creation are the mischievous among them. There are both human devils and Jinn devils. Allah said,

وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلٍّ نِّيَّةً عَدُوّاً شَيْطَانٍ الإِنْسَٰٓ وَالْجِنَّ يُوحِى بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ رُّخْفٍ القُولَ (غُرُورًا)

(And so We have appointed for every Prophet enemies Shayatin (devils) among mankind and Jinn, inspiring one another with adorned speech as a delusion (or by way of deception)) (6:112).

The Meaning of `Mocking

Allah said,

(قالوا إننا معاكم)

(They say: "Truly, we are with you"). Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah means, "We are with you,

(إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ نَسْتَهْزِئُونَ)

(Verily, we were but mocking), meaning, we only mock people (the believers) and deceive them." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah,

(إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ نَسْتَهْزِئُونَ)

(Verily, we were but mocking), means, "We (meaning the hypocrites) were mocking the Companions of Muhammad." Also, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah said similarly. Allah’s statement,
(Allah mocks at them and leaves them increasing in their deviation to wander blindly) answers the hypocrites and punishes them for their behavior. Ibn Jarir commented, "Allah mentioned what He will do to them on the Day of Resurrection, when He said,

(On the Day when the hypocrites men and women will say to the believers: "Wait for us! Let us get something from your light!" It will be said: "Go back to your rear! Then seek a light!" So a wall will be put up between them, with a gate therein. Inside it will be mercy, and outside it will be torment.) (57:13), and,

(And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing of their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness.) (3:178)."

He then said, "This, and its like, is Allah's mockery of the hypocrites and the people of Shirk.

The Hypocrites suffering for their Plots

Allah stated that He will punish the hypocrites for their mockery, using the same terms to describe both the deed and its punishment, although the meaning is different. Similarly, Allah said,

(And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing of their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness.) (3:178)."
THE RECOMPENSE FOR AN OFFENSE IS AN OFFENSE EQUAL TO IT; BUT WHOEVER FORGIVES AND MAKES RECONCILIATION, HIS REWARD IS WITH ALLAH (42:40), AND,

(ﭭ١٢ َٗٗٗٗ َٗٗٗ َٗٗٗ َٗٗٗ َٗٗٗ)

(THEN WHOEVER TRANSGRESSES (THE PROHIBITION) AGAINST YOU, TRANSGRESS LIKewise AGAINST HIM) (2:194).

THE FIRST ACT IS AN ACT OF INJUSTICE, WHILE THE SECOND ACT IS AN ACT OF JUSTICE. SO BOTH ACTIONS CARRY THE SAME NAME, WHILE BEING DIFFERENT IN REALITY. THIS IS HOW THE SCHOLARS EXPLAIN DECEIT, CUNNING AND MOCKING WHEN ATTRIBUTED TO ALLAH IN THE QUR'AN. SURELY, ALLAH EXACTS REVENGE FOR CERTAIN EVIL ACTS WITH A PUNISHMENT THAT IS SIMILAR IN NATURE TO THE ACT ITSELF. WE SHOULD AFFIRM HERE THAT ALLAH DOES NOT DO THESE THINGS OUT OF JOYFUL PLAY, ACCORDING TO THE CONSENSUS OF THE SCHOLARS, BUT AS A JUST FORM OF PUNISHMENT FOR CERTAIN EVIL ACTS.

**Meaning of ` Leaves them increasing in their deviation to wander blindly**

Allah said,

(وَيَمْدُدْهُمْ فِي طَعَانَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهْوُنَّ)

(Allah mocks at them and leaves them increasing in their deviation to wander blindly). As-Suddi reported that Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud and several other Companions of the Messenger of Allah said that,

(وَيَمْدُدْهُمْ)

(and leaves them increasing) means, He gives them respite. Also, Mujahid said, "He (causes their deviation) to increase." Allah said;

(أَيَحْسَبُونَ أنَّمَا نَمَدُّهُمْ يِهِ مِن مَّالٍ وَبَنِينَ - نُسَارَعُ لَهُمْ فِى الْخَيْرَةَ بَلَلَا يَشِعْرُونَ)

(Do they think that by the wealth and the children with which We augment them. (That) We hasten to give them with good things. Nay, but they perceive not.) (23:55-56).

Ibn Jarir commented, "The correct meaning of this Ayah is `We give them increase from the view of giving them respite and leaving them in their deviation and rebellion.' Similarly, Allah said,
(And We shall turn their hearts and their eyes away (from guidance), as they refused to believe in it the first time, and We shall leave them in their trespass to wander blindly). " (6:110).

Tughyan used in this Ayah means to transgress the limits, just as Allah said in another Ayah,

(Verily, when the water Tagha (rose) beyond its limits, We carried you in the ship) (69:11).

Also, Ibn Jarir said that the term `Amah, in the Ayah means, `deviation'. He also said about Allah's statement,

(in their deviation to wander), "In the misguidance and disbelief that has encompassed them, causing them to be confused and unable to find a way out of it. This is because Allah has stamped their hearts, sealed them, and blinded their vision. Therefore, they do not recognize guidance or find the way out of their deviation."

(16. These are they who have purchased error with guidance, so their commerce was profitless. And they were not guided.)

In his Tafsir, As-Suddi reported that Ibn `Abbas and Ibn Mas`ud commented on;

(These are they who have purchased error with guidance) saying it means, "They pursued misguidance and abandoned guidance. " Mujahid said, "They believed and then disbelieved," while Qatadah said, "They preferred deviation to guidance." Qatadah's statement is similar in meaning to Allah's statement about Thamud,
(And as for Thamud, We granted them guidance, but they preferred blindness to guidance) (41:17).

In summary, the statements that we have mentioned from the scholars of Tafsir indicate that the hypocrites deviate from the true guidance and prefer misguidance, substituting wickedness in place of righteousness. This meaning explains Allah's statement,

(أوَلِئِكَ الَّذينَ اشْتَرَوْا الصَّلَلَةَ بِالْهُدَى) (These are they who have purchased error with guidance), meaning, they exchanged guidance to buy misguidance. This meaning includes those who first believed, then later disbelieved, whom Allah described,

(ذَلِكَ بَلَانَهُمْ عَامِنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا فَطُغَّأُوا عَلَى قَلُوبِهِمْ) (That is because they believed, and then disbelieved; therefore their hearts are sealed) (63:3).

The Ayah also includes those who preferred deviation over guidance. The hypocrites fall into several categories. This is why Allah said,

(فَمَ رَبَحَتْ نَجَرُتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهَتَّدِينَ) (So their commerce was profitless. And they were not guided), meaning their trade did not succeed nor were they righteous or rightly guided throughout all this. In addition, Ibn Jarir narrated that Qatadah commented on the Ayah,

(فَمَا رَبَحَتْ نَجَرُتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهَتَّدِينَ) (So their commerce was profitless. And they were not guided), “By Allah! I have seen them leaving guidance for deviation, leaving the Jama`ah (the community of the believers) for the sects, leaving safety for fear, and the Sunnah for innovation.” Ibn Abi Hatim also reported other similar statements.
(17. Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindled a fire; then, when it illuminated all around him, Allah removed their light and left them in darkness. (So) they could not see). (18. They are deaf, dumb, and blind, so they return not (to the right path).)

The Example of the Hypocrites

Allah likened the hypocrites when they bought deviation with guidance, thus acquiring utter blindness, to the example of a person who started a fire. When the fire was lit, and illuminated the surrounding area, the person benefited from it and felt safe. Then the fire was suddenly extinguished. Therefore, total darkness covered this person, and he became unable to see anything or find his way out of it. Further, this person could not hear or speak and became so blind that even if there were light, he would not be able to see. This is why he cannot return to the state that he was in before this happened to him. Such is the case with the hypocrites who preferred misguidance over guidance, deviation over righteousness. This parable indicates that the hypocrites first believed, then disbelieved, just as Allah stated in other parts of the Qur'an.

Allah's statement,

(ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورُهُمْ)

(Allah removed their light) means, Allah removed what benefits them, and this is the light, and He left them with what harms them, that is, the darkness and smoke. Allah said,

(وَتَرَكَكُمْ فِي ظَلَمَتِ)

(And left them in darkness), that is their doubts, disbelief and hypocrisy.

(لاَ يُبْصِرُونَ)

((So) they could not see) meaning, they are unable to find the correct path or find its direction. In addition, they are,
(deaf) and thus cannot hear the guidance,

(بَكَمُ)

(dumb) and cannot utter the words that might benefit them,

(عَمَى)

(and blind) in total darkness and deviation. Similarly, Allah said,

(فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الأَبْصَرُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ
النَّبِيِّ فِي الصُّدُورِ)

(Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind) (22:46) and this why they cannot get back to the state of guidance that they were in, since they sold it for misguidance.

(وَأَوْ كَصِيبَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظَلَمَتْ وَرَعَدْ وَبَرَقْ
يَجْعُلُونَ أَصْبَعَهُمْ فِى ءَادَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ
حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطُ بِالْكَفَّارِينَ - يَكَادُ الْبَرَقُ
يُخْطُفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أُصِيبَهُمْ فِيَّ وَإِذَا
أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا وَلَوْ شَأَّا اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ يَسْمَعُهُمْ
وَأَبْصَرَهُمْ إِنْ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرُ)

(19. Or like a rainstorm in the sky, bringing darkness, thunder, and lightning. They thrust their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunderclap for fear of death. But Allah ever encompasses the disbelievers.) (20. The lightning almost snatches away their sight, whenever it flashes for them, they walk therein, and when darkness covers them, they stand still. And if Allah willed, He could have taken away their hearing and their sight. Certainly, Allah has power over all things.)

Another Parable of the Hypocrites
This is another parable which Allah gave about the hypocrites who sometimes know the truth and doubt it at other times. When they suffer from doubt, confusion and disbelief, their hearts are,

(کصیبٌ)

(Like a Sayyib), meaning, "The rain", as Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, and several other Companions have confirmed as well as Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ata`, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah, `Atiyah Al-Khurasani, As-Suddi and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Ad-Dahhak said "It is the clouds." However, the most accepted opinion is that it means the rain that comes down during,

(ظلمت)

(darkness), meaning, here, the doubts, disbelief and hypocrisy.

(ورعد)

(thunder) that shocks the hearts with fear. The hypocrites are usually full of fear and anxiety, just as Allah described them,

(یحسبون كل صيحة عليهم)

(They think that every cry is against them) (63: 4), and,

(ویتحفون بالله إنهم لمنكم وما هم منكم ولكنهم قوم يقربون لو يجدون ملجنًا أو معزات أو مدخلا لولوًا إليه وهم يجمحوَنَ)

(They swear by Allah that they are truly of you while they are not of you, but they are a people who are afraid. Should they find refuge, or caves, or a place of concealment, they would turn straightway thereto in a swift rush) (9:56-57).

(البرق)

(The lightning), is in reference to the light of faith that is sometimes felt in the hearts of the hypocrites,
(They thrust their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunderclap for fear of death. But Allah ever encompasses the disbelievers), meaning, their cautiousness does not benefit them because they are bound by Allah's all-encompassing will and decision. Similarly, Allah said,

(Has the story reached you of two hosts. Of Fir`awwà (Pharaoh) and Thamud Nay! The disbelievers (persisted) in denying. And Allah encompasses them from behind!) (85:17-20).

Allah then said,

(The lightning almost snatches away their sight) meaning, because the lightning is strong itself, and because their comprehension is weak and does not allow them to embrace the faith. Also, `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(The lightning almost snatches away their sight), "The Qur'an mentioned almost all of the secrets of the hypocrites." `Ali bin Abi Talhah also narrated that Ibn `Abbas said,

(Whenever it flashes for them, they walk therein), "Whenever the hypocrites acquire a share in the victories of Islam, they are content with this share. Whenever Islam suffers a calamity, they are ready to revert to disbelief.". Similarly, Allah said,
(And among mankind is he who worships Allah on the edge: If good befalls him, he is content with that.) (22:11). Also, Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said,

(Whenever it flashes for them, they walk therein, and when darkness covers them, they stand still), "They recognize the truth and speak about it. So their speech is upright, but when they revert to disbelief, they again fall into confusion." This was also said by Abu Al-`Aliyah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatada, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and As-Suddi, who narrated it from the Companions, and it is the most obvious and most correct view, and Allah knows best.

Consequently, on the Day of Judgment, the believers will be given a light according to the degree of their faith. Some of them will gain light that illuminates over a distance of several miles, some more, some less. Some people's light will glow sometimes and be extinguished at other times. They will, therefore, walk on the Sirat (the bridge over the Fire) in the light, stopping when it is extinguished. Some people will have no light at all, these are the hypocrites whom Allah described when He said,

(On the Day when the hypocrites men and women will say to the believers: "Wait for us! Let us get something from your light!" It will be said to them; "Go back to your rear! Then seek a light!") (57:13).

Allah described the believers,
(On the Day you shall see the believing men and the believing women their light running forward before them and by their right hands. Glad tidings for you this Day! Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)) (57:12), and, (The Day that Allah will not disgrace the Prophet (Muhammad) and those who believe with him. Their Light will run forward before them and (with their Records Books of deeds) in their right hands. They will say: "Our Lord! Keep perfect our Light for us and do not put it off till we cross over the Sirat (a slippery bridge over the Hell) safely and grant us forgiveness. Verily, You are Able to do all things") (66:8).

Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud commented on,

(Their Light will run forward before them). "They will pass on the Sirat. according to their deeds. The light that some people have will be as big as a mountain, while the light of others will be as big as a date tree. The people who will have the least light are those whose index fingers will sometimes be lit and extinguished at other times." Ibn Abi Hatim also reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Every person among the people of Tawhid (Islamic Monotheism) will gain a light on the Day of Resurrection. As for the hypocrite, his light will be extinguished. When the believers witness the hypocrite's light being extinguished, they will feel anxious. Hence, they will supplicate,

(Our Lord! Keep perfect our Light for us.)" Ad-Dahhak bin Muzahim said, "On the Day of Resurrection, everyone who has embraced the faith will be given a light. When they arrive at
the Sirat, the light of the hypocrites will be extinguished. When the believers see this, they will feel anxious and supplicate,

(ُرَبَّنَا أَثْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَانًا)

(Our Lord! Keep perfect our Light for us)."

Types of Believers and Types of Disbelievers

Consequently, there are several types of people. There are the believers whom the first four Ayat (2:2-5) in Surat Al-Baqarah describe. There are the disbelievers who were described in the next two Ayat. And there are two categories of hypocrites: the complete hypocrites who were mentioned in the parable of the fire, and the hesitant hypocrites, whose light of faith is sometimes lit and sometimes extinguished. The parable of the rain was revealed about this category, which is not as evil as the first category.

This is similar to the parables that were given in Surat An-Nur (chapter 24). Like the example of the believer and the faith that Allah put in his heart, compared to a brightly illuminated lamp, just like a rising star. This is the believer, whose heart is built on faith and receiving its support from the divine legislation that was revealed to it, without any impurities or imperfections, as we will come to know, Allah willing.

Allah gave a parable of the disbelievers who think that they have something, while in reality they have nothing; such people are those who have compounded ignorance. Allah said,

(وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أُعَمِّلْنَاهُمْ كَسَارَابٍ بَقِيَّةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ
الطَّمَنَانَ مَآءً حَتَّى إِذَا جَأَهُ إِذَا لمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا)

(As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water, until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing) (24:39).

Allah then gave the example of ignorant disbelievers, simple in their ignorance. He said;

(إِيَّاكَ لَمْ يَعْضَهُ مَوْجَةٌ مَّنْ فَوْقَهُ
أَوْ كَظَلَمَتْ فِي بَحْرٍ لَّجِئَ يَعْضَهُ مَوْجَةٌ مَّنْ فَوْقَهُ
مَوْجَةٌ مَّنْ فَوْقَهُ سَحَابٌ ظَلَمَتْ بَعْضُ هَا فَوْقَ
بَعْضٌ إِذَا أَخَرَجَ يَدُهُ لَمْ يَكْفِدْ يَرَاها وَمَنْ لَمْ يَجْعَل
اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مَنْ نُورٍ)
(Or (the state of a disbeliever) is like the darkness in a vast deep sea, overwhelmed by waves, topped by dark clouds, (layers of) darkness upon darkness: if a man stretches out his hand, he can hardly see it! And he for whom Allah has not appointed light, for him there is no light) (24:40).

Therefore, Allah divided the camp of the disbelievers into two groups, advocates and followers. Allah mentioned these two groups in the beginning of Surat Al-Hajj,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُجَدِّلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَبَعُّ
كلَّ شَيْطَانٍ مَّرِيدٍ)

(And among mankind is he who disputes about Allah, without knowledge, and follows every rebellious (disobedient to Allah) Shaytan (devil) (devoid of every kind of good)) (22:3), and,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُجَدِّلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا
هُدَا وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ)

(And among men is he who disputes about Allah, without knowledge or guidance, or a Book giving light (from Allah)) (22:8).

Furthermore, Allah has divided the group of the believers in the beginning of Surat Al-Waqi`ah (56) and at the end. He also divided them in Surat Al-Insan (76) into two groups, the Sabiqun (those who preceded); they are the "near ones" (Muqaribun) and Ashab Al-Yamin (the companions of the right), and they are righteous (Abrar).

In summary, these Ayat divide the believers into two categories, the near ones and righteous. Also, the disbelievers are of two types, advocates and followers. In addition, the hypocrites are divided into two types, pure hypocrites and those who have some hypocrisy in them. The Two Sahihs record that `Abdullah bin `Amr said that the Prophet said,

«ثَلَاثَ مِنْ كُنْ فيهِ كَانَ مُتَقَافِقًا حَالِصًا، وَمَنْ
كَانَ فِيهِ وَاحِدَةٌ مَّنْهُنَّ كَانَتْ فِيهِ حُصُلَةٌ منَ
النَّفَاقِ حَتَّى يَدَعَهَا: مَنْ إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَّبَ، وَإِذَا
وَعَدَ أَخْفَفَ، وَإِذَا ائْتَمَّ خَانَ»

(Whoever has the following three (characteristics) will be a pure hypocrite, and whoever has one of the following three characteristics will have one characteristic of hypocrisy, unless and
until he gives it up. Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie. Whenever he makes a covenant, he proves treacherous. Whenever he is entrusted, he breaches the trust.

Hence, man might have both a part of faith and a part of hypocrisy, whether in deed, as this Hadith stipulates, or in the creed, as the Ayah (2:20) stipulates.

**Types of Hearts**

Imam Ahmad recorded Abu Sa`id saying that the Messenger of Allah said:

«القُلُوبُ أَرْبَعَةٌ: قُلْبُ أَجْرَدٌ فِيهِ مِثْلُ السَّرَاجِ يُزِهِّرُ وَقُلْبُ أَعْلَفٌ مَرْبُوطٌ عَلَى غَلَافِهِ وَقُلْبُ مَنْكُوسٌ وَقُلْبُ مُصَفَّحٍ، فَأَمَّا القُلْبُ الأَجْرَدُ فَقُلْبُ الْمُؤْمِنِ فَسَيْرَاجُهُ فِيهِ نُورُهُ، وَأَمَّا القُلْبُ الأَعْلَفُ فَقُلْبُ الْكَافِرِ، وَأَمَّا القُلْبُ المَنْكُوسُ فَقُلْبُ الْمُنَافِقِ الْخَالِصُ عَرَفَ ثُمَّ أَنْكَرَ وَأَمَّا القُلْبُ المُصَفَّحٍ فَقُلْبُ فِيهِ إِيمَانٌ وَنِفَاقٌ وَمِثْلُ الْإِيمَانِ فِيهِ كَمَثْلِ الْبَقْلَةِ يَمْدُهَا الْمَاءُ الطَّيِّبُ وَمِثْلُ النِّفَاقِ فِيهِ كَمَثْلِ الْقُرْحَةِ يَمْدُهَا الْقَيْحُ وَالْدَمُ قَأْيُ الْمَادَّتَيْنِ غَلَبَتْ عَلَى الْأُخْرَى غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْهِ»

(The hearts are four (types): polished as shiny as the radiating lamp, a sealed heart with a knot tied around its seal, a heart that is turned upside down and a wrapped heart. As for the polished heart, it is the heart of the believer and the lamp is the light of faith. The sealed heart is the heart of the disbeliever. The heart that is turned upside down is the heart of the pure hypocrite, because he had knowledge but denied it. As for the wrapped heart, it is a heart that contains belief and hypocrisy. The example of faith in this heart, is the example of the herb that is sustained by pure water. The example of hypocrisy in it, is the example of an ulcer that thrives on pus and blood. Whichever of the two substances has the upper hand, it will have the upper hand on that heart). This Hadith has a Jayid Hasan (good) chain of narration.

Allah said,
(And if Allah willed, He would have taken away their hearing and their sight. Certainly, Allah has power over all things). Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement, (وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللَّهُ لْتَذَهَّبْ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٍ)

(And if Allah willed, He would have taken away their hearing and their sight), "Because they abandoned the truth after they had knowledge in it."

(إنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٍ)

(Certainly, Allah has power over all things). Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah is able to punish or pardon His servants as He wills." Ibn Jarir commented, "Allah only described Himself with the ability to do everything in this Ayah as a warning to the hypocrites of His control over everything, and to inform them that His ability completely encompasses them and that He is able to take away their hearing and sight."

Ibn Jarir and several other scholars of Tafsir stated that these two parables are about the same kind of hypocrite. So the `or` mentioned in,

(أَوْ كَصِيبٍ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ)

(Or like a rainstorm from the sky) means `and`, just as the Ayah,

(وَلَا تَطِعُ مِنْهُمْ عَاتِيَةً أَوْ كَفُورًا)

(And obey neither a sinner or a disbeliever among them). Therefore, `or` in the Ayah includes a choice of using either example for the hypocrites. Also, Al-Qurtubi said that `or` means, "To show compatibility of the two choices, just as when one says, `Sit with Al-Hasan or Ibn Sirin.' According to the view of Az-Zamakhshari, `so it means each of these persons is the same as the other, so you may sit with either one of them.' The meaning of `or` thus becomes `either.' Allah gave these two examples of the hypocrites, because they both perfectly describe them."

I (Ibn Kathir) say, these descriptions are related to the type of hypocrite, because there is a difference between them as we stated. For instance, Allah mentioned these types in Surat Bara'ah (chapter 9) when He repeated the statement, "And among them" three times, describing their types, characteristics, statements and deeds. So the two examples mentioned here describe two types of hypocrites whose characteristics are similar. For instance, Allah
gave two examples in Surat Al-Nur, one for the advocates of disbelief and one for the followers of disbelief, He said,

(وَالَّذينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَلُهُمْ كُسَارَابٍ بَقِيَةٍ)

(As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert) (24:39), until,

(أَوْ كَظْلَمَتِ فِي بَحْرٍ لَجِيءٍ)

(Or (the state of a disbeliever) is like the darkness in a vast deep sea) (24:40).

The first example is of the advocates of disbelief who have complex ignorance, while the second is about the followers who have simple ignorance. Allah knows best.

(يَأْيُهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ الَّذِي خَلَقْكُمْ وَالذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَقُونَ - الَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَاءً وَأَنُزِلْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَااءً فَأَخْرِجَ بِهِ مِنَ الْثَّمَرَاتِ رَزْقًا لَكُمْ فَلا تَجَّعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْثِمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(21. O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may acquire Taqwa.) (22. Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down water (rain) from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know (that He alone has the right to be worshipped).)

**Tawhid Al-Uluhiyyah**

Allah next mentioned His Oneness in divinity and stated that He has favored His servants by bringing them to life after they did not exist. He also surrounded them with blessings, both hidden and apparent. He made the earth a resting place for them, just like the bed, stable with the firm mountains.

(وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَاءً)
(And the sky as a canopy) meaning, `a ceiling'. Similarly, Allah said in another Ayah,

وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا مَّحْفُوظًا وَهُمْ عَنْ عَيْنِهَا مُعْرَضُونَ

(And We have made the heaven a roof, safe and well-guarded. Yet they turn away from its signs (i.e. sun, moon, winds, clouds)) (21:32).

وَأَنزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءَ مَآءَ

(And sends down for you water (rain) from the sky) meaning, through the clouds, when they need the rain. Hence, Allah caused the various types of vegetation and fruits to grow as a means of sustenance for people and their cattle. Allah reiterated this bounty in various parts of the Qur'an.

There is another Ayah that is similar to this Ayah (2:22), that is, Allah's statement,

الذِّي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَآءًا وَصَوْرَكُمْ فَأَحْسِنَ صُوْرَكُمْ وَرِزْقُكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِبَتِ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

(It is He Who has made for you the earth as a dwelling place and the sky as a canopy, and has given you shape and made your shapes good (looking) and has provided you with good things. That is Allah, your Lord, so Blessed be Allah, the Lord of all that exists) (40:64).

The meaning that is reiterated here is that Allah is the Creator, the Sustainer, the Owner and Provider of this life, all that is in and on it. Hence, He alone deserves to be worshipped, and no one and nothing is to be associated with Him. This is why Allah said next,

فَلا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أُنْدَاداً وَأَنْثِمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

(Then do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know (that He alone has the right to be worshipped)) (2:22).

The Two Sahih record that Ibn Mas'ud said, "I said to the Messenger of Allah , `Which evil deed is the worst with Allah' He said,
(To take an equal with Allah, while He alone created you.)"

Also, Mu`adh narrated the Prophet's statement,

«أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الله نَدَا وَهُوَ خَلَقَكَ»

(Do you know Allah's right on His servants They must worship Him alone and refrain from associating anything with Him in worship.) Another Hadith states,

«لَمَّا يُقُولُنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ مَا شَاءَ الله وَسَاءَ فُلَانٌ»

(None of you should say, `What Allah and so-and-so person wills. Rather, let him say, `What Allah wills, and then what so-and-so person wills.)

**Hadith with the same Meaning** Imam Ahmad narrated that Al-Harith Al-Ash`ari said that the Prophet of Allah said,

«إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَمَرَ يَحْيُى بْنَ زَكْرِيَّ بِغَزْيَةٍ عَلَيْهِ الْسَلَّامُ بِخَمْسِ كُلُمَاتٍ أَنْ يَعْمَلَ بِهِنَّ، وَأَنْ يَأْمُرَ بْنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنْ يَعْمَلُوا بِهِنَّ وَأَنْ يَكُونَ كَافِرًا بِهِ»

بهًا، فقال له عيسى عليه السلام: إنك قد أمرت بخمس كلمات أن تعمل بهن وتأمر بني إسرائيل أن يعملوا بهن فامرأة أن تبشعهم وإمامًا أن أبلغهم، فقال: يا أخي إني أخشى إن سبقتني أن
أَعْدَبَ أَوْ يُخْسَفَ بَيْنَكُمْ يُحِيَّى بِنُ الزَّكَرِيَّةِ بَنُي إِسْرَائِيلَ فِي بَيْتِ الْمُقْدَسِ حَتًى امْتِلَّ الْمُسْجِدُ، فَقَدْ عَدَّلَ عَلَى الشَّرَفِ فِي الْقُدْسِ اَلْهُ وَأَتَنَى عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمْرَنِي بِخَمْسِ كُلَّمَاتٍ أَنْ أَعْمَلَ بِهِنَّ وَأَمْرَكُمْ أَنْ تَعْمَلُوا بِهِنَّ أَوْلِيَاهُنَّ، أَنْ تَعْبَدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَشْرَكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا، فَإِنَّ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ كَمِثْلٌ رَجُلٌ اِسْتَرِى عَبْدًا مِنْ خَلَقِ مَالِهِ بُوْرَقِ أَوْ ذَهَبٍ فَجَعَلْ يَعْمَلْ وَيُؤْدِي غَنْثَهُ إِلَى غَيْرِ سَيْبَةِ، فَأَيَّكُمْ يَسُرُّهُ أَنْ يَكُونْ عَبْدًا كَذَلِكَ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقْكُمْ وَرَزَقْكُمْ فَاعْبِدُوهُ وَلَا تَشْرَكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا. وَاَمْرُكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَنْصَبُ وَجْهُهُ لَوْجَهَ عَبْدُهُ مَا لَمْ يَلْتَفَّتْ فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمْ قَلْلَا تَلْتَفَّوْا. وَاَمْرُكُمْ بِالصِّيَامِ فَإِنَّ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ كَمِثْلٌ رَجُلٌ مَعْهُ صَرْرَةٌ مِنْ مَسْكٍ فِي عَصَابَةٍ كُلُّهُمْ يُجِدُّ رِيحَ الْمَسْكَ وَإِنَّ خَلُوفُ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمَسْكَ. وَاَمِرُكُمْ بِالصَّدَّقَةِ فَإِنَّ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ كَمِثْلٌ رَجُلٌ أَسْرَهُ العَدُوُّ فَشَدُّوا يَدَيْهِ إِلَى عَنْقِهِ وَقَدْ مُهْلَكُ لِيَضْرِبُوا عَنْقَهُ قَالُوهُمْ: هَلْ لَكُمْ أَقَدْنَى
(Allah commanded Yahya bin Zakariya to implement five commands and to order the Children of Israel to implement them, but Yahya was slow in carrying out these commands. `Isa said to Yahya, `You were ordered to implement five commands and to order the Children of Israel to implement them. So either order, or I will do it.' Yahya said, 'My brother! I fear that if you do it before me, I will be punished or the earth will be shaken under my feet.' Hence, Yahya bin Zakariya called the Children of Israel to Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), until they filled the Masjid. He sat on the balcony, thanked Allah and praised him and then said, "Allah ordered me to implement five commandments and that I should order you to adhere to them. The first is that you worship Allah alone and not associate any with Him. The example of this command is the example of a man who bought a servant from his money with paper or gold. The servant started to work for the master, but was paying the profits to another person. Who among you would like his servant to do that Allah created you and sustains you. Therefore, worship Him alone and do not associate anything with Him. I also command you to pray, for Allah directs His Face towards His servant's face, as long as the servant does not turn away. So when you pray, do not turn your heads to and fro. I also command you to fast. The example of it is the example of a man in a group of men and he has some musk wrapped in a piece of cloth, and consequently, all of the group smells the scent of the wrapped musk. Verily, the odor of the mouth of a fasting person is better before Allah than the scent of musk. I also command you to give charity. The example of this is the example of a man who was captured by the enemy. They tied his hands to his neck and brought him forth to cut off his neck. He said to them, 'Can I pay a ransom for myself?' He kept ransoming himself with small and large amounts until he liberated himself. I also command you to always remember Allah. The example of this deed is that of a man who the enemy is tirelessly pursuing. He takes refuge in a fortified fort. When the servant remembers Allah, he will be resorting to the best refuge from Satan.)

Al-Harith then narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,
(And I order you with five commandments that Allah has ordered me. Stick to the Jama`ah (community of the faithful), listen and obey (your leaders) and perform Hijrah (migration) and Jihad for the sake of Allah. Whoever abandons the Jama`ah, even the distance of a hand span, will have removed the tie of Islam from his neck, unless he returns. Whoever uses the slogans of Jahiliyah (the pre-Islamic period of ignorance) he will be among those kneeling in Jahannam (Hellfire).) They said, "O Messenger of Allah! Even if he prays and fasts." He said, "Even if he prays, fasts and claims to be Muslim. So call the Muslims with their names that Allah has called them: 'The Muslims, the believing servants of Allah'."

This is a Hasan Hadith, and it contains the statement, "Allah has created and sustains you, so worship Him and do not associate anything with Him in worship." This statement is relevant in the Ayat (2:21-22) we are discussing here and supports singling Allah in worship, without partners.

Several scholars of Tafsir, like Ar-Razi and others, used these Ayat as an argument for the existence of the Creator, and it is a most worthy method of argument. Indeed, whoever ponders over the things that exist, the higher and lower creatures, their various shapes, colors, behavior, benefits and ecological roles, then he will realize the ability, wisdom, knowledge, perfection and majesty of their Creator. Once a bedouin was asked about the evidence to Allah's existence, he responded, "All praise is due to Allah! The camel's dung testifies to the existence of the camel, and the track testifies to the fact that someone was walking. A sky that holds the giant stars, a land that has fairways and a sea that has waves, does not all of this testify that the Most Kind, Most Knowledgeable exists".

Hence, whoever gazes at the sky in its immensity, its expanse, and the various kinds of planets in it, some of which appear stationary in the sky - whoever gazes at the seas that surround the land from all sides, and the mountains that were placed on the earth to stabilize it, so that
whoever lives on land, whatever their shape and color, are able to live and thrive - whoever reads Allah's statement,

(وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جَدَّةً بِيضُ وَحَمرُ مُخْتَلِفُ أَلوَنَهَا
وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودُونَ النَّاسَ وَالدُّوَابَّ وَالأَنْعَم
مُخْتَلِفُ أَلوَنَهَا كَذَٰلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَحْشَى اللَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ
الْعُلُمَاءُ)

(And among the mountains are streaks white and red, of varying colours and (others) very black. And likewise, men and Ad-Dawabb (moving (living) creatures, beasts) and cattle are of various colours. It is only those who have knowledge among His servants that fear Allah) (35: 27-28).

Whoever thinks about the running rivers that travel from area to area bringing benefit, whoever ponders over what Allah has created on earth; various animals and plants of different tastes, scents, shapes and colors that are a result of unity between land and water, whoever thinks about all of this then he will realize that these facts testify to the existence of the Creator, His perfect ability, wisdom, mercy, kindness, generosity and His overall compassion for His creation. There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, nor is there a Lord besides Him, upon Him we rely and to Him we turn in repentance. There are numerous Ayat in the Qur'an on this subject.

(وَإِنْ كَنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مَّمَّا نُزِّلْتُنَا عَلَى عَبْدِنَا فَأُتْنَا
بِسُورَةً مِّن مَّثَلٍّ وَأَذَعَّوا شَهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
إِنْ كَنْتُمْ صَدِيقِينَ - فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا
فَأُتْقِوا النَّارَ الَّتِى وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالحِجَّارَةُ أُعِدَّتُ
لِلْكَفِّرِينَ)

(23. And if you (Arab pagans, Jews, and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Qur'an) to Our servant (Muhammad), then produce a Surah (chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful).
(24. But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.)
The Message of Messenger of Allah is True

Allah begins to prove the truth of prophethood after He stated that there is no deity worthy of worship except Him. Allah said to the disbelievers,

وَإِنَّكُنْتُمْ فِي رِيْبٍ مَّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَي عَبْدِنَا

(And if you (Arab pagans, Jews, and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Qur'an) to Our servant) meaning, Muhammad,

فَأْتُوا بسُورَةٍ

(then produce a Surah (chapter)) meaning, similar to what he brought to you. Hence, if you claim that what he was sent with did not come from Allah, then produce something similar to what he has brought to you, using the help of anyone you wish instead of Allah. However, you will not be able to succeed in this quest. Ibn `Abbas said that,

شَهَدَاءَكُمْ

(your witnesses) means "Aids." Also, As-Suddi reported that Abu Malik said the Ayah means, "Your partners, meaning, some other people to help you in that. Meaning then go and seek the help of your deities to support and aid you." Also, Mujahid said that,

وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ

(and call your witnesses) means, "People, meaning, wise and eloquent men who will provide the testimony that you seek."

The Challenge

Allah challenged the disbelievers in various parts of the Qur’an. For instance, Allah said in Surat Al-Qasas (28:49),

قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِكِتَابٍ مَّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ هُوَ أَهْدَى مِنْ هَٰٓمَا أَتْبَعَهُ إِنْ كُنتُمْ صَدِيقِينَ

(Say (to them, O Muhammad): “Then bring a Book from Allah, which is a better guide than these two (the Tawrah (Torah) and the Qur’an), that I may follow it, if you are truthful”). Also, Allah said in Surat Al-Isra’ (17:88),
(Say: "If mankind and the Jinn were together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another.") Allah said in Surat Hud (11:13),

(Or they say, "He (Prophet Muhammad ) forged it (the Qur'an)." Say: "Bring you then ten forged Surahs (chapters) like it, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth!"), and in Surat Yunus (10:37-38),

(And this Qur'an is not such as could ever be produced by other than Allah (Lord of the heavens and the earth), but it is a confirmation of (the revelation) which was before it (i.e. the Tawrah, and the Injil), and a full explanation of the Book (i.e. Laws decreed for mankind) wherein there is no doubt from the Lord of all that exists.) (Or do they say: "He (Muhammad ) has forged it” Say: "Bring then a Surah (chapter) like it, and call upon whomsoever you can besides Allah, if you are truthful!"). All of these Ayat were revealed in Makkah.

Allah also challenged the disbelievers in the Ayat that were revealed in Al-Madinah. In this Ayah, Allah said,
(And if you (Arab pagans, Jews, and Christians) are in Rayb) meaning, doubt.

(Concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Qur'an) to Our servant) meaning, Muhammad ,

(then produce a Surah (chapter) the like thereof) meaning, similar to the Qur'an. This is the Tafsir of Mujahid, Qatadah, Ibn Jarir At-Tabari, Az-Zamakhshari and Ar-Razi. Ar-Razi said that this is the Tafsir of `Umar, Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn `Abbas, Al-Hasan Al-Basri and the majority of the scholars. And he gave preference to this view and mentioned the fact that Allah has challenged the disbelievers as individuals and as groups, whether literate or illiterate, thus making the challenge truly complete. This type of challenge is more daring than simply challenging the disbelievers who might not be literate or knowledgeable. This is why Allah said,

(Bring you then ten forged Surahs (chapters) like it) (11:13), and,

(They could not produce the like thereof) (17:88).

Therefore, this is a general challenge to the Arab disbelievers, the most eloquent among all nations. Allah challenged the Arab disbelievers both in Makkah and Al-Madinah several times, especially since they had tremendous hatred and enmity for the Prophet and his religion. Yet, they were unable to succeed in answering the challenge, and this is why Allah said,

(But if you do it not, and you can never do it), indicating that they will never be able to answer the challenge. This is another miracle, in that, Allah clearly stated without doubt that the Qur'an will never be opposed or challenged by anything similar to it, for eternity. This is a true statement that has not been changed until the present and shall never change. How can anyone be able to produce something like the Qur'an, when the Qur'an is the Word of Allah Who created everything How can the words of the created ever be similar to the Words of the Creator
Examples of the Miracle of the Qur'an

Whoever reads through the Qur'an will realize that it contains various levels of superiority through both the apparent and hidden meanings that it mentions. Allah said,

(Alif Lam Ra. (This is) a Book, the verses whereof are perfect (in every sphere of knowledge, etc.), and then explained in detail from One (Allah), Who is Wise and well-acquainted (with all things)) (11:1)

So the expressions in the Qur'an are perfect and its meanings are explained. Further, every word and meaning in the Qur'an is eloquent and cannot be surpassed. The Qur'an also mentioned the stories of the people of the past; and these accounts and stories occurred exactly as the Qur'an stated. Also, the Qur'an commanded every type of righteousness and forbade every type of evil, just as Allah stated,

(And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice) (6:115). meaning, true in the stories it narrates and just in its Laws. The Qur'an is true, just and full of guidance. It does not contain exaggerations, lies or falsehood, unlike Arabic and other types of poems that contained lies. These poems, conform with the popular statement, "The most eloquent speech is the one that contains the most lies!" Sometimes, one would find a long poem that mainly contains descriptions of women, horses or alcohol. Or, the poem might contain praise or the description of a certain person, horse, camel, war, incident, fear, lion, or other types of items and objects. Such praise or descriptions do not bring any benefit, except shed light on the poet's ability to clearly and eloquently describe such items. Yet, one will only be able to find one or two sentences in many long poems that elaborate on the main theme of the poem, while the rest of the poem contains insignificant descriptions and repetitions.

As for the Qur'an, it is entirely eloquent in the most perfect manner, as those who have knowledge in such matters and understand Arabic methods of speech and expressions concur. When one reads through the stories in the Qur'an, he will find them fruitful, whether they were in extended or short forms, repeated or not. The more these stories are repeated, the more fruitful and beautiful they become. The Qur'an does not become old when one repeats reciting it, nor do the scholars ever get bored with it. When the Qur'an mentions the subject of warning and promises, it presents truths that would make solid, firm mountains shake, so what about the comprehending, understanding hearts When the Qur'an promises, it opens the hearts and the ears, making them eager to attain the abode of peace - Paradise - and to be the neighbors of the Throne of the Most Beneficent. For instance, on the subject of promises and encouragement, the Qur'an said,
(No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do) (32:17), and,

(There will be) therein all that inner selves could desire, and all that eyes could delight in and you will abide therein forever) (43:71).

On the subject of warning and discouragement;

(Do you then feel secure that He will not cause a side of the land to swallow you up) (17:68), and,

(Do you feel secure that He, Who is over the heaven (Allah), will not cause the earth to sink with you, and then it should quake Or do you feel secure that He, Who is over the heaven (Allah), will not send against you a violent whirlwind Then you shall know how (terrible) has been My warning) (67:16-17).

On the subject of threats, the Qur'an said,

(So We punished each (of them) for his sins) (29:40). Also, on the subject of soft advice, the Qur'an said,
(Tell Me, (even) if We do let them enjoy for years. And afterwards comes to them that (punishment) which they had been promised. All that with which they used to enjoy shall not avail them) (26:205-207).

There are many other examples of the eloquence, beauty, and benefits of the Qur'an.

When the Qur'an is discussing Laws, commandments and prohibitions, it commands every type of righteous, good, pleasing and beneficial act. It also forbids every type of evil, disliked and amoral act. Ibn Mas`ud and other scholars of the Salaf said, "When you hear what Allah said in the Qur'an, such as,

(He (Muhammad ) commands them for Al-Ma`ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); he allows them as lawful At-Tayyibat (i.e. all good and lawful things), and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khaba`ith (i.e. all evil and unlawful things), he releases them from their heavy burdens and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them) (7:157).

When the Ayat mention Resurrection and the horrors that will occur on that Day, and Paradise and the Fire and the joys and safe refuge that Allah prepared for His loyal friends, or torment and Hell for His enemies, these Ayat contain glad tidings or warnings. The Ayat then call to perform good deeds and avoid evil deeds, making the life of this world less favorable and the Hereafter more favorable. They also establish the correct methods and guide to Allah's straight path and just legislation, all the while ridding the hearts of the evil of the cursed devil.

The Qur'an is the Greatest Miracle given to the Prophet

The Two Sahihs record that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,
(Every Prophet was given a miracle, the type of which brings mankind to faith. What I was given is a revelation that Allah sent down to me. Yet, I hope that I will have the most following on the Day of Resurrection.)

This is the wording narrated by Muslim. The Prophet stated that among the Prophets he was given a revelation, meaning, he was especially entrusted with the miraculous Qur'an that challenged mankind to produce something similar to it. As for the rest of the divinely revealed Books, they were not miraculous according to many scholars. Allah knows best. The Prophet was also aided with innumerable signs and indications that testify to the truth of his prophethood and what he was sent with, all thanks and praise is due to Allah.

**Meaning of `Stones**

Allah said,

(قَانَّفُوا الْتَّارِ الَّتَى وُقِودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ)

(Then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers) (2:24).

`Fuel` is wood, or similar substances, used to start and feed a fire. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَأَمَّا الْقَسِيطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطِبًا)

(And as for the Qasitun (disbelievers who deviated from the right path), they shall be firewood for Hell) (72:15), and,
(Certainly you (disbelievers) and that which you are worshipping now besides Allah, are (but) fuel for Hell! (Surely) you enter it. Had these (idols) been alilah (gods), they would not have entered there (Hell), and all of them will abide therein) (21:98-99).

The stones mentioned here are the giant, rotten, black, sulfuric stones that become the hottest when heated, may Allah save us from this evil end. It was also reported that the stones mentioned here are the idols and rivals that were worshipped instead of Allah, just as Allah said,

(عِيدَتُ لِلَّكُفَّرِينَ)

(Prepared for the disbelievers)

It appears most obvious that it refers to the Fire that is fueled by men and stones, and it also may refer to the stones themselves. There is no contradiction between these two views, because they are dependent upon each other. ‘Prepared’ means, it is ‘kept’ and will surely touch those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messenger. Ibn Ishaq narrated that Muhammad said that `Ikrimah or Sa'id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas said,

(عِيدَتُ لِلَّكُفَّرِينَ)

(Prepared for the disbelievers),

"For those who embrace the disbelief that you (disbelievers) have embraced."
Jahannam (Hellfire) exists now

Many of the Imams of the Sunnah used this Ayah to prove that the Fire exists now. This is because Allah said,

(أعدت)

(prepared) meaning, prepared and kept. There are many Hadiths on this subject. For instance, the Prophet said,

«تجاجت الجنة والنار»

(Paradise and the Fire had an argument...)

Also, the Prophet said,

استأذنت النار ربها فقالت: رب أكل بعضي بعضاً فأذن لها بنفسين. نفس في الشناء ونفس في الصييف

(The Fire sought the permission of her Lord. She said, 'O my Lord! Some parts of me consumed the other parts.' And Allah allowed her two periods to exhale, one in winter and one in summer.)

Also, there is a Hadith recorded from Ibn Mas'ud that the Companions heard the sound of a falling object. When they asked about it, the Messenger of Allah said,

هذا حجر ألقى به من شفير جهد من سبعين سنة، الآن وصل إلى قعرها

(This is a stone that was thrown from the top of Jahannam seventy years ago, but only now reached its bottom.) This Hadith is in Sahih Muslim.

There are many Hadiths that are Mutawatir (narrated by many different chains of narrations) on this subject, such as the Hadiths about the eclipse prayer, the night of Isra' etc.

Allah's statements,
(Then produce a Surah (chapter) of the like thereof) (2:23), and,

(A Surah (chapter) like it) (10:38) this includes the short and long Surahs of the Qur’an. Therefore, the challenge to creation stands with regards to both the long and short Surahs, and there is no disagreement that I know of on this fact between the scholars of old and new.

Before he became Muslim, `Amr bin Al-`As met Musaylimah the Liar who asked him, "What has recently been revealed to your fellow (meaning Muhammad) in Makkah". `Amr said, "A short, yet eloquent Surah." He asked, "What is it" He said,

(وَالعَصْرُ - إنَّ الإِنْسَانَ لَفِي حُسْرٍ)

By Al-`Asr (the time). Verily, man is in loss,) (103:1-2)

Musaylimah thought for a while and said, "A similar Surah was also revealed to me." `Amr asked, "What is it" He said, "O Wabr, O Wabr (i.e. a wild cat), you are but two ears and a chest, and the rest of you is unworthy and thin." `Amr said, "By Allah! You know that I know that you are lying."

(وَبَشَّرُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّلِحَاتِ أنَّ لَهُمِ
جَنَّتٌ تَجْرِى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَرُ كُلُّمَا رَزَقْتُوهَا مِنْهَا
مِنْ ثُمَرَةٍ رَزَقْتُوهَا هَذَا الَّذِى رَزَقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلٍ
وَأُوْلَاهُ مَتَشْبِهِهَا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أُزُوجُ مُطَهَّرُهُ وَهُمْ
فيَهَا خَلِيْدُونَ)

(25. And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say: "This is what we were provided with before," and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste) and they shall have therein Azwajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives), and they will abide therein forever.)

Rewards of Righteous Believers
After mentioning the torment that Allah has prepared for His miserable enemies who disbelieve in Him and in His Messengers, He mentions the condition of His happy, loyal friends who believe in Him and in His Messengers, adhere to the faith and perform the good deeds. This is the reason why the Qur'an was called Mathani, based on the correct opinion of the scholars. We will elaborate upon this subject later. Mathani means to mention faith and then disbelief, or vice versa. Or, Allah mentions the miserable and then the happy, or vice versa. As for mentioning similar things, it is called Tashabbuh, as we will come to know, Allah willing. Allah said,

(And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)). Consequently, Allah stated that Paradise has rivers that run beneath it, meaning, underneath its trees and rooms. From Hadiths it is learned that the rivers of Paradise do not run in valleys, and that the banks of Al-Kawthar (the Prophet's lake in Paradise) are made of domes of hollow pearls, the sand of Paradise is made of scented musk while its stones are made from pearls and jewels. We ask Allah to grant Paradise to us, verily, He is the Most Beneficent, Most Gracious.

Ibn Abi Hatim reported that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

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Ibn Abi Hatim reported that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

(The rivers of Paradise spring from beneath hills, or mountains of musk.)

He also reported from Masruq that 'Abdullah said, "The rivers of Paradise spring from beneath mountains of musk."

The similarity between the Fruits of Paradise

Allah said next,

(And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)). Consequently, Allah stated that Paradise has rivers that run beneath it, meaning, underneath its trees and rooms. From Hadiths it is learned that the rivers of Paradise do not run in valleys, and that the banks of Al-Kawthar (the Prophet's lake in Paradise) are made of domes of hollow pearls, the sand of Paradise is made of scented musk while its stones are made from pearls and jewels. We ask Allah to grant Paradise to us, verily, He is the Most Beneficent, Most Gracious.

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He also reported from Masruq that 'Abdullah said, "The rivers of Paradise spring from beneath mountains of musk."

The similarity between the Fruits of Paradise

Allah said next,
Ibn Abi Hatim reported that Yahya bin Abi Kathir said, "The grass of Paradise is made of saffron, its hills from musk and the boys of everlasting youth will serve the believers with fruits which they will eat. They will then be brought similar fruits, and the people of Paradise will comment, 'This is the same as what you have just brought us.' The boys will say to them, 'Eat, for the color is the same, but the taste is different. Hence Allah's statement, (وَأَنْتُوَا يَهِي مُتَشَشَّبَهَا) (and they will be given things in resemblance)." Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi narrated that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that Abu Al-` Aliyah said that, (وَأَنْتُوَا يَهِي مُتَشَشَّبَهَا) (and they will be given things in resemblance) means, "They look like each other, but the taste is different." Also, Ikrimah said, (وَأَنْتُوَا يَهِي مُتَشَشَّبَهَا) (and they will be given things in resemblance) "They are similar to the fruits of this life, but the fruits of Paradise taste better." Sufyan Ath-Thawri reported from Al-A` mash, from Abu Thubyan, that Ibn `Abbas said, "Nothing in Paradise resembles anything in the life of this world, except in name." In another narration, Ibn `Abbas said, "Only the names are similar between what is in this life and what is in Paradise."

The Wives of the People of Paradise are Pure

Allah said, (وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ) (and they shall have therein Azwajun Mutahharatun). Ibn Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Purified from filth and impurity." Also, Mujahid said, "From menstruation, relieving the call of nature, urine, spit, semen and pregnancies." Also, Qatadah said, "Purified from impurity and sin." In another narration, he said, "From menstruation and pregnancies." Further, `Ata`, Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, Abu Salih, `Atiyah and As-Suddi were reported to have said similarly.

Allah's statement, (وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَلِدُونَ) (and they will abide therein forever) meaning ultimate happiness, for the believers will enjoy everlasting delight, safe from death and disruption of their bliss, for it never ends or ceases.
We ask Allah to make us among these believers, for He is the Most Generous, Most Kind and Most merciful.

(إنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَسْتَحَبِّى أن يَضْرِبَ مَثَالًا مَّا بَعْوَضَةَ فَمَا فَوْقَهَا قَأْمًا الَّذِينَ عَامَّنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَبِّهِمْ وأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهِ ذَلِكَ مَثَالًا يَضْلِلُ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَضْلِلُ بِهِ إِلَّا الْقَسَقِينَ الَّذِينَ يَنْفَضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يَوْلِدُونَ وَيَفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولِيَّ الْكَفْرِ الْخَسَرُونَ)

(26. Verily, Allah is not ashamed to set forth a parable even of a mosquito or so much more when it is bigger (or less when it is smaller) than it. And as for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord, but as for those who disbelieve, they say: "What did Allah intend by this parable" By it He misleads many, and many He guides thereby. And He misleads thereby only the Fasiqin (the rebellious, disobedient to Allah). (27. Those who break Allah's covenant after ratifying it, and sever what Allah has ordered to be joined and do mischief on earth, it is they who are the losers.)

In his Tafsir, As-Suddi reported that Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud, and some Companions said; "When Allah gave these two examples of the hypocrites" meaning Allah's statements,

(مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثِلِ الَّذِى أَسْتَوَقَدَ نَارًا)

(Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindled a fire), and,

(أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مَّنَ السَّمَآءِ)

(Or like a rainstorm from the sky). 'The hypocrites said, `Allah's far more exalted than for Him to make such examples.' So Allah revealed these Ayat (2:26-27) up to:
(Who are the losers)’. Said said that Qatadah said, “Allah does not shy away from the truth when He mentions a matter as a parable, whether this matter is significant or not. When Allah mentioned the flies and the spider in His Book, the people of misguidance said, ‘Why did Allah mention these things?’ So Allah revealed;

(إنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُسْتَحِي أَن يُضْرِبَ مَثَالًا مَّا بَعْوِضَةً فَمَا قُوَّقُهاَ)

(Verily, Allah is not ashamed to set forth a parable even of a mosquito or so much more when it is bigger (or less when it is smaller) than it)."

A Parable about the Life of This World

Abu Ja’far Ar-Razi reported that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas commented on this Ayah (2:26); “This is an example that Allah has given for the life of this world. The mosquito lives as long as it needs food, but when it gets fat, it dies. This is also the example of people whom Allah mentioned in the Qur’an: when they acquire (and collect the delights of) the life of this world, Allah then takes them away.” Afterwards, he recited,

(قَلْمًا نَسَوْا مَا ذَكَرُوا بِهِ فَتَحَنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلٍّ شَيْءٍ)

(So, when they forgot (the warning) with which they had been reminded, We opened for them the gates of every (pleasant) thing) (6:44)

In this Ayah (2:26) Allah stated that He does not shy away or hesitate in making an example or parable of anything, whether the example involves a significant or an insignificant matter.

Allah’s statement,

(فَمَا قُوَّقُهَاَ)

(Or so much more when it is bigger than it) Fama fawqaha means, something bigger than the mosquito, which is one of the most insignificant and tiniest of creatures. Muslim narrated that Aishah said that the Messenger of Allah said,
No Muslim is harmed by a thorn, Fama fawqaha (or something larger), but a good deed will be written for him and an evil deed will be erased from his record.)

So Allah has informed us that there is no matter that is too small that is exempt from being used as an example, even if it was as insignificant as a mosquito or a spider. Allah said,

(O mankind! A similitude has been coined, so listen to it (carefully): Verily, those on whom you call besides Allah, cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly snatches away a thing from them, they will have no power to release it from the fly. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought.) (22:73),

(The likeness of those who take (false deities as) Awliya’ (protectors, helpers) other than Allah is the likeness of a spider who builds (for itself) a house; but verily, the frailest (weakest) of houses is the spider’s house if they but knew.) (29:41), and,

(Ałm Tər Kifə Qərəbə ləhə Məntələ Kəlmə Təbiyyə Kəşərə Təbiyyə Aşələsə Təbaat Qərəğə Vəfi Səməa - Təwəttü Akləhə ələrə Hər Bədən Rəbərə Və əsərəbə ləhə)
See you not how Allah sets forth a parable A goodly word as a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the sky (i.e. very high). Giving its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord, and Allah sets forth parables for mankind in order that they may remember. And the parable of an evil word is that of an evil tree uprooted from the surface of earth, having no stability. Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in life of this world (i.e. they will keep on worshipping Allah alone and none else), and in the Hereafter. And Allah will cause the Zalimin (polytheists and wrongdoers) to go astray those and Allah does what He wills.) (14:24-27). Allah said,

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(He sets forth for you a parable from your own selves: Do you have partners among those whom your right hands possess (i.e. your servants) to share as equals in the wealth we have bestowed on you) (30:28).

Mujahid commented on Allah's statement,

(Verily, Allah is not ashamed to set forth a parable even of a mosquito or so much more when it is bigger than it.) "The believers believe in these parables, whether they involve large matters or small, because they know that they are the truth from their Lord, and Allah guides the believers by these parables."

In his Tafsir, As-Suddi reported that Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud and other people among the Companions said,

(By it He misleads many), "Meaning the hypocrites. Allah guides the believers with these parables, and the straying of the hypocrites increases when they reject the parables that Allah mentioned for them which they know are true. This is how Allah misleads them."

(And He guides thereby) meaning, with the parables,

(many) from among the people of faith and conviction. Allah adds guidance to their guidance, and faith to their faith, because they firmly believe in what they know to be true, that is, the parables that Allah has mentioned. This is guidance that Allah grants them;
(And He misleads thereby only the Fasiqin (the rebellious, disobedient to Allah)), meaning, the hypocrites. The Arabs say that the date has Fasaqat, when it comes out of its skin, and they call the mouse a Fuwaysiqah, because it leaves its den to cause mischief. The Two Sahihs recorded `A’ishah saying that the Messenger of Allah said,

«خمْسُ ٍفَوْاسِقٌ ٍيُقْتَلُنَّ ٍفِي ٍالْحَلِّ ٍوَالْحَرَّمِ: ٍالْعَرَابُ ٍوَالْحَدِيثَةُ ٍوَالْعَقْرَبُ ٍوَالْفَأْرَةُ ٍوَالْكَلْبُ ٍالْعَفْوُ»

(Five animals are Fawasiq, and they must be killed during Ihram and otherwise: the crow, the kite, the scorpion, the mouse and the rabid dog.) eFasiq, includes the disbeliever and the disobedient. However, the Fisq of the disbeliever is worse, and this is the type of Fasiq that the Ayah is describing here, because Allah described them as,

(الذين ينقضون عهده الله من بعد ميتقه ويقطعون ما أمر الله به أن يوصل ويقسدون في الأرض أولئك هم الخسرون)

(Those who break Allah's covenant after ratifying it, and sever what Allah has ordered to be joined and do mischief on earth, it is they who are the losers.)

These are the characteristics of the disbelievers and they contradict the qualities of the believers. Similarly, Allah said in Surat Ar-Ra’id,

(أَفْلَمْ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَى إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الألُبْبِ َ- َالذين يُفْوَنُ عِبَادُ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَنْفُضُونَ المِيتَقَهِ َ- َوَالذين يُصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أن يُوْصِلَ وَيُحَشُّونَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الحِاسَبِ)

(Shall he then, who knows that what has been revealed unto you (O Muhammad) from your Lord is the truth, be like him who is blind But it is only the men of understanding that pay heed. Those who fulfill the covenant of Allah and break not the Mithaq (bond, treaty, covenant). And those who join that which Allah has commanded to be joined (i.e. they are
good to their relatives and do not sever the bond of kinship), and fear their Lord, and dread the terrible reckoning.) (13:19-21)) until,

(And those who break the covenant of Allah, after its ratification, and sever that which Allah has commanded to be joined (i.e. they sever the bond of kinship and are not good to their relatives), and work mischief in the land, on them is the curse (i.e. they will be far away from Allah's mercy), and for them is the unhappy (evil) home (i.e. Hell).) (13:25)

The covenant that these deviant people broke is Allah's covenant with His creation, that is, to obey Him and avoid the sins that He prohibited. This covenant was reiterated in Allah's Books and by the words of His Messengers. Ignoring this covenant constitutes breaking it. It was said that the Ayah (2:27) is about the disbelievers and the hypocrites among the People of the Book. In this case, the covenant that they broke is the pledge that Allah took from them in the Tawrah to follow Muhammad when he is sent as a Prophet, and to believe in him, and in what he was sent with. Breaking Allah's covenant in this case occurred when the People of the Book rejected the Prophet after they knew the truth about him, and they hid this truth from people, even though they swore to Allah that they would do otherwise. Allah informed us that they threw the covenant behind their backs and sold it for a miserable price.

It was also reported that the Ayah (2:27) refers to all disbelievers, idol worshippers and hypocrites. Allah took their pledge to believe in His Oneness, showing them the signs that testify to His Lordship. He also took a covenant from them to obey His commands and refrain from His prohibitions, knowing that His Messengers would bring proofs and miracles that none among the creation could ever produce. These miracles testified to the truth of Allah's Messengers. The covenant was broken when the disbelievers denied what was proven to them to be authentic and rejected Allah's Prophets and Books, although they knew that they were the truth. This Tafsir was reported from Muqatil bin Hayyan, and it is very good. It is also the view that Az-Zamakhshari held.

Allah's statement next,

(And sever what Allah has ordered to be joined) is in reference to keeping the relations with the relatives, as Qatadah asserted. This Ayah is similar to Allah's statement,
(Would you then, if you were given the authority, do mischief in the land, and sever your ties of kinship) (47:22)

Ibn Jarir At-Tabari preferred this opinion. However, it has been said that the meaning of the Ayah (2:27) here is more general. Hence, everything that Allah has commanded to nurture, and the people severed, is included in its meaning.

The Meaning of `Loss

Muqatil bin Hayyan commented on Allah's statement,

(أولئك هم الخاسرون)

(It is they who are the losers) "In the Hereafter." Similarly, Allah said,

(أولئك لهم اللعنة ولهم سوء الدار)

(On them is the curse (i.e. they will be far away from Allah's mercy), and for them is the unhappy (evil) home (i.e. Hell)) (13:25).

Also, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Every characteristic that Allah describes those other than the people of Islam - such as being losers - then it refers to disbelief. However, when they are attributed to the people of Islam, then these terms refer to sin." Ibn Jarir commented on Allah's statement,

(أولئك هم الخاسرون)

(It is they who are the losers,) "Losers is plural for loser, this word refers to whoever decreased his own share of Allah's mercy by disobeying Him, just as the merchant loses in his trade by sustaining capital loss. Such is the case with the hypocrite and the disbeliever who lose their share of the mercy that Allah has in store for His servants on the Day of Resurrection. And that is when the disbeliever and the hypocrite most desperately need Allah's mercy."

(كيف تكفرون بالله وكنتم أموتًا فأحياءكم ثم
يميتكم ثم يحييكم ثم إليه ترجعون)

(28. How can you disbelieve in Allah seeing that you were dead and He gave you life Then He will give you death, then again will bring you to life (on the Day of Resurrection) and then unto Him you will return.)

Allah testifies to the fact that He exists and that He is the Creator and the Sustainer Who has full authority over His servants,
(How can you disbelieve in Allah)

How can anyone deny Allah's existence or worship others with Him while;

(You were dead and He gave you life) meaning, He brought them from the state of non-existence to life. Similarly, Allah said,

(Were they created by nothing Or were they themselves the creators Or did they create the heavens and the earth Nay, but they have no firm belief) (52:35-36) and,

(Has there not been over man a period of time, when he was not a thing worth mentioning) (76:1).

There are many other Ayat on this subject. Ibn Jarir reported from `Ata' that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(Seeing that you were dead and He gave you life) means, "You did not exist beforehand. You were nothing until Allah created you; He will bring death to you and then bring you back to life during Resurrection." Ibn `Abbas then said, "This is similar to Allah's statement;

(They will say: "Our Lord! You have made us to die twice and You have given us life twice.") (40:11)"
(29. He it is Who created for you all that is on earth. Then He Istawa ila the heaven and made them seven heavens and He is the Knower of everything.)

Evidence of Allah’s Ability

After Allah mentioned the proofs of His creating them, and what they can witness in themselves as proof of that, He mentioned another proof that they can witness, that is, the creation of the heavens and earth. Allah said,

(He it is Who created for you all that is on earth. Then He Istawa ila the heaven and made them seven heavens) meaning, He turned towards the heaven,

(And made them) meaning, that He made the heaven, seven heavens. Allah said,

(And made them seven heavens and He is the Knower of everything) meaning, His knowledge encompasses all His creation, just as He said in another Ayah,

(Should not He Who has created know) (67:14).

The Beginning of the Creation

This Ayah (2:29) is explained in detail in Surat As-Sajdah where Allah said;
(Say O Muhammad): "Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days And you set up rivals (in worship) with Him That is the Lord of all that exists. He placed therein (i.e. the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e. all these four `days' were equal in the length of time) for all those who ask (about its creation). Then He Istawa ila the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: "Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.'' They both said: "We come willingly." Then He finished them (as) seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest (lowest) heaven with lamps (stars) to be an adornment as well as to guard (from the devils by using them as missiles against the devils). Such is the decree of the Almighty, the Knower) (41:9-12).

These Ayat indicate that Allah started creation by creating earth, then He made heaven into seven heavens. This is how building usually starts, with the lower floors first and then the top floors, as the scholars of Tafsir reiterated, as we will come to know, Allah willing. Allah also said,
(Are you more difficult to create or is the heaven that He constructed He raised its height, and has perfected it. Its night He covers with darkness and its forenoon He brings out (with light). And the earth, after that, He spread it out. And brought forth therefrom its water and its pasture. And the mountains He has fixed firmly. (To be) a provision and benefit for you and your cattle) (79:27-33).

It is said that "Then" in the Ayah (2:29) relates only to the order of reciting the information being given, it does not relate to the order that the events being mentioned took place, this was reported from Ibn ` Abbas by ` Ali bin Abi Talhah.

**The Earth was created before Heaven**

Mujahid commented on Allah's statement,

(Hوَ الْذِّي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا)

(He it is Who created for you all that is on earth) "Allah created the earth before heaven, and when He created the earth, smoke burst out of it. This is why Allah said,

(ثُمَّ أَسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّمَاءَ وَهُدَى دُخَانٍ)

(Then He Istawa ila (turned towards) the heaven when it was smoke.) (41:11)

(فَسَوَاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ)

(And made them seven heavens) means, one above the other, while the `seven earths' means, one below the other."

This Ayah testifies to the fact that the earth was created before heaven, as Allah has indicated in the Ayat in Surat As-Sajdah.

**Spreading the Earth out after the Heavens were created**

Sahih Al-Bukhari records that when Ibn ` Abbas was question about this matter, he said that the earth was created before heaven, and the earth was spread out only after the creation of the heaven. Several Tafsir scholars of old and recent times also said similarly, as we have elaborated on in the Tafsir of Surat An-Nazi`at (chapter 79). The result of that discussion is
that the word Daha (translated above as "spread") is mentioned and explained in Allah's statement,

(And the earth, after that, He spread it out. And brought forth therefrom its water and its pasture. And the mountains He has fixed firmly.) (79:30-32)

Therefore, Daha means that the earth's treasures were brought to its surface after finishing the job of creating whatever will reside on earth and heaven. When the earth became Daha, the water burst out to its surface and the various types, colors, shapes and kinds of plants grew. The stars started rotating along with the planets that rotate around them. And Allah knows best.

(30. And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels. "Verily, I am going to place (mankind) generations after generations on earth." They said: "Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, while we glorify You with praises and thanks and sanctify You." He (Allah) said: "I know that which you do not know."

Adam and His Children inhabited the Earth, Generation after Generation

Allah reiterated His favor on the Children of Adam when He stated that He mentioned them in the highest of heights before He created them. Allah said,

(And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels.)

This Ayah means, "O Muhammad! Mention to your people what Allah said to the angels,
(Verily, I am going to place a Khalifah on earth).

Meaning people reproducing generation after generation, century after century, just as Allah said,

(And it is He Who has made you (Khala‘if) generations coming after generations, replacing each other on the earth) (6:165),

(And makes you (Khulafa’) inheritors of the earth) (27:62),

(And if it were Our will, We would have (destroyed you (mankind all, and) made angels to replace you (Yakhlufun) on the earth.) (43: 60) and,

(Then after them succeeded an (evil) generation (Khalf)) (7:169). It appears that Allah was not refering to Adam specifically as Khalifah, otherwise he would not have allowed the angels’ statement,

(Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood).

The angels meant that this type of creature usually commits the atrocities they mentioned. The angels knew of this fact, according to their understanding of human nature, for Allah stated that He would create man from clay. Or, the angels understood this fact from the word Khalifah, which also means the person who judges disputes that occur between people, forbidding them from injustice and sin, as Al-Qurtubi said.
The statement the angels uttered was not a form of disputing with Allah's, nor out of envy for the Children of Adam, as some mistakenly thought. Allah has described them as those who do not precede Him in speaking, meaning that they do not ask Allah anything without His permission. When Allah informed them that He was going to create a creation on the earth, and they had knowledge that this creation would commit mischief on it, as Qatadah mentioned, they said,

(أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يَفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيُسَفِّكُ الدَّمَاءَ)

(Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood)

This is only a question for the sake of learning about the wisdom of that, as if they said, Our Lord! What is the wisdom of creating such creatures since they will cause trouble in the earth and spill blood "If the wisdom behind this action is that You be worshipped, we praise and glorify You (meaning we pray to You) we never indulge in mischief, so why create other creatures"

Allah said to the angels in answer to their inquiry,

(إِلَّا أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(I know that which you do not know.) meaning, "I know that the benefit of creating this type of creature outweighs the harm that you mentioned, that which you have no knowledge of. I will create among them Prophets and send Messengers. I will also create among them truthful, martyrs, righteous believers, worshippers, the modest, the pious, the scholars who implement their knowledge, humble people and those who love Allah and follow His Messengers."

The Sahih recorded that when the angels ascend to Allah with the records of the servant's deeds, Allah asks them, while having better knowledge, "How did you leave My servants" They will say, "We came to them while they were praying and left them while they were praying." This is because the angels work in shifts with mankind, and they change shifts during the Fajr and Asr prayers. The angels who descended will remain with us, while the angels who have remained with us ascend with our deeds. The Messenger of Allah said,

«يَرْفَعُ إِلَيْهِ عَمَلُ الْلَّيْلِ قَبْلَ الْفَجَرِ وَعَمَلُ الْفَجَرِ قَبْلَ الْلَّيْلِ»

(The deeds of the night are elevated to Allah before the morning, and the deeds of the morning before the night falls.)

Hence, the angels' statement, "We came to them while they were praying and left them while they were praying," explains Allah's statement,
(I know that which you do not know.)

It was said that the meaning of Allah's statement,

(I know that which you do not know.) is, "I have a specific wisdom in creating them, which you do not have knowledge of." It was also said that it is in answer to,

(While we glorify You with praises and thanks and sanctify You) after which Allah said,

(I know that which you do not know). Meaning, "I know that Iblis is not as you are, although he is among you." Others said,

"(Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, while we glorify you with praises and thanks and sanctify You.) is their request that they should be allowed to inhabit the earth, instead of the Children of Adam. So Allah said to them,

(I know that which you do not know) if your inhabiting the heavens is better, or worse for you."

Ar-Razi as well as others said this. Allah knows best.

The Obligation of appointing a Khalifah and some related Issues

Al-Qurtubi, as well as other scholars, said that this Ayah (2:30) proves the obligation of appointing a Khalifah to pass judgements on matters of dispute between people, to aid the oppressed against the oppressor, to implement the Islamic penal code and to forbid evil. There are many other tasks that can only be fulfilled by appointing the Imam, and what is necessary
in performing an obligation, is an obligation itself. We should state here that Imamah occurs by either naming a successor, as a group among Ahl As-Sunnah scholars said occurred - by the Prophet - in the case of Abu Bakr, or hinting to a successor. Or, the current Khalifah names a certain person as Khalifah after him, as Abu Bakr did with `Umar. Or, the Khalifah might leave the matter in the hands of the Muslim consultative council, or a group of righteous men, just as `Umar did. Or, the people of authority could gather around a certain person to whom they give the pledge of allegiance, or they could select one among them to choose the candidate, according to the majority of the scholars.

The Khalifah must be a responsible adult Muslim male, able to perform Ijtihad (independent legal judgments), bodily able, righteous, with knowledge of warfare, politics. He also must be from the tribe of Quraysh, according to the correct view, but it is not necessary that he be from the tribe of Bani Hashim, or that he be immune from error, as the Rafidah (Shiites) falsely claim.

When the Khalifah becomes an immoral person (Fasiq), should he be impeached There is disagreement over this matter, but the correct view is that he is not to be removed, because the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِلَّا أَنْ تُرِوْا كَفُّرًا بَيْاحًا عِنْدَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِيهِ بُرْهَانَ»

(Unless you witness a clear Kufr regarding which you have clear proof from Allah.)

Does the Khalifah have the right to resign from his post There is a difference on this issue. It is a fact that Al-Hasan bin `Ali removed himself from the position of Khalifah and surrendered it to Mu`awiyah. However, this occurred because of a necessity, and Al-Hasan was praised for this action.

It is not permissible to appoint two Imams for the world or more at the same time. This is not allowed because the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنِ جَاءَكُمْ وَأَمَرَكُمْ جَمِيعَ يُرِيدُ أنْ يُقَرَّقَ بَيْنَكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُ كَانِئًا مَنْ كَانَ»

(Whoever came to you while you are united and tried to divide you, then execute him, no matter who he is.)

This is the view of the majority of scholars. Imam Al-Haramayn stated that Abu Ishaq allowed the appointment of two or more Imams when the various provinces are far away from each other. However, Imam Al-Haramayn himself was indecisive about this view.
(31. And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said, “Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful.”) (32. They (angels) said: “Glory is to You, we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verily, You are the Knower, the Wise.”) (33. He said: “O Adam! Inform them of their names,” and when he had informed them of their names, He said: “Did I not tell you that I know the Ghayb (unseen) in the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing”)

**The Virtue of Adam over the Angels**

Allah stated the virtue of Adam above the angels, because He taught Adam, rather than them, the names of everything. This occurred after they prostrated to him. This discussion precedes that event here, only to show the importance of his position, and the absence of the angels' knowledge about creating the Khalifah when they asked about it. So Allah informed the angels that He knows what they do not know, and then He mentioned this to show them Adam's superiority over them in knowledge. Allah said,

(وَعَلَّمَ عَادَمَ الأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا)

(And He taught Adam all the names (of everything)).

Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah;

(وَعَلَّمَ عَادَمَ الأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا)
And He taught Adam all the names (of everything) “Meaning, the names that people use, such as human, animal, sky, earth, land, sea, horse, donkey, and so forth, including the names of the other species.” Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir reported that ‘Asim bin Kulayb narrated from Sa‘id bin Ma‘bad that Ibn `Abbas was questioned, "Did Allah teach him the names of the plate and the pot?" He said, "Yes, and even the terms for breaking wind!"

Allah taught Adam the names of everything, their proper names, the names of their characteristics, and what they do, just as Ibn `Abbas stated about the terms for passing gas.

In his Sahih, Al-Bukhari explained this Ayah in the Book of Tafsir with a report from Anas bin Malik who said that the Messenger of Allah said,
(The believers will gather on the Day of Resurrection and will say, `We should seek a means of intercession with our Lord.' They will go to Adam and say, `O Adam! You are the father of all mankind, Allah created you with His Own Hand, ordered the angels to prostrate for you and taught you the names of everything. Will you not intercede for us to your Lord, so that he relieve us from this gathering place?' On that Adam will reply, `I cannot do what you have asked.' He will have remembered his error and will be embarrassed, saying, `Go to Nuh, for he is the first of Allah's Messengers whom Allah sent to the people of the earth.' They will go to Nuh and ask him. He will say, `I cannot do what you have asked.' He will recall asking Allah what he was not to know, and will also be embarrassed. He will say, `Go to Khalil Ar-Rahman.' They will go to Ibrahim and he will also say, `I cannot do what you have asked.' He will say, `Go to Musa, a servant to whom Allah spoke directly and gave the Tawrah.' Musa will say, `I cannot do what you have asked.' He will remember that he killed a person without justification and will be embarrassed before his Lord. He will say, `Go to `Isa, Allah's servant and Messenger and His Word and a spirit of His.' They will go to `Isa and he will say, `I will not do what you asked. Go to Muhammad, a servant whose previous and latter errors were forgiven.' They will come to me, and I will go to Allah and seek His permission and He will give me His permission. When I gaze at my Lord, I will prostrate myself and Allah will allow me to remain like that as much as He will. Then I will be addressed, `O Muhammad! Raise your head; ask, for you will be
given what you ask, and intercede, for your intercession will be accepted.' I will raise my head and thank and praise Allah with such praise as He will inspire me. I will intercede and He will grant me a quantity of people that He will admit into Paradise. I will go back to Him, and when I see my Lord, I will intercede and He will allow me a quantity that He will admit into Paradise. I will do that for a third and then a fourth time. I will say, 'There are no more people left in Hell except those whom the Qur'an has incarcerated and have thus acquired eternity in Hell.' This Hadith was collected by Muslim, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah. The reason why we mentioned this Hadith here is the Prophet's statement:

"قَالُوا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ أَبَيْ النَّاسِ خَلَقَكَ اللَّهُ بِيَدِهِ وَأَسْجَدَ لَكَ مَلَائِكَتُهُ وَعَلَمَكَ أَسْمَاءَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ"

(They will go to Adam and say, 'O Adam! You are the father of all mankind, and Allah created you with His Own Hand, ordered the angels to prostrate for you, and taught you the names of everything). This part of the Hadith testifies to the fact that Allah taught Adam the names of all creatures.

This is why Allah said,

(ثَمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ)

(Then He showed them to the angels) meaning, the objects or creations. Abdur-Razzaq narrated that Ma'mar said that Qatadah said, "Allah paraded the objects before the angels,

(فَقَالَ اِنْبِيْتُونِي بَأَسْمَائِهِمْ هُوَ لَاءٍ إِنْ كَنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ)

(And said, "Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful")."

Allah's statement means, "Tell Me the names of what I paraded before you, O angels who said,

(أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُقِسْدُ فِيهَا وَيِسْفِكُ الْدَمَّاءَ)

(Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood).

You asked, 'Are You appointing a Khalifah from us or from other creations We praise and glorify You.

Therefore, Allah said, 'If you say the truth, that if I appoint a non-angel Khalifah on the earth, he and his offspring will disobey Me, commit mischief and shed blood, but if I designate you the Khalifahs you will obey Me, follow My command and honor and glorify Me. However, since you
do not know the names of the objects I paraded before you, then you have even less knowledge of what will occur on the earth that does not exist yet."

(قالوا سبحنك لا علم لنا إلا ما علمتنا إنك أنتgod Almighty)

(They (angels) said: "Glory is to You, we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verily, it is You, the Knower, the Wise.").

Here the angels are praising Allah's holiness, and perfection above every kind of deficiency, affirming that no creature could ever acquire any part of Allah's knowledge, except by His permission, nor could anyone know anything except what Allah teaches them. This is why they said,

(سبحنك لا علم لنا إلا ما علمتنا إنك أنتgod Almighty)

("Glory is to You, we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verily You are the Knower, the Wise) meaning, Allah is knowledgeable of everything, Most Wise about His creation, and He makes the wisest decisions, and He teaches and deprives whom He wills from knowledge. Verily, Allah's wisdom and justice in all matters is perfect.

Adam's Virtue of Knowledge is demonstrated

Allah said,

(قال يا آدم أنبئهم بأسمائهم فلمَّا أنبأهم بأسمائهم قال ألم أقل لكم إني أعلم غيب السماوات والأرض وأعلم ما تبدين وما كنتم تكتمون)

(He said: "O Adam! Inform them of their names," and when he had informed them of their names, He said: "Did I not tell you that I know the Ghayb (unseen) in the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing")

Zayd bin Aslam said, "You are Jibril, you are Mi'kal, you are Israfil, until he mentioned the name of the crow." Mujahid said that Allah's statement,
(He said: "O Adam! Inform them of their names.") "The name of the pigeon, the crow and everything." Statements of a similar meaning were reported from Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan, and Qatadah. When Adam's virtue over the angels became apparent, as he mentioned the names that Allah taught him, Allah said to the angels,

(أَلَمْ أُقِلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمِّوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ
وَأَعْلَمُ مَا نُبْدِؤُونَ وَمَا كَنَّتْمُ تَكْتُمُونَ)

(Did I not tell you that I know the Ghayb (unseen) in the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing)

This means, "Did I not state that I know the seen and unseen matters. " Similarly, Allah said,

(وَإِنَّ تَجْهَرُ بِالْقُولِ فَأَيْنَاءُ يَعْلَمُ السَّرِّ وَأَخْفَى)

(And if you (O Muhammad) speak (the invocation) aloud, then verily, He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden) (20:7).

Also, Allah said about the hoopoe, that it said to Sulayman;

(أَلَّا يُسَجَّدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الخَبْءَ فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا نُبْدِؤُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ
- اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ العَظِيمُ)

( As Shaytan (Satan) has barred them from Allah's way so they do not prostrate before Allah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne) (27:25-26).

They also have comments other than what we have said about the meaning of Allah's statement,

(وَأَعْلَمُ مَا نُبْدِؤُونَ وَمَا كَنَّتْمُ تَكْتُمُونَ)

(And I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing).
It is reported from Ad-Dahhak that Ibn `Abbas said that,

وأعلمنا ما تبدون وما كنتم تكنمون

(And I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing) means, "I know the secrets, just as I know the apparent things, such as, what Iblis concealed in his heart of arrogance and pride." Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi narrated that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

وأعلمنا ما تبدون وما كنتم تكنمون

(And I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing) means, "The apparent part of what they said was: `Do you create in it that which would commit mischief and shed blood? The hidden meaning was: `We have more knowledge and honor than any creation our Lord would create.' But they came to know that Allah favored Adam above them regarding knowledge and honor."

وإذ قلت أملكة استجدوا لآدم فسجدوا إلا إبليس أبى واستكبر وكان من الكفررين

(And (remember) when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves before Adam." And they prostrated except Iblis (Shaytan), he refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allah).)

Honoring Adam when the Angels prostrated before Him

This Ayah mentions the great honor that Allah granted Adam, and Allah reminded Adam's offspring of this fact. Allah commanded the angels to prostrate before Adam, as this Ayah and many Hadiths testify, such as the Hadith about the intercession that we discussed. There is a Hadith about the supplication of Musa, "O my Lord! Show me Adam who caused us and himself to be thrown out of Paradise." When Musa met Adam, he said to him, "Are you Adam whom Allah created with His Own Hands, blew life into and commanded the angels to prostrate before?" Iblis was among Those ordered to prostrate before Adam, although He was not an Angel.

When Allah commanded the angels to prostrate before Adam, Iblis was included in this command. Although Iblis was not an angel, he was trying - and pretending - to imitate the angels' behavior and deeds, and this is why he was also included in the command to the angels to prostrate before Adam. Satan was criticized for defying that command, as we will explain with detail, Allah willing, when we mention the Tafsir of Allah's statement,
(Except Iblis (Satan). He was one of the Jinn; he disobeyed the command of his Lord.) (18:50)

Similarly, Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Before he undertook the path of sin, Iblis was with the angels and was called `Azazil.' He was among the residents of the earth and was one of the most active worshippers and knowledgeable persons among the angels. This fact caused him to be arrogant. Iblis was from a genus called Jinn."

**The Prostration was before Adam but the Obedience was to Allah**

Qatadah commented on Allah's statement,

(And (remember) when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves before Adam.")

"The obedience was for Allah and the prostration was before Adam. Allah honored Adam and commanded the angels to prostrate before him." Some people said that this prostration was just a prostration of greeting, peace and honor, hence Allah's statement,

(وَرَفَعَ أَبْوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرَّوْا لَهُ سُجَدًا وَقَالَ يُبْتَهِذَ هَذَا تَأْوِيلٌ رُؤْوَيْئِي مِنْ قَبْلِ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًا)

(And he (Prophet Yusuf) raised his parents to the throne and they fell down before him prostrate. And he said: "O my father! This is the interpretation of my dream aforetime! My Lord has made it come true!") (12:100)

The practice of prostrating was allowed for previous nations, but was repealed for ours. Mu‘adh said to the Prophet, "I visited Ash-Sham and found that they used to prostrate before their priests and scholars. You, O Messenger of Allah, are more deserving of prostration." The Prophet said,

«لا لَوْ كَتَبْتُ أُمَرًا بَشَرًا أَنْ يُسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ لَأَمْرَتُ المَرَاةَ أَنْ يُسْجُدَ لُزْوَيْهَا مِنْ عَظِيمٍ حَقُّهُ عَلَيْهَا»

(No. If I was to command any human to prostrate before another human, I would command the wife to prostrate before her husband because of the enormity of his right on her.)

Ar-Razi agreed with this view. Also, Qatadah said about Allah's statement,
And they prostrated except Iblis (Shaytan), he refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allah).)

"Iblis, the enemy of Allah, envied Adam because Allah honored Adam. He said, `I was created from fire, and he was created from clay.' Therefore, the first error ever committed was arrogance, for the enemy of Allah was too arrogant to prostrate before Adam." I - Ibn Kathir - say, the following is recorded in the Sahih,

«لا يَدْخَلُ الجَنَّةُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالٌ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ حَرْدَلٍ مِنْ كَبْرٍ»

(No person who has the weight of a mustard seed of arrogance in his heart shall enter Paradise.)

Iblis had disbelief, arrogance, and rebellion, all of which caused him to be expelled from the holy presence of Allah, and His mercy.

وَقَلْنَا يَا ادَّمْ اسْكُنْ أَنتُ وَزَوْجَكَ الَّذِينَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شَدَأْتِ أَهْمَمًا وَلاَ تَفْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةُ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الْظَّلَمِينَ - فَأَزَلْلَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقَلْنَا اهْبِطْوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الأَرْضَ مُسْتَقِرٌ وَمَنْ تَعَلَّمْ إِلَى أَيْنَ يَحْيَى

(35. And We said: "O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zalimin (wrongdoers). ") (36. Then the Shaytan made them slip therefrom (the Paradise), and got them out from that in which they were. We said: "Get you down, all, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be a dwelling place for you and an enjoyment for a time.")
Adam was honored again

Allah honored Adam by commanding the angels to prostrate before him, so they all complied except for Iblis. Allah then allowed Adam to live and eat wherever and whatever he wished in Paradise. Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr bin Marduwyah reported Abu Dharr saying, "I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Was Adam a Prophet' He said,

«نَعَمْ نَبِيّاً رَسُولاً كَلِمَةُ اللَّهُ فَتَبَلَّا»

(Yes. He was a Prophet and a Messenger to whom Allah spoke directly), meaning

(اسْکُنْ أَنتَ وَزِوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةُ)

((O Adam!) Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise.)"

Hawwa' was created before Adam entered Paradise

The Ayah (2:35) indicates that Hawwa' was created before Adam entered Paradise, as Muhammad bin Ishaq stated. Ibn Ishaq said, "After Allah finished criticizing Iblis, and after teaching Adam the names of everything, He said,

(يَاءَ أَدَمْ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِإِسْمَآئِلِهِمْ)

(O Adam! Inform them of their names) until,

(إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَلِيمُ الحَكِيمُ)

(Verily, You are the Knower, the Wise.)

Then Adam fell asleep, as the People of the Book and other scholars such as Ibn `Abbas have stated, Allah took one of Adam's left ribs and made flesh grow in its place, while Adam was asleep and unaware. Allah then created Adam's wife, Hawwa', from his rib and made her a woman, so that she could be a comfort for him. When Adam woke up and saw Hawwa' next to him, it was claimed, he said, 'My flesh and blood, my wife.' Hence, Adam reclined with Hawwa'. When Allah married Adam to Hawwa' and gave him comfort, Allah said to him directly,
(O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zalimin (wrongdoers).”)

**Allah tests Adam**

Allah's statement to Adam,

(ولَا تَقُرَّبَا هَذِهِ الشَجْرَةَ)

(But come not near this tree) is a test for Adam. There are conflicting opinions over the nature of the tree mentioned here. Some said that it was the grape tree, barley, date tree, fig tree, and so forth. Some said that it was a certain tree, and whoever eats from it will be relieved of the call of nature. It was also said that it was a tree from which the angels eat so that they live for eternity. Imam Abu Ja'far bin Jarir said, "The correct opinion is that Allah forbade Adam and his wife from eating from a certain tree in Paradise, but they ate from it. We do not know which tree that was, because Allah has not mentioned anything in the Qur'an or the authentic Sunnah about the nature of this tree. It was said that it was barley, grape, or a fig tree. It is possible that it was one of those trees. Yet, this is knowledge that does not bring any benefit, just as being ignorant in its nature does no harm. Allah knows best." This is similar to what Ar-Razi stated in his Tafsir, and this is the correct opinion. Allah's statement,

(فَأَزْلَلْهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا)

(Then the Shaytan made them slip therefrom) either refers to Paradise, and in this case, it means that Shaytan led Adam and Hawwa' away from it, as `Asim bin Abi An-Najud recited it. It is also possible that this Ayah refers to the forbidden tree. In this case, the Ayah would mean, as Al-Hasan and Qatadah stated, "He tripped them." In this case,

(فَأَزْلَلْهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا)

(Then the Shaytan made them slip therefrom)

means, "Because of the tree", just as Allah said,
(Turned aside therefrom (i.e. from Muhammad and the Qur'an) is he who is turned aside (by the decree and preordainment of Allah)) (51:9) meaning, the deviant person becomes turned aside - or slips - from the truth because of so and so reason. This is why then Allah said,

(And got them out from that in which they were) meaning, the clothes, spacious dwelling and comfortable sustenance.

(We said: Get you down, all, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be a dwelling place for you and an enjoyment for a time.) meaning, dwelling, sustenance and limited life, until the commencement of the Day of Resurrection

**Adam was very Tall**

Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Ubayy bin Ka`b said that the Messenger of Allah said,
(Allah created Adam tall, with thick hair, just as a date tree with full branches. When Adam ate from the forbidden tree, his cover fell off, and the first thing that appeared was his private area. When he saw his private area, he ran away in Paradise and his hair got caught in a tree. He tried to free himself and Ar-Rahman called him, 'O Adam! Are you running away from Me?' When Adam heard the words of Ar-Rahman (Allah), he said, 'No, O my Lord! But I am shy.')

**Adam remained in Paradise for an Hour**

Al-Hakim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Adam was allowed to reside in Paradise during the time period between the `Asr (Afternoon) prayer, until sunset." Al-Hakim then commented this is "Sahih according to the Two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhari and Muslim), but they did not include it in their collections." Also, Ibn Abi Hatim recorded Ibn `Abbas saying, "Allah sent Adam to earth to an area called, Dahna, between Makkah and At-Taif." Al-Hasan Al- Basri said that Adam was sent down to India, while Hawwa' was sent to Jeddah. Iblis was sent down to Dustumaysan, several miles from Basra. Further, the snake was sent down to Asbahan. This was reported by Ibn Abi Hatim. Also, Muslim and An-Nasa'i recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«خيرِ يوْمٍ طَلَعْتُ فيهِ الشَّمْسُ يوْمُ الْجَمْعَةِ فيهِ حَلْقَ آدمٍ وَفِيهِ أَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ وَفِيهِ أَخْرَجُ مِنْهَا.»

(Friday is the best day on which the sun has risen. On Friday, Allah created Adam, admitted him into Paradise, and expelled him from it.)

**A Doubt and a Rebuttal**

If one asks, "If the Paradise that Adam was thrown out of was in heaven, as the majority of the scholars assert, then is it possible for Iblis to enter Paradise, although he was expelled from it by Allah's decision (when he refused to prostrate before Adam)"

Basically, the response to this would be that the Paradise which Adam was in, was in the heavens, not on the earth, as we explained in the beginning of our book Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah.

The majority of scholars said that Shaytan was originally prohibited from entering Paradise, but there were times when he sneak ed into it in secret. For instance, the Tawrah stated that Iblis hid inside the snake's mouth and entered Paradise. Some scholars said that it is possible that Shaytan led Adam and Hawwa' astray on his way out of Paradise. Some scholars said that he led Adam and Hawwa' astray when he was on earth, while they were still in heaven, as stated by Az-Zamakhshari. Al-Qurtubi mentioned several beneficial Hadiths here about snakes and the ruling on killing them.

(فَتَلَقِى عَادَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ قَتَابٍ عَلَىٰهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْتَوَلُّابُ الرَّحِيمُ)
(37. Then Adam received from his Lord Words. And his Lord pardoned him (accepted his repentance). Verily, He is the One Who forgives (accepts repentance), the Most Merciful.)

**Adam repents and supplicates to Allah**

It was reported that the above Ayah is explained by Allah's statement,

(قَالَ أُمَّيْلَنا ظَلَمَنَا أَنفُسُنَا وَإِنَّ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا
لَنَكُونَ مِنَ النَّخْسِينَ)

(37. They said: "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers." (7:23) as Mujahid, Sā`id bin Jubayr, Abu Al-`A’iyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Muhammad bin Ka’b Al-Qurazi, Kha lid bin Ma`dan, `Ata’ Al-Khurasani and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam have stated. As-Suddi said that Ibn `Abbas commented on,

(فَتَلَقَّى عَادِمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كُلِمَاتٍ)

(Then Adam received from his Lord Words) "Adam said, `O Lord! Did You not created me with Your Own Hands’ He said, `Yes.’ He said, `And blow life into me’ He said, `Yes.’ He said, `And when I sneezed, You said, `May Allah grant you His mercy.’ Does not Your mercy precede Your anger’ He was told, `Yes.’ Adam said, `And You destined me to commit this evil act’ He was told, `Yes.’ He said, `If I repent, will You send me back to Paradise’ Allah said, `Yes.’" Smilar is reported from Al-`Awfi, Sā`id bin Jubayr, Sā`id bin Ma`bad, and Ibn `Abbas. Al-Hakim recorded this Hadith in his Mustadrak from Ibn Jubayr, who narrated it from Ibn `Abbas. Al-Hakim said, "Its chain is Sahih and they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it."

Allah's statement,

(إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْرَّحِيمُ الْرَّحْمَنُ)

(Verily, He is the One Who forgives (accepts repentance), the Most Merciful) (2:37) means that Allah forgives whoever regrets his error and returns to Him in repentance. This meaning is similar to Allah's statements,

(أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ الْتَّوَّبَةَ عَنْ عَبَادِهِ
(Know they not that Allah accepts repentance from His servants) (9:104),
(And whoever does evil or wrongs himself) (4:110) and

(And whosoever repents and does righteous good deeds) (25:71).

The Ayat mentioned above, testify to the fact that Allah forgives the sins of whoever repents, demonstrating His kindness and mercy towards His creation and servants. There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

(38. We said: "Get down all of you from this place (the Paradise), then whenever there comes to you Hudan (guidance) from Me, and whoever follows My guidance, there shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.) (39. But those who disbelieve and belie Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) such are the dwellers of the Fire. They shall abide therein forever.")

Allah stated that when He sent Adam, Hawwa', and Shaytan to earth from Paradise, He warned them that He will reveal Books and send Prophets and Messengers to them, i.e., to their offspring. Abu Al-' Aliyah said, "Al-Huda, refers to the Prophets, Messengers, the clear signs and plain explanation."

(And whatever follows My guidance) meaning, whoever accepts what is contained in My Books and what I send the Messengers with,

(There shall be no fear on them) regarding the Hereafter,
(nor shall they grieve) regarding the life of this world. Similarly, in Surat Ta Ha, Allah said,

(He (Allah) said: "Get you down (from the Paradise to the earth), both of you, together, some of you are an enemy to some others. Then if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, he shall neither go astray, nor shall he be distressed.") (20:123)

Ibn `Abbas commented, "He will not be misguided in this life or miserable in the Hereafter."

The Ayah,

(But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Qur'an nor acts on its teachings) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.) (20:124) is similar to what Allah stated here,

(But those who disbelieve and belie Our Ayat such are the dwellers of the Fire. They shall abide therein forever), meaning, they will remain in Hell for eternity and will not find a way out of it.

(بيِّنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ اذْكُرُواْ نَعْمَتِي الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُواْ بِعَهْدِي أَوْفَ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّىْ فَارْهَبُونَ - وَإِعَامِنُواْ بِمَا أنْزِلَتْ مَسْدُقًا لَّمَأَ مَعَكُمْ)
(40. O Children of Israel! Remember My favor which I bestowed upon you, and fulfill (your obligations to) My covenant (with you) so that I fulfill (My obligations to) your covenant (with Me), and fear none but Me.) (41. And believe in what I have sent down (this Qur'an), confirming that which is with you (the Tawrah and the Injil), and be not the first to disbelieve therein, and buy not with My verses (the Tawrah and the Injil) a small price (i.e. getting a small gain by selling My verses), and fear Me and Me alone.)

Encouraging the Children of Israel to embrace Islam

Allah commanded the Children of Israel to embrace Islam and to follow Muhammad. He also reminded them with the example of their father Israel, Allah's Prophet Ya`qub, as if saying, "O children of the pious, righteous servant of Allah who obeyed Allah! Be like your father, following the truth." This statement is similar to one's saying, "O you son of that generous man! Do this or that" or, "O son of the brave man, engage the strong fighters," or "O son of the scholar, seek the knowledge," and so forth. Similarly, Allah said,

(دُرِّيَةٌ مِّنْ حَمْلَنَا مَعَ نُوحَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا)

(O offspring of those whom We carried (in the ship) with Nuh (Noah)! Verily, he was a grateful servant) (17:3).

Israel is Prophet Ya`qub (Jacob)

Israel is Prophet Ya`qub, for Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded that ` Abdullah Ibn ` Abbas said, "A group of Jews came to the Prophet and he said to them,

«هل تعلمون أن إسرائيل يعقوب؟»

(Do you know that Israel is Jacob) They said, "Yes, by Allah." He said,

«اللهمَ اشهد»

(O Allah! Be witness.)"

At-Tabari recorded that ` Abdullah Ibn ` Abbas said that ` Israel' means, `the servant of Allah.'
Allah's Blessings for the Children of Israel

Allah said,

(اذکروا نعمةتي التي أنعمت عليكم)
(Remember My favor which I bestowed upon you).

Mujahid commented, "Allah's favor that He granted the Jews is that He made water gush from stones, sent down manna and quails for them, and saved them from being enslaved by Pharaoh." Abu Al-`Aliyah also said, "Allah's favor mentioned here is His sending Prophets and Messengers among them, and revealing Books to them." I - Ibn Kathir - say that this Ayah is similar to what Musa said to the Children of Israel,

(يقوم اذکروا نعمة الله عليكم إذ جعل فيكم نبياً وجعلكم ملوكاً وءاتكم ما لم يؤت أحداً من العلمين)
(O my people! Remember the favor of Allah to you: when He made Prophets among you, made you kings, and gave you what He had not given to any other among the nations (of their time) (5:20) meaning, during their time. Also, Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Ibn `Abbas said,

(اذکروا نعمةتي التي أنعمت عليكم)
(Remember My favor which I bestowed upon you,) means, "My support for you and your fathers," that is saving them from Pharaoh and his people.

Reminding the Children of Israel of Allah's Covenant with Them

Allah's statement,

(وأوافقوا بهدهى أوف بعهدكم)
(And fulfill (your obligations to) My covenant (with you) so that I fulfill (My obligations to) your covenant (with Me),) means, `My covenant that I took from you concerning Prophet Muhammad , when he is sent to you, so that I grant you what I promised you if you believe in him and follow him. I will then remove the chains and restrictions that were placed around your necks, because of the errors that you committed.' Also, Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "The `covenant' is in reference to Allah's statement, i
(Indeed, Allah took the covenant from the Children of Israel (Jews), and We appointed twelve leaders among them. And Allah said: "I am with you if you perform As-Salah and give Zakah and believe in My Messengers; honor and assist them, and lend a good loan to Allah, verily, I will expiate your sins and admit you to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise)) (5:12)."

Other scholars said, "The covenant is what Allah took from them in the Tawrah, that He will send a great Prophet - meaning Muhammad - from among the offspring of Isma`il, who will be obeyed by all peoples. Therefore, whoever obeys him, then Allah will forgive his sins, enter him into Paradise and award him two rewards." We should mention here that Ar-Razi mentioned several cases of information brought by the earlier Prophets regarding the coming of Muhammad. Further, Abu Al-` Aliyah said that,

(And fulfill (your obligations to) My covenant (with you)) means, "His covenant with His servants is to embrace Islam and to adhere to it." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "I fulfill My obligations to you' means, 'I (Allah) will be pleased with you and admit you into Paradise.'" As-Suddi, Ad-Dahhak, Abu Al-` Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said similarly.

Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's statement,

(And fear Me and Me alone.) means, "Fear the torment that I might exert on you, just as I did with your fathers, like the mutation, etc." This Ayah contains encouragement, followed by warning. Allah first called the Children of Israel, using encouragement, then He warned them, so that they might return to the Truth, follow the Messenger, heed the Qur'an's prohibitions and commands and believe in its content. Surely, Allah guides whom He wills to the straight path.

Allah said next,
(And believe in what I have sent down, confirming that which is with you (the Tawrah and the Injil)) meaning, the Qur'an that Allah sent down to Muhammad, the unlettered Arab Prophet, as bringer of glad tidings, a warner and a light. The Qur'an contains the Truth from Allah and affirms what was revealed beforehand in the Tawrah and the Injil (the Gospel). Abu Al-` Aliyah said that Allah's statement,

(And believe in what I have sent down, confirming that which is with you (the Tawrah and the Injil)) "means, 'O People of the Book! Believe in what I sent down that conforms to what you have.' This is because they find the description of Muhammad recorded in the Tawrah and the Injil." Similar statements were attributed to Mujahid, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah.

Allah said,

(And believe in what I have sent down (this Qur'an), confirming that which is with you (the Tawrah and the Injil))

Ibn ` Abbas commented, "Do not become the first to disbelieve in the Qur'an (or Muhammad), while you have more knowledge in it than other people." Abu Al-` Aliyah commented, "Do not become the first to disbelieve in Muhammad, ' meaning from among the People of the Book, 'after you hear that he was sent as a Prophet.' " Similar statements were attributed to Al-Hasan, As-Suddi and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Ibn Jarir stated that the Ayah (disbelieve therein 2:41) refers to the Qur'an, mentioned earlier in the Ayah,

(And be not the first to disbelieve therein).

Both statements are correct because they are inter-related. For instance, whoever disbelieves in the Qur'an will have disbelieved in Muhammad, and whoever disbelieves in Muhammad will have disbelieved in the Qur'an. Allah's statement,

(in what I have sent down (this Qur'an),)

(the first to disbelieve therein) means, do not become the first among the Children of Israel to disbelieve in it, for there were people from Quraysh and the Arabs in general who rejected Muhammad before the People of the Book disbelieved in him. We should state here that the Ayah is talking about the Children of Israel in specific, because the Jews in Al-Madinah were
the first among the Children of Israel to be addressed by the Qur’an. Hence, their disbelief in the Qur’an means that they were the first among the People of the Book to disbelieve in it.

Allah's statement,

(وَلا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَتِي ثَمَنًا قَليلاً)

(and buy not with My verses a small price,) means, "Do not substitute faith in My Ayat and belief in My Prophet with the life of this world and its lusts which are minute and bound to end. " Allah said,

(وَإِيَّاِيَّ فَاتَّقُونَ)

(and have Taqwa of Me and Me alone).

Ibn Abi Hatim reported that Talq bin Habib said, "Taqwa is to work in Allah's obedience, on a light from Allah, hoping in Allah's mercy, and to avoid Allah's disobedience, on a light from Allah, fearing Allah's punishment." Allah's statement,

(وَإِيَّاِيَّ فَاتَّقُونَ)

(and fear Me and Me alone) means, that Allah warns the People of the Book against intentionally hiding the truth and spreading the opposite of it, as well as, against defying the Messenger .

(وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالبَطْلَ وَتَكْثُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ - وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوَةَ وَأَثِنَا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَرَكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ)

(42. And mix not truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth while you know (the truth).) (43. And perform As-Salat, and give Zakah, and bow down along with Ar-Raki` in.)

The Prohibition of hiding the Truth and distorting It with Falsehood

Allah forbade the Jews from intentionally distorting the truth with falsehood and from hiding the truth and spreading falsehood,
(And mix not truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth while you know (the truth)).

So Allah forbade them from two things; He ordered them to make the truth known, as well as explaining it. Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas mentioned the Ayah,

(And mix not truth with falsehood) and said; "Do not mix the truth with falsehood and the facts with lies." Qatadah said that,

(And mix not truth with falsehood) means, "Do not mix Judaism and Christianity with Islam,

(while you know (the truth).) that the religion of Allah is Islam, and that Judaism and Christianity are innovations that did not come from Allah." It was reported that Al-Hasan Al-Basri said similarly.

Also, Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(nor conceal the truth while you know (the truth).) means, "Do not hide the knowledge that you have of My Messenger and what he was sent with. His description, which you know about, can be found written in the Books that you have."

It is possible that it means, "...although you know the tremendous harm that this evil will cause people, misleading them and leading them to the Fire, because they will follow the falsehood that you mixed with the truth in your claims."

(And make the truth known and explain it.)
(And perform As-Salat and give Zakah, and bow down along with Ar-Raki`in.)

Muqatil said, "Allah's statement to the People of the Book,

(وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوَةَ)

(And perform As-Salat) commands them to perform the prayer behind the Prophet,

(وَأَتِنَّوْا الزَّكَاةَ)

(and give Zakah) commands them to pay the Zakah to the Prophet, and

(وَأَرْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ)

(and bow down along with Ar-Raki`in) commands them to bow down with those who bow down among the Ummah of Muhammad. Allah therefore commands the People of the Book to be with, and among the Ummah of Muhammad." In addition, Allah's statement,

(وَأَرْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ)

(And bow down along with Ar-Raki`in) means, "And be among the believers performing the best deeds they perform, such as, and foremost, the prayer." Many scholars said that this Ayah (2:43) is proof for the obligation of performing the prayer in congregation (for men only). I will explain this ruling in detail in Kitab Al-Ahkam Al-Kabir, Allah willing.

(44. Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture (Tawrah))! Have you then no sense)

The Condemnation of commanding Others to observe Righteousness while ignoring Righteousness

Allah said, "How is it, O People of the Book, that you command people to perform Al-Birr, which encompasses all types of righteousness, yet forget yourselves and do not heed what you call others to And you read Allah's Book (the Tawrah) and know what it promises to those who do not fulfill Allah's commandments.
(Have you then no sense) of what you are doing to yourselves, so that you might become aware of your slumber and restore your sight from blindness” `Abdur-Ra‘zaq said that Ma‘mar stated that Qatadah commented on Allah's statement,

(أتأمروُونَ النَّاسَ بالبَرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أنفسَكَمْ)

(Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves,) "The Children of Israel used to command people to obey Allah, fear Him and perform Al-Birr. Yet, they contradicted these orders, so Allah reminded them of this fact." As-Suddi said similarly. Ibn Jurayj said that the Ayah:

(أتأمروُونَ النَّاسَ بالبَرِّ)

(Enjoin you Al-Birr on the people) "Is about the People of the Book and the hypocrites. They used to command people to pray and fast. However, they did not practice what they commanded others. Allah reminded them of this behavior. So whoever commands people to do righteousness, let him be among the first of them to implement that command." Also, Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَتَنسَوْنَ أنفسَكَمْ)

(And you forget yourselves,) means, “You forget to practice it yourselves,

(وَأنتمُ تَثْلُونَ الكِتَابَ أفلا تَعْقِلُونَ)

(While you recite the Scripture (Tawrah)! Have you then no sense) You forbid the people from rejecting the prophethood and the covenant that you have mentioned with you in the Tawrah, while you yourselves have forgotten it, meaning that "you have forgotten the covenant that I made with you that you will accept My Messenger. You have breeched My covenant, and rejected what you know is in My Book."

Therefore, Allah admonished the Jews for this behavior and alerted them to the wrongs that they were perpetrating against themselves by ordering righteousness, yet refraining themselves from righteousness. We should state that Allah is not criticizing the People of the Book for ordering righteousness, because enjoining good is a part of righteousness and is an obligation for the scholars. However, the scholar is himself required to heed, and adhere to, what he invites others to. For instance, Prophet Shu‘ayb said,
(I wish not, in contradiction to you, to do that which I forbid you. I only desire reform to the best of my power. And my guidance cannot come except from Allah, in Him I trust and unto Him I repent) (11:88).

Therefore, enjoining righteousness and performing righteousness are both required. Neither category is rendered not necessary by the practice of the other, according to the most correct view of the scholars among the Salaf (predecessors) and the Khalaf.

Imam Ahmad reported that Abu Wa'il said, "While I was riding behind Usamah, he was asked, 'Why not advise `Uthman'? He said, 'Do you think that if I advise him I should allow you to hear it I advise him in secret, and I will not start something that I would hate to be the first to start. I will not say to a man, 'You are the best man,' even if he was my leader, after what I heard from the Messenger of Allah.' They said, 'What did he say' He said, 'I heard him say,«سَبِلْنَا لَيْتَنَا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ فَيَقُولُ: كَذَٰلِكَ أَمَرَكُمْ بِالْمَغْرُوفِ وَلَا آتِيَهُ وَأَنَّهَا كُمْ عَنِ المُنْكَرِ وَآتِيَهُ»

(A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown in the Fire. His intestines will fall out and he will continue circling pulling them behind him, just as the donkey goes around the pole. The people of the Fire will go to that man and ask him, `What happened to you Did you not used to command us to do righteous acts and forbid us from committing evil' He will say, `Yes. I used to enjoin righteousness, but refrained from performing righteousness, and I used to forbid you to perform from evil while I myself did it.')"

This Hadith was also recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim. eAlso, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i said, "I hesitate in advising people because of three Ayat:
(Enjoin you Al-Birr on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves).

(O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do Most hateful it is to Allah that you say that which you do not do) (61:2-3).

And Allah informed us that the Prophet Shu`ayb said,

(I wish not, in contradiction to you, to do that which I forbid you. I only desire reform to the best of my power. And my guidance cannot come except from Allah, in Him I trust and unto Him I repent) (11:88).

(45. And seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer) and truly, it is extremely heavy and hard except for Al-Khashi in.) (46 (They are those) who are certain that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return.)

The Support that comes with Patience and Prayer

Allah commanded His servants to use patience and prayer to acquire the good of this life and the Hereafter. Muqatil bin Hayan said that this Ayah means, "Utilize patience and the obligatory prayer in seeking the Hereafter. As for patience (here), they say that it means
fasting." There are similar texts reported from Mujahid. Al-Qurtubi and other scholars commented, "This is why Ramadan is called the month of patience," as is mentioned in the Hadith literature. It was also said that 'patience' in the Ayah means, refraining from evil, and this is why 'patience' was mentioned along with practicing acts of worship, especially and foremost, the prayer. Also, Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that `Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "There are two types of patience: good patience when the disaster strikes, and a better patience while avoiding the prohibitions of Allah." Ibn Abi Hatim said that Al-Hasan Al-Basri was reported to have said similarly.

Allah then said,

(وَالصَّلْوَةُ)

(And As-Salah (the prayer).)

The prayer is one of the best means of assistance for firmly adhering to Allah's orders, just as Allah said;

(قُلۡۚ أَنفُذِ الْقُرْآنَ لَنَذْهَبْ عَنَّكَ الْمَكْسَرُ وَالْمُنَكَّرُ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ)

(Precite (O Muhammad) what has been revealed to you of the Book (the Qur'an), and perform As-Salah. Verily, As-Salah (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahsha' (i.e. great sins of every kind), and Al-Munkar and the remembrance of (praising) of (you by) Allah is greater indeed) (29:45).

The personal pronoun in the Ayah,

(وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ)

(And truly, it is extremely heavy and hard) refers to prayer, as Mujahid is reported to have said, and it was also the choice of Ibn Jarir. It is possible that the pronoun might be referring to the advice - to observe patience and the prayer - mentioned in the same Ayah. Similarly, Allah said about Qarun (Korah),
(But those who had been given (religious) knowledge said: "Woe to you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this, none shall attain except As-Sabirun (the patient).") (28:80).

Also, Allah said,

(The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. But none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion (of happiness in the Hereafter and) in this world.) (41:34-35) meaning, this advice is only implemented by those who are patient and the fortunate. In any case, Allah's statement here means, prayer is 'heavy and burdensome',

(except for Al-Khashi in.)

Ibn Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on this Ayah, "They (Al-Khashi in) are those who believe in what Allah has revealed."

Allah's statement,

(except for Al-Khashi in.)
(They are those who are certain that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return.) continues the subject that was started in the previous Ayah. Therefore, the prayer, or the advice to observe it is heavy,

(إِلاَّ عَلَى الْخَشْيَعِينَ الَّذِينَ يُظْنُونَ أنَّهُمْ مُّلْقِواٰ رَبِّهِمْ)

(except for Al-Khashi`in. (They are those) who are certain (Yazunnuna) that they are going to meet their Lord,) meaning, they know that they will be gathered and face their Lord on the Day of Resurrection,

(وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَجِعُونَ)

(and that unto Him they are going to return.) meaning, their affairs are all subject to His will and He justly decides what He wills. Since they are certain that they will be returned to Allah and be reckoned, it is easy for them to perform the acts of obedience and refrain from the prohibitions. Ibn Jarir commented on Allah's statement;

(يُظْنُونَ أنَّهُمْ مُّلْقِواٰ رَبِّهِمْ)

(Yazunnuna that they are going to meet their Lord)

Ibn Jarir said; "The Arabs call certainty as well as doubt, Zann. There are similar instances in the Arabic language where a subject as well as its opposite share the same name. For instance, Allah said,

(وَرَأَى الْمُجْرِمُونَ الْدَّارَ فَظَنُّوا أنَّهُمْ مُوقَعُواٰهَا)

(And the Mujrimun (criminals, polytheists, sinners), shall see the Fire and Zannu (apprehend) that they have to fall therein)"(18:53).

It is recorded in the Sahih that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will say to a servant, "Have I not allowed you to marry, honored you, made the horses and camels subservient to you and allowed you to become a chief and a master" He will say, "Yes." Allah will say, "Did you have Zann (think) that you will meet Me" He will say, "No." Allah will say, "This Day, I will forget you, just as you forgot Me." If Allah wills, we will further elaborate on this subject when we explain Allah's statement,

(نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسَبَيْهِمْ)

(They have forgotten Allah, so He has forgotten them) (9:67).
(47. O Children of Israel! Remember My favor which I bestowed upon you and that I preferred you over the `Alamin (nations))

Reminding the Children of Israel that They were preferred above the Other Nations

Allah reminds the Children of Israel of the favors that He granted their fathers and grandfathers, how He showed preference to them by sending them Messengers from among them and revealing Books to them, more so than any of the other previous nations. Similarly, Allah said,

(ولقد اختيرتمهم على علم على الأمم) (And We chose them (the Children of Israel) over the `Alamin, (nations) with knowledge.) (44:32) and,

(وإذ قال موسى لقومه يقوموا اذكروا نعمة الله عليكم إذ جعل فيكم أئمة وجعلكم ملوكاً وءاتكم ما لم يؤمن أحداً من الأمم) (And (remember) when Musa (Moses) said to his people: "O my people! Remember the favor of Allah to you: when He made Prophets among you, made you kings, honored you above the `Alamin (nations).") (5:20).

Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi reported that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that Abu Al-`Aliyah said that Allah's statement,

(وأنتى فضلتكم على الأمم) (and that I preferred you over the `Alamin) means, "The kingship, Messengers and Books that were granted to them, instead of granting such to the other kingdoms that existed during their time, for every period there is a nation." It was also reported that Mujahid, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and Isma`il bin Abi Khalid said similarly.
The Ummah of Muhammad is Better than the Children of Israel

This is the only way the Ayah can be understood, because this Ummah is better than theirs, as Allah said;

(كنتم خير أمة أخرجت للناس تأمرون بالمعروف وتنهرون عن المنكر وتؤمنون بالله ولؤم عاهم أهل الكتب لكان خيرًا لهم)

(You are the best of people ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin good and forbid evil, and you believe in Allah. And had the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) believed, it would have been better for them) (3:110).

Also, the Musnad and Sunan Collections of Hadith recorded that Mu`awiyah bin Haydah Al-Qushayri said that the Messenger of Allah said,

»أنتم توقون سبعين أمة أنتم خيرها وأكرمها على الله«

(You (Muslims) are the seventieth nation, but you are the best and most honored of them according to Allah.)

There are many Hadiths on this subject, and they will be mentioned when we discuss Allah's statement,

(كنتم خير أمة أخرجت للناس)

(You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind) (3:110).

(وانفقوا يومًا لا تجزوا نفسًا عن نفس شبيبًا ولا يقبل منهما شفعة ولا يؤخذ منه عذاب ولا هم ينصرون)

(48. And fear a Day (of Judgement) when a person shall not avail another, nor will intercession be accepted from him, nor will compensation be taken from him, nor will they be helped.)
After Allah reminded the Children of Israel of the favors that He has granted them, He warned them about the duration of the torment which He will punish them with on the Day of Resurrection. He said,

(وَانْفَقُواْ يَوْمَآ)

(And fear a Day) meaning, the Day of Resurrection,

(لاَّ تَجْزَى نَفْسَ عَن نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا)

(When a person shall not avail another) meaning, on that Day, no person shall be of any help to another. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلاَ تَزَرُّ وَازْرَةً وَوزْرَ أُخْرَى)

(And no bearer of burdens shall bear another's burden) (35:18)

(لَكُلْ أَمْرُ يَوْمَٰٓ ِمَتْنُهُمْ يَوْمَيْنِ ِشَأْنُ يُعْفِنِيهِ)

(Every man that Day will have enough to make him careless of others.) (80:37) and,

(يَايُهَا النَّاسُ آتِقُواْ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحْتَشَّواْ يَوْمَاً لَآَ يَجْزِى
وَالْدُّ عَن وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مُولُودٌ هُوَ جَازٌ عَن وَلَدِهِ
شَيْئًا)

(O mankind! Have Taqwa of your Lord (by keeping your duty to Him and avoiding all evil), and fear a Day when no father can avail aught for his son, nor a son avail aught for his father) (31: 33).

This indeed should serve as a great warning that both the father and the son will not be of help to each other on that Day.

Neither Intercession, Ransom, or Assistance will be accepted on behalf of the Disbelievers

Allah said,
(nor will intercession be accepted from him)

meaning, from the disbelievers. Similarly, Allah said,

(فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَقَعَةُ الشَّفَاعِينَ)

(So no intercession of intercessors will be of any use to them) (74:48) and described the people of the Fire saying,

(فَمَا لَنَا مِن شَفَاعِينَ - وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ)

(Now we have no intercessors. Nor a close friend (to help us)) (26:100-101).

Allah's statement here (2:48)

(وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلًا)

(nor will compensation be taken from him) means, that Allah does not accept the disbelievers to ransom themselves. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كَفَارُ فَلَنْ يُقِلَّ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مَلَءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهْبًا وَلَوْ اقْتَدَى بِهِ)

(Verily, those who disbelieved, and died while they were disbelievers, the (whole) earth full of gold will not be accepted from anyone of them even if they offered it as a ransom) (3:91)

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لِيَقِلُّوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَّمَةِ مَا تُقِلَّ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, those who disbelieve, if they had all that is in the earth, and as much again therewith to ransom themselves from the torment on the Day of Resurrection, it would never be accepted of them, and theirs would be a painful torment) (5:36)
(And even if he offers every ransom, it will not be accepted from him) (6:70) and,

(قَالُوهُمْ لَا يُؤْخِذُ مِنْكُمْ فَدْيَةً وَلَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مَأْوَاتُ النَّارِ هِيَ مَوْلَكُمْ)

(So this Day no ransom shall be taken from you (hypocrites), nor of those who disbelieved. Your abode is the Fire. That is your Mawla (friend proper place)) (57:15).

Allah stated that if the people do not believe in His Messenger and follow what He sent him with, then when they meet Him on the Day of Resurrection, after remaining on the path of disbelief, their family lineage and/or the intercession of their masters will not help them at all. It will not be accepted of them, even if they paid the earth's fill of gold as ransom. Similarly, Allah said,

(مَنْ قَبْلُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمَ لَا بَيْعٍ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلُقٍ وَلَا شَفَقَةُ)

(Before a Day comes when there will be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession) (2:254) and,

(لاَ بَيْعٍ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلُقُ)

(On which there will be neither mutual bargaining nor befriending) (19:31). Allah's statement next,

(وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ)

(nor will they be helped.) means, "no person shall get angry - or anxious - on their behalf and offer them any help, or try to save them from Allah's punishment." As stated earlier on that Day, neither the relative, nor persons of authority will feel pity for the disbelievers, nor will any ransom be accepted for them. Consequently, they will receive no help from others and they will be helpless themselves. Allah said,

(وَهُوَ يُحِيْرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ)
(While He (Allah) grants refuge (or protection), but none grants refuge from Him) (23:88)

قَيَّمَنَا لَا يُعَدَّبُ عَذَابَهُ أَحَدٌ - وَلَا يُوَثِّقُ وَتَافِهُ

أَحَدُ (23:88)

(So on that Day none will punish as He will punish. And none will bind (the wicked, disbelievers and polytheists) as He will bind) (89:25-26)

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنُصَّرُونَ - بَلْ هُمُ الْيَوْمِ مُسْتَسِلِمُونَ

(89:25-26)

("What is the matter with you Why do you not help one another (as you used to do in the world)" Nay, but that Day they shall surrender) (37:25-26) and,

قَلُوْلَا نَصَرُّ هُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذَوْا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ قَرْبَانًا

(37:25-26)

(Then why did those whom they had taken for alilah (gods) besides Allah, as a way of approach (to Allah) not help them Nay, but they vanished completely from them) (46:28).

Also, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said that Allah's statement,

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنُصَّرُونَ

("What is the matter with you Why do you not help one another") (37:25) means, "This Day, you shall not have a refuge from Us. Not this Day." Ibn Jarir said that Allah's statement,

وَلَا هُمَّ يُنصَّرُونَ

(nor will they be helped.) meaning, on that Day, they shall neither be helped by any helper, nor shall anyone intercede on their behalf. No repeal or ransom will be accepted for them, all courtesy towards them will have ceased, along with any helpful intercession. No type of help or cooperation will be available for them on that Day. The judgment will, on that Day, be up to the Most Great, the Most Just, against whom no intercessor or helper can ever assist. He will then award the evil deed its kind and will multiply the good deeds. This is similar to Allah's statement,
(But stop them, verily, they are to be questioned. "What is the matter with you Why do you not help one another" Nay, but that Day they shall surrender) (37:24-26).

(49. And (remember) when We delivered you from Fir`awn's (Pharaoh) people, who were afflicting you with a horrible torment, killing your sons and sparing your women, and therein was a mighty trial from your Lord.) (50. And (remember) when We separated the sea for you and saved you and drowned Fir`awn's (Pharaoh) people while you were watching.)

The Children of Israel were saved from Pharaoh and His Army Who drowned

Allah said to the Children of Israel, “Remember My favor on you

(And (remember) when We delivered you from Fir`awn's (Pharaoh) people, who were afflicting you with a horrible torment,) meaning, `I - Allah - saved you from them and delivered you from their hands in the company of Musa, after they subjected you to horrible torture.' This favor came after the cursed Pharaoh had a dream in which he saw a fire emerge from Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), and then the fire entered the houses of the Coptics in Egypt, with the exception of the Children of Israel. Its purport was that his kingship would be toppled by a man among the Children of Israel. It was also said that some of Pharaoh's entourage said that the Children of Israel were expecting a man among them to arise who would establish a state for them. We will mention the Hadith on this subject when we explain Surat Ta Ha (20), Allah willing. After the dream, Pharaoh ordered that every newborn male among the Children of Israel be killed
and that the girls be left alone. He also commanded that the Children of Israel be given tasks of hard labor and assigned the most humiliating jobs.

The torment here refers to killing the male infants. In Surat Ibrahim (14) this meaning is clearly mentioned,

(يَسُوُمُونَكَمْ سُوءَ العَذَابِ وَيُدْبِحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسِتَحِيُّونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ)

(Who were afflicting you with horrible torment, and were slaughtering your sons and letting your women live.) (14:6).

We will explain this Ayah in the beginning of Surat Al-Qasas (28), Allah willing, and our reliance and trust are with Him.

The meaning of,

(يَسُوُمُونَكَمْ)

(who were afflicting you) is, "They humiliated you," as Abu `Ubaydah stated. It was also said that it means, "They used to exaggerate in tormenting you" according to Al-Qurtubi. As for Allah saying,

(يُدْبِحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسِتَحِيُّونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ)

(killing your sons and sparing your women) that explains His statement,

(يَسُوُمُونَكَمْ سُوءَ العَذَابِ)

(who were afflicting you with horrible torment) then it explains the meaning of the favor He gave them, as mentioned in His statement,

(اذْكُروا نِعْمَتِي الَّتِى أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(Remember My favor which I bestowed upon you). As for what Allah said in Surat Ibrahim,
(And remind them of the annals of Allah) (14:5) meaning, the favors and blessing He granted them, He then said,

(وَيَدْبِحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ)

(Who were afflicting you with horrible torment, and were slaughtering your sons and letting your women live.) (14:6)

So Allah mentioned saving their children from being slaughtered in order to remind them of the many favors that He granted them.

We should state here that `Pharaoh' (Fir`awn) is a title that was given to every disbelieving king who ruled Egypt, whether from the `Amaliq (Canaanites) or otherwise, just as Caesar (Qaysar) is the title of the disbelieving kings who ruled Rome and Damascus. Also, Khosrau (Kisra) is the title of the kings who ruled Persia, while Tubb`a is the title of the kings of Yemen, and the kings of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) were called Negus (An-Najashi).

Allah said,

(وَفِي ذَلِكَ مَبَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَمْ عَظِيمٍ)

(And therein was a mighty trial from your Lord.)

Ibn Jarir commented that this part of the Ayah means, "Our saving your fathers from the torment that they suffered by the hand of Pharaoh, is a great blessing from your Lord." We should mention that in the blessing there is test, the same as with hardship, for Allah said,

(وَنَبَلُوْكُمْ بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فَيَنْتَهُمْ)

(And We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good) (21:35) and,

(وَبَلْوَانُهُمْ يَرْجَعُونَ)

(And We tried them with good (blessings) and evil (calamities) in order that they might turn (to obey Allah.)) (7:168).

Allah's statement next,
(And (remember) when We separated the sea for you and saved you and drowned Fir` awn's (Pharaoh) people while you were watching) means, `After We saved you from Fir` awn and you escaped with Musa; Fir` awn went out in your pursuit and We parted the sea for you.' Allah mentioned this story in detail, as we will come to know, Allah willing. One of the shortest references to this story is Allah's statement,

(And saved you) meaning, "We saved you from them, drowning them while you watched, bringing relief to your hearts and humiliation to your enemy."

Fasting the Day of `Ashura

It was reported that the day the Children of Israel were saved from Fir` awn was called the day of `Ashura'. Imam Ahmad reported that Ibn ` Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah came to Al-Madinah and found that the Jews were fasting the day of `Ashura'. He asked them, "What is this day that you fast?" They said, "This is a good day during which Allah saved the Children of Israel from their enemy, and Musa used to fast this day." The Messenger of Allah said,

``I have more right to Musa than you have.''

So the Messenger of Allah fasted that day and ordered that it be fasted. This Hadith was collected by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.

(And (remember) when We appointed for Musa (Moses) forty nights, and (in his absence) you took the calf (for worship), and you were Zalimun (polytheists and wrongdoers).) (52. Then after that We forgave you so that you might be grateful.) (53. And (remember) when We gave
Musa the Scripture (the Tawrah)) and the criterion (of right and wrong) so that you may be guided aright.)

The Children of Israel worshipped the Calf

Allah then said, "Remember My favor on you when I forgave you for worshipping the calf." This happened after Musa went to the meeting place with his Lord at the end of that period which was forty days. These forty days were mentioned in Surat Al-A`rāf, when Allah said,

(وَوَعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثلَاثِينَ لِيْلَةٍ وَأَثْمَمَنَا هَا بَعْشَرٍ)

(And We appointed for Musa thirty nights and added (to the period) ten (more)) (7:142).

It was said that these days were during the month of Dhul-Qa`dah plus the first ten days in Dhul-Hijjah, after the Children of Israel were delivered from Fir`awn and they safely crossed the sea. Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ عَانِثَتْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ)

(And (remember) when We gave Musa the Scripture) means, the Tawrah,

(وَالْفَرْقَانَ)

(And the criterion) that is that which differentiates between truth and falsehood, guidance and deviation.

(لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ)

(So that you may be guided aright), after escaping the sea, as another Ayah in Surat Al-A`rāf clearly stated,
(And indeed We gave Musa after We had destroyed the generations of old the Scripture (the Tawrah) as an enlightenment for mankind, and a guidance and a mercy, that they might remember (or receive admonition)) (28:43).

(O and indeed We gave Musa after We had destroyed the generations of old the Scripture, (the Tawrah) as an enlightenment for mankind, and a guidance and a mercy, that they might remember (or receive admonition))

(And (remember) when Musa said to his people: "O my people! Verily, you have wronged yourselves by worshipping the calf. So turn in repentance to your Creator and kill yourselves (the innocent kill the wrongdoers among you), that will be better for you with your Creator." Then He accepted your repentance. Truly, He is the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.)

The Children of Israel kill each other in Repentance

This was the repentance required from the Children of Israel for worshipping the calf. Commenting on Allah's statement;

(And (remember) when Musa said to his people: "O my people! Verily, you have wronged yourselves by worshipping the calf...")

(And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray, they (repented and) said: "If our Lord does not have mercy upon us and forgive us") (7:149). This is when Musa said to them,

(And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray, they (repented and) said: "If our Lord does not have mercy upon us and forgive us") (7:149). This is when Musa said to them,

(And (remember) when Musa said to his people: "O my people! Verily, you have wronged yourselves by worshipping the calf...)." Abu `Al-`Aliyah, Sa`id bin Jubayr and Ar-Pabi` bin Anas commented on,

(You have wronged yourselves by worshipping the calf...)." Abu `Al-`Aliyah, Sa`id bin Jubayr and Ar-Pabi` bin Anas commented on,
(So turn in repentance to your Bari‘) that it means, “To your Creator.” Allah’s statement,

(إِلَى بَارِيَّكَمْ)

to your Bari‘ (Creator) alerts the Children of Israel to the enormity of their error and means, “Repent to He Who created you after you associated others with Him in worship.”

An-Nasa‘î, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim recorded Ibn ‘Abbas saying, “Allah told the Children of Israel that their repentance would be to slay by the sword every person they meet, be he father or son. They should not care whom they kill. Those were guilty whom Musa and Harun were not aware of their guilt, they admitted their sin and did as they were ordered. So Allah forgave both the killer and the one killed.” This is part of the Hadith about the trials that we will mention in Surat Ta Ha, (20) Allah willing.

Ibn Jarir narrated that Ibn ‘Abbas said, “Musa said to his people,

قُتُلُوا إِلَى بَارِيَّكُمْ قَاتِلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

عِنْدَ بَارِيَّكُمْ قَتَابٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّهُ هُوَ النُّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

("So turn in repentance to your Creator and kill each other (the innocent kill the wrongdoers among you), that will be better for you with your Creator.” Then He accepted your repentance. Truly, He is the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.)

Allah ordered Musa to command his people to kill each other. He ordered those who worshipped the calf to sit down and those who did not worship the calf to stand holding knives in their hands. When they started killing them, a great darkness suddenly overcame them. After the darkness lifted, they had killed seventy thousand of them. Those who were killed among them were forgiven, and those who remained alive were also forgiven.” p

وَإِذْ قَلَّمْ يَمُوسَى لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى نَرَى اللَّهَ

جَهَرًا فَأَحْدَثْتُكُمْ الصَّعِيقَةَ وَأَنْثَمْ تَنْظُرُونَ - ثُمَّ

بَعَثْنَاكُمْ مَنْ بَعْدَ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

(55. And (remember) when you said: “O Musa! We shall never believe in you until we see Allah plainly.” But you were seized with a bolt of lightning while you were looking). (56. Then We raised you up after your death, so that you might be grateful.)

The Best among the Children of Israel ask to see Allah; their subsequent Death and Resurrection
Allah said, `Remember My favor on you for resurrecting you after you were seized with lightning when you asked to see Me directly, which neither you nor anyone else can bear or attain.' This was said by Ibn Jurayj. Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah

وَإِذْ قَلَّلْنَاهُ مِنْ نُؤُوْسِىَ لَكَ حَتَّى نَرَى اللَّهَ

(And (remember) when you said: "O Musa! We shall never believe in you until we see Allah plainly.") means, "Publicly", "So that we gaze at Allah." Also, `Urwah bin Ruwaym said that Allah's statement,

وَأَنْتُمْ تَنَظُّرُونَ

(While you were looking) means, "Some of them were struck with lightning while others were watching." Allah resurrected those, and struck the others with lightning. As-Suddi commented on,

فَأَخْذَنَّكُمْ الْصَّعِيقَةَ

(But you were seized with a bolt of lightning) saying; "They died, and Musa stood up crying and supplicating to Allah, `O Lord! What should I say to the Children of Israel when I go back to them after You destroyed the best of them,

لَوْ شِئْنَتَ أَهْلُكُتُهُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَإِيَّاَيَ أَنْهَيْنَا يَمَا فَعَلَ...

(If it had been Your will, You could have destroyed them and me before; would You destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us) Allah revealed to Musa that these seventy men were among those who worshipped the calf. Afterwards, Allah brought them back to life one man at a time, while the rest of them were watching how Allah was bringing them back to life. That is why Allah's said,

ثمَّ بَعْثَنَّكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

(Then We raised you up after your death, so that you might be grateful.)"

Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said, "Death was their punishment, and they were resurrected after they died so they could finish out their lives." Qatadah said similarly.
`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam commented on this Ayah, "Musa returned from meeting with his Lord carrying the Tablets on which He wrote the Tawrah. He found that they had worshipped the calf in his absence. Consequently, he commanded them to kill themselves, and they complied, and Allah forgave them. He said to them, 'These Tablets have Allah's Book, containing what He commanded you and what He forbade for you.' They said, 'Should we believe this statement because you said it By Allah, we will not believe until we see Allah in the open, until He shows us Himself and says: This is My Book, therefore, adhere to it. Why does He not talk to us as He talked to you, O, Musa'." Then he (`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd) recited Allah's statement, 

(لا تؤمنوا لنك حتى نرى الله جهراً)

(We shall never believe in you until we see Allah plainly) and said, "So Allah's wrath fell upon them, a thunderbolt struck them, and they all died. Then Allah brought them back to life after He killed them." Then he (`Abdur-Rahman) recited Allah's statement, 

(ثم بعثناكم من بعد موتكم لعلكم تشكرون)

(Then We raised you up after your death, so that you might be grateful), and said, "Musa said to them, 'Take the Book of Allah.' They said, 'No.' He said, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, 'The problem is that we died and came back to life.' He said, 'Take the Book of Allah.' They said, 'No.' So Allah sent some angels who made the mountain topple over them."

This shows that the Children of Israel were required to fulfill the commandments after they were brought back to life. However, Al-Mawardy said that there are two opinions about this matter. The first opinion is that since the Children of Israel witnessed these miracles, they were compelled to believe, so they did not have to fulfill the commandments. The second opinion states that they were required to adhere to the commandments, so that no responsible adult is free of such responsibilities. Al-Qurtubi said that this is what is correct, because, he said, although the Children of Israel witnessed these tremendous calamities and incidents, that did not mean that they were not responsible for fulfilling the commandments any more. Rather they are responsible for that, and this is clear. Allah knows best.

(وظللنا عليكم الغمام ونزلنا عليكم المن) 

(And We shaded you with clouds and sent down on you Al-Manna and the quail, (saying): "Eat of the good lawful things We have provided for you," (but they rebelled). And they did not wrong Us but they wronged themselves.)

The Shade, the Manna and the Quail
After Allah mentioned the calamities that He saved the Children of Israel from, He mentioned the favors that He granted them, saying,

(وَظَلَّلَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ الْعَمَامَ)

And We shaded you with clouds. This Ayah mentions the white clouds that provided shade for the Children of Israel, protecting them from the sun's heat during their years of wandering. In the Hadith about the trials, An-Nasa'i recorded Ibn Abbas saying, Allah shaded the Children of Israel with clouds during the years of wandering. Ibn Abi Hātim said, Narrations similar to that of Ibn Abbas were reported from Ibn Umar, Ar-Rabî bin Anas, Abu Mij Laz, Ad-Dahâk, and As-Suddi. Al-Hasan and Qata'dah said that,

(وَظَلَّلَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ الْعَمَامَ)

(And We shaded you with clouds) "This happened when they were in the desert and the clouds shielded them from the sun." Ibn Jarir said that several scholars said that the type of cloud the Ayah mentioned, "was cooler and better than the type we know."

'Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn 'Abbas commented on Allah's statement,

(وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَنَّ)

And sent down on you Al-Manna, The manna used to descend to them to the trees, and they used to eat whatever they wished of it. Also, Qata'dah said, The manna, which was whiter than milk and sweeter than honey, used to rain down on the Children of Israel, just as the snow falls, from dawn until sunrise. One of them would collect enough for that particular day, for if it remained more than that, it would spoil. On the sixth day, Friday, one would collect enough for the sixth and the seventh day, which was the Sabbath during which one would not leave home to seek his livelihood, or for anything else. All this occurred in the wilderness. The type of manna that we know provides sufficient food when eaten alone, because it is nutritious and sweet. When manna is mixed with water, it becomes a sweet drink. It also changes composition when mixed with other types of food. However, this is not the only type. The evidence to this fact is that Al-Bukhârî narrated, that Sa'd bin Zayd said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الْكَمْآَهِ مِنَ الْمَنَّ وَمَاؤُهَا شَفَاءٌ لِلْعَيْنِ»

(Kam'ah (truffles) is a type of manna, and its liquid is a remedy for the eyes.)

This Hadith was also collected by Imam Ahmad. The group of Hadith compilers, with the exception of Abu Dawud, also collected it, and At-Tirmidhi graded it Hasan Sahih. At-Tirmidhi recorded Abu Hurayrah saying that the Messenger of Allah said,
The `A`wjah (pressed, dried date) is from Paradise and it cures poison, Al-Kam`ah (truffles) is a form of manna, and its liquid heals the eye. Al-Tirmidhi is the only one of them who recorded this Hadith.

As for the quail (Salwa) in question, `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The (Salwa) is a bird that looks like the quail." This is the same opinion reported from Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan, `Ikrimah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, may Allah have mercy upon them. Also, `Ikrimah said that the Salwa is a bird in Paradise about the size of a sparrow. Qatadah said "The Salwa is a bird that is similar to a sparrow. During that time, an Israelite could catch as many quails as was sufficient for that particular day, otherwise the meat would spoil. On the sixth day, Friday, he would collect what is enough for the sixth and the seventh day, the Sabbath, during which one was not allowed to depart his home to seek anything."

Allah said,

(کُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَتِ مَا رَزَقْنَكُمْ)

(Eat of the good lawful things We have provided for you,) (7:160) this form of command is a simple order of allowance, guiding to what is good. Allah said,

(وَمَا ظَلَّمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يُظْلِمُونَ)

(And they did not wrong Us but they wronged themselves) means, `We commanded them to eat from what We gave them, and to perform the acts of worship (but they rebelled).' This Ayah is similar to Allah's statement,

(کُلُوا مِنْ رَزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاِشْكُرُوا لَهُ)

(Eat of the provision of your Lord, and be grateful to Him) (34:15).

Yet, the Children of Israel rebelled, disbelieved and committed injustice against themselves, even though they saw the clear signs, tremendous miracles and extraordinary events.

The Virtue of Muhammad's Companions over the Companions of all Other Prophets

Here it is important to point out the virtue of Muhammad's Companions over the companions of the other Prophets. This includes firmness in the religion, patience and the lack of arrogance, may Allah be pleased with them. Although the Companions accompanied the Prophet in his
travels and battles, such as during the battle of Tabuk, in intense heat and hardship, they did not ask for a miracle, though this was easy for the Prophet by Allah's leave. And when the Companions became hungry, they merely asked the Prophet - to invoke Allah - for an increase in the amount of food. They collected whatever food they had and brought it to the Prophet, and he asked Allah to bless it, told each of them to take some food, and they filled every pot they had. Also, when they needed rain, the Prophet asked Allah to send down rain, and a rain cloud came. They drank, gave water to their camels and filled their water skins. When they looked around, they found that the cloud had only rained on their camp. This is the best example of those who were willing to accept Allah's decision and follow the Messenger of Allah.

(وَإِذْ قَلَّنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شَاءَتمُ رِغْدًا وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سَجَدًا وَقُولُوا حَتَّى تَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ خَطْيَكُمْ وَسَتَزِيدُ المُحْسِنِينَ - قَبْلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَّمُوا قُوَّاً غَيْرَ الْأَلْلَهِ الَّذِي قَبْلَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَّمُوا رَجَزًا مَّنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ)

(58. And (remember) when We said: "Enter this town (Jerusalem) and eat bountifully therein with pleasure and delight wherever you wish, and enter the gate in prostration (or bowing with humility) and say: 'Forgive us,' and We shall forgive you your sins and shall increase (reward) for the good-doers.") (59. But those who did wrong changed the word from that which had been told to them for another, so We sent upon the wrongdoers Rijz (a punishment) from the heaven because of their rebellion.)

The Jews were Rebellious instead of Appreciative when They gained Victory

Allah admonished the Jews for avoiding Jihad and not entering the holy land as they had been ordered to do when they came from Egypt with Musa. They were also commanded to fight the disbelieving Amaliq (Canaanites) dwelling in the holy land at that time. But they did not want to fight, because they were weak and exhausted. Allah punished them by causing them to become lost, and to continue wandering, as Allah has stated in Surat Al-Ma'idah (5). The correct opinion about the meaning of, `the holy land' mentioned here is that it was Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), as As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and Abu Muslim Al-Asfahani, as well as others have stated. Musa said,
(O people! Enter the holy land which Allah has assigned to you and turn not back (in flight).) (5:21)

However, some scholars said that the holy land is Jericho, (Ariha') and this opinion was mentioned from Ibn `Abbas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd.

After the years of wandering ended forty years later, in the company of Yuwsha` (Joshua) bin Nun, Allah allowed the Children of Israel to conquer the holy land on the eve of a Friday. On that day, the sun was kept from setting for a little more time, until victory was achieved. When the Children of Israel conquered the holy land, they were commanded to enter its gate while,

(prostrating) in appreciation to Allah for making them victorious, triumphant, returning them to their land and saving them from being lost and wandering. Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(and enter the gate Sujjadan) means, "While bowing". Ibn Jarir reported Ibn `Abbas saying,

(and enter the gate in prostration) means, "Through a small door while bowing." Al-Hakim narrated it, and Ibn Abi Hatim added, "And they went through the door backwards!" Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that they were ordered to prostrate on their faces when they entered the city, but Ar-Razi discounted this explanation. It was also said that the Sujud mentioned here means, 'submissiveness', for actually entering while prostrating is not possible.

Khasif said that `Ikrimah said that Ibn `Abbas said, "The door mentioned here was facing the Qiblah." Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, As-Suddi, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak said that the door is the door of Hittah in Iyya', which is Jerusalem. Ar-Razi also reported that some of them said that it was a door in the direction of the Qiblah". Khasif said that `Ikrimah said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Children of Israel entered the door sideways. As-Suddi said that Abu Sa`id Al-Azdy said that Abu Al-Kanud said that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said that they were commanded to, u
(enter the gate in prostration (or bowing with humility)) but instead, they entered while their heads were raised in defiance.

Allah said next,

(وَقُولُواْ حِتَّةٌ)

(and say: `Hittah'). Ibn `Abbas commented, "Seek Allah's forgiveness." Al-Hasan and Qatadah said that it means, "Say, `Relieve us from our errors.'"

(نَعْفِرُ لْكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ وَسَنَزِيدُ المُحْسِنِينَ)

(and We shall forgive you your sins and shall increase (reward) for the good-doers) Here is the reward for fulfilling Allah's commandment. This Ayah means, "If you implement what We commanded you, We will forgive your sins and multiply your good deeds." In summary, upon achieving victory, the Children of Israel were commanded to submit to Allah in tongue and deed and, to admit to their sins and seek forgiveness for them, to be grateful to Allah for the blessings He gave them, hastening to do the deeds that Allah loves, as He said,

(إِذَا جَآَءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالفَتْحُ - وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا - فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمَدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوابٌ)

(When there comes the help of Allah (to you, O Muhammad against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah). And you see that the people enter Allah's religion (Islam) in crowds. So glorify the praises of your Lord, and ask His forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance.) (110).

Allah said,

(فَبَدَلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قَبْلَ لَهُمْ)

(But those who did wrong changed the word from that which had been told to them for another).

Al-Bukhari recorded Abu Hurayrah saying that the Prophet said,
(The Children of Israel were commanded to enter the door while bowing and to say `Hittah'.
Yet, they entered the door on their behinds, distorting the words. They said; `Habbah (seed),
in Sha' rah (a hair).')

An-Nasa'i recorded this part of it from Abu Hurayrah only, but he has a chain from the Prophet,
explaining Allah's statement,

(HTTP:)

(`Hittah'), saying, "So they deviated and said `Habbah.' Similar was recorded by `Abdur-
Razzaq, and his route was also collected by Al-Bukhari. Muslim and At-Tirmidhi narrated similar
versions of this Hadith, At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih."

The summary of what the scholars have said about this subject is that the Children of Israel
distorted Allah's command to them to submit to Him in tongue and deed. They were
commanded to enter the city while bowing down, but they entered while sliding on their rear
ends and raising their heads! They were commanded to say, `Hittah' meaning, "Relieve us from
our errors and sins." However, they mocked this command and said, "Hintah (grain seed) in
Sha' irah (barley)." This demonstrates the worst type of rebellion and disobedience, and it is
why Allah released His anger and punishment upon them, all because of their sinning and
defying His commands. Allah said,

(Faq anzulana 'ala al-diniyin 'azlmuwara raji'ra min-an-s-sima'ayi bama-
kaalwawal fihafsou
t

(So We sent upon the wrongdoers Rijz (a punishment) from the heaven because of their
rebellion.)

Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Every word in Allah's Book that says Rijz means, `a
punishment.'" Mujahid, Abu Malik, As-Suddi, Al-Hasan and Qatadah were reported to have said
that Rijz means `Torment.' Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Sa'd bin Malik, Usamah bin Zayd and
Khuzaymah bin Thabit said that the Messenger of Allah said,
The plague is a Rijz, a punishment with which Allah punished those before you.

This is also how An-Nasa'i recorded this Hadith. In addition, the basis of this Hadith was collected in the Two Sahih.

If you hear of the plague in a land, then do not enter it.

Ibn Jarir recorded Usamah bin Zayd saying that the Messenger of Allah said,

This calamity and sickness (i.e. the plague) is a Rijz, a punishment with which some nations who were before you were punished.

The basis of this Hadith was also collected in the Two Sahih.

(60. And (remember) when Musa asked for water for his people, We said: “Strike the stone with your stick.” Then gushed forth therefrom twelve springs. Each (group of) people knew its own place for water. “Eat and drink of that which Allah has provided and do not act corruptly, making mischief on the earth.”)

Twelve Springs gush forth
Allah said, "Remember My favor on you when I answered the supplication of your Prophet, Musa, when he asked Me to provide you with water. I made the water available for you, making it gush out through a stone. Twelve springs burst out of that stone, a designated spring for each of your tribes. You eat from the manna and the quails and drink from the water that I provided for you, without any effort or hardship for you. So worship the One Who did this for you.

(وَلاَ تَعْتَوَّا فِي الأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ)

(And do not act corruptly, making mischief on the earth) meaning, "Do not return the favor by committing acts of disobedience that cause favors to disappear."

Ibn `Abbas said that the Children of Israel, "Had a square stone that Musa was commanded to strike with his staff and, as a result, twelve springs burst out of that stone, three on each side. Each tribe was, therefore, designated a certain spring, and they used to drink from their springs. They never had to travel from their area, they would find the same bounty in the same manner they had in the first area." This narration is part of the long Hadith that An-Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim recorded about the trials.

This story is similar to the story in Surat Al-`Araf (Chapter 7) although the latter was revealed in Makkah. In Surat Al-A`raf, Allah used the third person when He mentioned the Children of Israel to the Prophet and narrated what He favored them with. In this Surat Al-Baqarah, which was revealed in Al-Madinah, Allah directed His Speech at the Children of Israel. Further, Allah said in Surat Al-A`raf,

(فَانْبِجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَانِ اثْنَاءَ عَشَرَةَ عَيْنًا)

(And there gushed forth out of it twelve springs) (7:160), describing what first occurred when the water begins to gush out. In the Ayah in Surat Al-Baqarah, Allah described what happened later on, meaning when the water burst out in full force. Allah knows best.

(وَإِذْ قَلَّتُمْ يَمْوَسَى لَن نَّصْبَرُ عَلَى طَعَامٍ وَحَدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا نَّنبِتُ الأَرْضُ مِن بَلَهَا وَقَتَّانِهَا وَفُومُهَا وَعَدْسُهَا وَبَصِّلَهَا قَالَ أُنْتُسْبِدُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَى بَالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ اهْبِطُوا مِصْرَارًا فَإِنْ لَكُمْ مَا سَأَلْتُمْ)

(61. And (remember) when you said, "O Musa! We cannot endure one kind of food. So invoke your Lord for us to bring forth for us of what the earth grows, its herbs, its cucumber, its Fum, its lentils and its onions." He said, "Would you exchange that which is better for that which is lower? Go you down to any town and you shall find what you want!")
The Children of Israel preferred Foods inferior to Manna and Quails

Allah said, "And remember My favor on you when I sent down the manna and quails to you, a good, pure, beneficial, easily acquired food. And remember your ungratefulness for what We granted you. Remember how you asked Musa to exchange this type of food for an inferior type that consists of vegetation, and so forth." Al-Hasan Al-Basri said about the Children of Israel, "They were bored and impatient with the type of food they were provided. They also remembered the life they used to live, when their diet consisted of lentils, onions, garlic and herbs." They said,

(عَلَى طَعَامٍ وَحِدٍ) (O Musa! We cannot endure one kind of food. So invoke your Lord for us to bring forth for us of what the earth grows, its herbs, its cucumbers, its Fum, its lentils and its onions). They said,

(وُقُومُهَا) (Its Fum), "Ibn `Abbas said that Fum means, garlic."

He also said that the expression, `Fumu-lanna` means, `bake for us`, according to the languages of old. Ibn Jarir commented, "If this is true, then `Fum` is one of the words whose pronunciation were altered, the letter `fa` was replaced by the letter `tha`, since they are similar in sound." And Allah knows best. Others said that Fum is wheat, the kind used for bread. Al-Bukhari said, "Some of them said that Fum includes all grains or seeds that are eaten."

Allah's statement,

(قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَى بَالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ) (He said, "Would you exchange that which is better for that which is lower") criticized the Jews for asking for inferior foods, although they were living an easy life, eating tasty, beneficial and pure food. Allah's statement,
(Go you down to any Misr) means, `any city', as Ibn `Abbas said. Ibn Jarir also reported that Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi' bin Anas said that the Ayah refers to Misr, the Egypt of Fir`awn. The truth is that the Ayah means any city, as Ibn `Abbas and other scholars stated. Therefore, the meaning of Musa's statement to the Children of Israel becomes, "What you are asking for is easy, for it is available in abundance in any city that you might enter. So since what you asked for is available in all of the villages and cities, I will not ask Allah to provide us with it, especially when it is an inferior type of food. " This is why Musa said to them,

(Would you exchange that which is better for that which is lower Go you down to any town and you shall find what you want!)

Since their request was the result of boredom and arrogance and since fulfilling it was unnecessary, their request was denied. Allah knows best.

(61. And they were covered with humiliation and misery, and they drew on themselves the wrath of Allah. That was because they used to disbelieve in the Ayat (proofs, evidence) of Allah and killed the Prophets wrongfully. That was because they disobeyed and used to transgress the bounds (in their disobedience to Allah, i.e. commit crimes and sins.)) (2:61)

Covering the Jews in Humiliation and Misery

Allah said,

(And they were covered with humiliation and misery). This Ayah indicates that the Children of Israel were plagued with humiliation, and that this will continue, meaning that it will never
cease. They will continue to suffer humiliation at the hands of all who interact with them, along with the disgrace that they feel inwardly. Al-Hasan commented, "Allah humiliated them, and they shall have no protector. Allah put them under the feet of the Muslims, who appeared at a time when the Mājūs (Zoroastrians) were taking the Jizyah (tax) from the Jews." Also, Abu Al-'Aliyah, Ar-Rabī' bin Anas and As-Suddi said that 'misery' used in the Ayah means, 'poverty.' 'Atiyah Al-'Awfi said that 'misery' means, 'paying the tilth (tax).' In addition, Ad-Dahhak commented on Allah's statement,

(وَبَآَءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(and they drew on themselves the wrath of Allah), "They deserved Allah's anger." Also, Ibn Jarir said that,

(وَبَآَءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(and they drew on themselves the wrath of Allah) means, "They went back with the wrath. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّ أَرِيدُ أَنْ تَبْوَؤَنَّ بِأَنْثِمَيْ وَإِنْثِمَكَ)

(Verily, I intend to let you draw my sin on yourself as well as yours) (Al-Ma'idah 5:29) meaning, 'You will end up carrying my, and your, mistakes instead of me'. Thus, the meaning of the Ayah becomes, 'They went back carrying Allah's anger; Allah's wrath descended on them; they deserved Allah's anger.'

Allah's statement,

(ذَلِكَ بَيْنَهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ)

(That was because they used to disbelieve in the Ayat (proofs, evidences, etc.) of Allah and killed the Prophets wrongfully.) means, "This is what We rewarded the Children of Israel with: humiliation and misery." Allah's anger that descended on the Children of Israel was a part of the humiliation they earned, because of their defiance of the truth, disbelief in Allah's Ayat and belittling the carriers of Allah's Law i.e. the Prophets and their following. The Children of Israel rejected the Messengers and even killed them. Surely, there is no form of disbelief worse than disbelieving in Allah's Ayat and murdering the Prophets of Allah.

Meaning of Kibr

Similarly, in a Hadith recorded in the Two Sahihs the Messenger of Allah said,
(Kibr, is refusing the truth and degrading (belittling) people.)

Imam Ahmad recorded, `Abdullah bin Mas`ud saying that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أُشْدِدْ النَّاسَ عَدَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلٌ قَتَلْ قَتْلًا نَبِيٌّ أَوْ قَتَلَ نَبِيًّا: وَإِمَامٌ ضَلَالَةٍ وَمُمَثِّلٌ مِنَ المُمَثِّلِينَ»

(The people who will receive the most torment on the Day of Resurrection are: a man who was killed by a Prophet or who killed a Prophet, an unjust ruler and one who mutilates (the dead).) Allah's statement,

(That was because they disobeyed and used to transgress the bounds) mentions another reason why the Children of Israel were punished in this manner, for they used to disobey and transgress the limits. Disobedience is to do what is prohibited, while transgression entails overstepping the set limits of what is allowed and what is prohibited. Allah knows best.

إنَّ الَّذينَ ءَمَّنُوا وَالَّذينَ هَادُوا وَالْبَصُّرَى وَالصَّبِّيْنِ مَنْ ءَمَّنَ بَلَلِهِ وَالْيَوْمَ الأَخْرَ وَعَمِلَ صَلِحًا فَلَمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا حَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

(62. Verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians (Sabi'ın), whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

Faith and doing Righteous Deeds equals Salvation in all Times

After Allah described the condition - and punishment - of those who defy His commands, fall into His prohibitions and transgress set limits by committing prohibited acts, He stated that the earlier nations who were righteous and obedient received the rewards for their good deeds. This shall be the case, until the Day of Judgment. Therefore, whoever follows the unlettered
Messenger and Prophet shall acquire eternal happiness and shall neither fear from what will happen in the future nor become sad for what has been lost in the past. Similarly, Allah said,

(أَلَّا إِنَّ أُوْلَيَّاَيْهِ اللّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُخْرِزُونَ)

(No doubt! Verily, the Awliya' of Allah, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve) (10:62).

The angels will proclaim to the dying believers, as mentioned,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اللّهُ نَمَّا أَتَّقُونَا تَنَزُّلُ عَلَيْهِمْ المَلِكَةُ أَلَّا تَحَافُزَا وَلَا تَخْرِزُنَّ وَأَبْشَرُوا بِالجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ)

(Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah (alone)," and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!"). (41:30)

The Meaning of Mu'min, or Believer

Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn `Abbas, about,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا)

(Verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day) that Allah revealed the following Ayah afterwards,

(وَمَنْ يَبْتَغْ غَيْرَ الإِلْسَلْمِ دِينًا قَلَنَّ يُقَبِّلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى الأُخْرَا مِنَ النَّخَعَرِينَ)

(Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn `Abbas, about,)
(And whoever seeks religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers) (3:85).

This statement by Ibn `Abbas indicates that Allah does not accept any deed or work from anyone, unless it conforms to the Law of Muhammad that is, after Allah sent Muhammad. Before that, every person who followed the guidance of his own Prophet was on the correct path, following the correct guidance and was saved

**Why the Jews were called `Yahud**

The Jews are the followers of Prophet Musa, who used to refer to the Tawrah for judgment. Yahud is a word that means, 'repenting', just as Musa said,

(إننا هدنا إليناك)

**why the christians were called nasara**

("Who will be my helpers in Allah's cause" Al-Hawariyyun said: "We are the helpers of Allah.") (61:14)

It was said that they were called 'Nasara', because they inhabited a land called An-Nasirah (Nazareth), as Qatadah, Ibn Jurayj and Ibn `Abbas were reported to have said, Allah knows best. Nasara is certainly plural for Nasran.

When Allah sent Muhammad as the Last and Final Prophet and Messenger to all of the Children of Adam, mankind was required to believe in him, obey him and refrain from what he prohibited them; those who do this are true believers. The Ummah of Muhammad was called 'Mu'minin' (believers), because of the depth of their faith and certainty, and because they believe in all of the previous Prophets and matters of the Unseen.

**The Sabi'un or Sabians**

There is a difference of opinion over the identity of the Sabians. Sufyan Ath-Thawri said that Layth bin Abu Sulaym said that Mujahid said that, "The Sabians are between the Majus, the Jews and the Christians. They do not have a specific religion." Similar is reported from Ibn Abi Najih. Similar statements were attributed to `Ata' and Sa`id bin Jubayr. They (others) say that the Sabians are a sect among the People of the Book who used to read the Zabur (Psalms), others say that they are a people who worshipped the angels or the stars. It appears that the closest opinion to the truth, and Allah knows best, is Mujahid's statement and those who agree with him like Wahib bin Munabbih, that the Sabians are neither Jews nor Christians nor Majus nor polytheists. Rather, they did not have a specific religion that they followed and enforced, because they remained living according to their Fitrah (instinctual nature). This is why the idolators used to call whoever embraced Islam a 'Sabi', meaning, that he abandoned all religions that existed on the earth. Some scholars stated that the Sabians are those who never received a message by any Prophet. And Allah knows best.
(63. And (O Children of Isra’il, remember) when We took your covenant and We raised above you the Mount (saying): “Hold fast to that which We have given you, and remember that which is therein so that you may acquire Taqwa.) (64. Then after that you turned away. Had it not been for the grace and mercy of Allah upon you, indeed you would have been among the losers.)

Taking the Covenant from the Jews

Allah reminded the Children of Israel of the pledges, covenants and promises that He took from them to believe in Him alone, without a partner, and follow His Messengers. Allah stated that when He took their pledge from them, He raised the mountain above their heads, so that they affirm the pledge that they gave Allah and abide by it with sincerity and seriousness. Hence, Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ أَخْذَنَّكُمْ مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَقَعَتَا فَوَقَّكُمْ الطُّورَ حُدُوًا مَا عَاتِينَاكُمْ بْلَيْلاً وَأَذَّنْنَا مَا فِيهِ لِعَاكِبَتِكُمْ تَنَافِقُونَ - ثُمَّ تَوْلَيْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فِلْوًا فَضَلْتُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لِكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَسَرِينَ)

(And (remember) when We raised the mountain over them as if it had been a canopy, and they thought that it was going to fall on them. (We said): “Hold firmly to what We have given you (Tawrah), and remember that which is therein (act on its commandments), so that you may fear Allah and obey Him.”) (7:171).

The mount mentioned here is At-Tur, just as it was explained in Surat Al-A’raf, according to the Tafsir of Ibn ‘Abbas, Mujahid, ‘Ata’, Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi’ bin Anas and others. This is more obvious. There is another report from Ibn ‘Abbas saying: ‘The Tur is a type of mountain that vegetation grows on, if no vegetation grows on it, it is not called Tur.’ And in the Hadith about the trials, Ibn ‘Abbas said; “When they (the Jews) refused to obey, Allah raised the mountain above their heads so that they would listen.”

Al-Hasan said that Allah's statement,
(Hold fast to that which We have given you) means, the Tawrah. Mujahid said that the Ayah commanded, "Strictly adhere to it." Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` said that, (and remember that which is therein) means, "Read the Tawrah and implement it." Allah's statement, (Then after that you turned away. Had it not been for the grace of Allah) means, "Yet, after the firm pledge that you gave, you still deviated and broke your pledge;" (Had it not been for the grace and mercy of Allah upon you), meaning, by forgiving you and by sending the Prophets and Messengers to you, (Indeed you would have been among the losers) meaning, in this life and the Hereafter due to their breach of the covenant.

(65. And indeed you knew those amongst you who transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday). We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected.") (66. So We made this punishment an example for those in front of it and those behind it, and a lesson for Al-Muttaqin (the pious.)

The Jews breach the Sanctity of the Sabbath

Allah said,
(And indeed you knew). This Ayah means, O Jews! Remember that Allah sent His torment on the village that disobeyed Him and broke their pledge and their covenant to observe the sanctity of the Sabbath. They began using deceitful means to avoid honoring the Sabbath by placing nets, ropes and artificial pools of water for the purpose of fishing before the Sabbath. When the fish came in abundance on Saturday as usual, they were caught in the ropes and nets for the rest of Saturday. During the night, the Jews collected the fish after the Sabbath ended. When they did that, Allah changed them from humans into monkeys, the animals having the form closest to humans. Their evil deeds and deceit appeared lawful on the surface, but they were in reality wicked. This is why their punishment was compatible with their crime. This story is explained in detail in Surat Al-A`raf, where Allah said (7:163),

(وَسَنِّلُهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرِينَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِهِمْ حِينَاءً هُمْ يُوَّمُّ سَبْبِهِمْ شَرْعَةً وَيَوْمَ لاَ يَسْبِعُونَ لَا تَأْتِهِمْ كَذَلِكَ نَبْلِوْهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسَقُونَ)

(And ask them (O Muhammad ) about the town that was by the sea; when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday): when their fish came to them openly on the Sabbath day, and did not come to them on the day they had no Sabbath. Thus We made a trial of them, for they used to rebel (disobey Allah).)(7:163)

In his Tafsir, Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas that he said,

("أَفْلَتْلَا لَهُمْ كُوَنُوا قَرَدةً حَسَنِينَ")

("We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected") means, "Allah changed their bodies into those of monkeys and swines. The young people turned into monkeys while the old people turned into swine." Shayban An-Nahwi reported that Qatadah commented on,

("أَفْلَتْلَا لَهُمْ كُوَنُوا قَرَدةً حَسَنِينَ")

("We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected"), "These people were turned into howling monkeys with tails, after being men and women."

**The Monkeys and Swine that exist now are not the Descendants of Those that were transformed**
Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Those who violated the sanctity of the Sabbath were turned into monkeys, then they perished without offspring." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah turned them into monkeys because of their sins. They only lived on the earth for three days, for no transformed person ever lives more than three days. They did not eat, drink or have offspring. Allah transformed their shapes into monkeys, and He does what He wills, with whom He wills and He changes the shape of whomever He wills. On the other hand, Allah created the monkeys, swines and the rest of the creation in the six days (of creation) that He mentioned in His Book."

Allah's statement,

(فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَلًا)

(So We made this punishment an example) means, Allah made the people of this village, who violated the sanctity of the Sabbath,

(نَكَلًا)

(an example) via the way they were punished. Similarly, Allah said about Pharaoh,

(فَأَخْحَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَلًا الآخَرَةَ وَالأَوْلِيَ)

(So Allah, seized him with punishing example for his last and first transgression) (79:25).

Allah's statement,

(لَمَّا بَيْنَ يَدِيْهَا وَمَا خَلْقَهَا)

(for those in front of it and those behind it) meaning, for the other villages. Ibn `Abbas commented, "Meaning, `We made this village an example for the villages around it by the manner in which We punished its people.'" Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ أُهْلِكْنَا مَا حَوَلَّكَ مِنْ الْقُرَى وَصَرَّفَنَا الآيَتَ لَعِلْهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ)

(And indeed We have destroyed towns (populations) round about you, and We have (repeatedly) shown (them) the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) in various ways that they might return (to the truth and believe in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism)). (46:27)

Therefore, Allah made them an example for those who lived during their time as well as a reminder for those to come, by preserving their story. This is why Allah said,
(and a lesson for Al-Muttaqin (the pious), meaning, a reminder. This Ayah means, “The torment and punishment that this village suffered was a result of indulging in Allah’s prohibitions and their deceit. Hence, those who have Taqwa should be aware of their evil behavior, so that what occurred to this village does not befall them as well.” Also, Imam Abu `Abdullah bin Battah reported that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

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لا تَرْتَكِبُوا ما ارْتَكَبَتِ الْيَهُودُ قَتَسَتْنَجْلُوا مَحَارِمَ
اللهِ بَأَدَّنِى الْحَيْلَ
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(Do not commit what the Jews committed, breaching what Allah has forbidden, by resorting to the lowest types of deceit.)

This Hadith has a good (Jayid) chain of narration. Allah knows best.

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وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقَرَةً قَالَوْا أَتَتَخْدِينَا هُرُوًا قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أُكْنُ مِنَ الْجَهَلِينَ
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(67. And (remember) when Musa said to his people: "Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you make fun of us" He said, "I take Allah's refuge from being among Al-Jahilin (the ignorant or the foolish)."

The Story of the murdered Israeli Man and the Cow

Allah said, `O Children of Israel! Remember how I blessed you with miracle of the cow that was the means for discovering the identity of the murderer, when the murdered man was brought back to life.'

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded `Ubaydah As-Salmani saying, "There was a man from among the Children of Israel who was impotent. He had substantial wealth, and only a nephew who would inherit from him. So his nephew killed him and moved his body at night, placing it at the doorstep of a certain man. The next morning, the nephew cried out for revenge, and the people took up their weapons and almost fought each other. The wise men among them said, 'Why would you kill each other, while the Messenger of Allah is still among you' So they went to Musa and mentioned the matter to him and Musa said,
(Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you make fun of us" He said, "I take Allah's refuge from being among Al-Jahilin (the ignorant or the foolish))." "Had they not disputed, it would have been sufficient for them to slaughter any cow. However, they disputed, and the matter was made more difficult for them, until they ended up looking for the specific cow that they were later ordered to slaughter. They found the designated cow with a man, only who owned that cow. He said, "By Allah! I will only sell it for its skin's fill of gold.' So they paid the cow's fill of its skin in gold, slaughtered it and touched the dead man with a part of it. He stood up, and they asked him, "Who killed you" He said, "That man," and pointed to his nephew. He died again, and his nephew was not allowed to inherit him. Thereafter, whoever committed murder for the purpose of gaining inheritance was not allowed to inherit." Ibn Jarir reported something similar to that. Allah knows best.

(68. They said, "Call upon your Lord for us that He may make plain to us what it is!" He said, "He says, 'Verily, it is a cow neither too old nor too young, but (it is) between the two conditions', so do what you are commanded.") (69. They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us its colour." He said, "He says, 'It is a yellow cow, bright in its colour, pleasing the beholders.'") (70. They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us what it is.
Verily, to us all cows are alike. And surely, if Allah wills, we will be guided.

(71. He (Musa) said, "He says, `It is a cow neither trained to till the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no blemish in it.'" They said, "Now you have brought the truth." So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it.)

The Stubbornness of the Jews regarding the Cow; Allah made the Matter difficult for Them

Allah mentioned the stubbornness of the Children of Israel and the many unnecessary questions they asked their Messengers. This is why when they were stubborn, Allah made the decisions difficult for them. Had they slaughtered a cow, any cow, it would have been sufficient for them, as Ibn `Abbas and `Ubaydah have said. Instead, they made the matter difficult, and this is why Allah made it even more difficult for them. They said,

(اذْعِ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يَبِينَ لَنَا مَا هَيِّٰنَ

(Call upon your Lord for us that He may make plain to us what it is!), meaning, "What is this cow and what is its description"

Musa said,

(إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بَكْرٌ

(He says, `Verily, it is a cow neither too old nor too young), meaning, that it is neither old nor below the age of breeding. This is the opinion of Abu Al-'Aliyah, As-Suddi, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, `Atiyah Al-'Awfi, `Ata', Al-Khurasani, Wahb bin Munabbih, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ibn `Abbas. Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(عَوْانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ

(But (it is) between the two conditions) means, "Neither old nor young. Rather, she was at the age when the cow is strongest and fittest." In his Tafsir Al-'Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas that,

(فَاقِعُ لَوْنُهَا

(bright in its colour) "A deep yellowish white."

As-Suddi said,
(pleasing the beholder) meaning, that it pleases those who see it. This is also the opinion of Abu Al-` Aliyah, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Furthermore, Wahb bin Munabbih said, "If you look at the cow's skin, you will think that the sun's rays radiate through its skin." The modern version of the Tawrah mentions that the cow in the Ayah was red, but this is an error. Or, it might be that the cow was so yellow that it appeared blackish or reddish in color. Allah's knows best.

(إنَّ البَقْرَ تَشَبَّهَة عَلَيْنَا)

(Verily, to us all cows are alike) this means, that since cows are plentiful, then describe this cow for us further,

(وَإِنَّا إِن شَآءَ اللَّهُ)  

(And surely, if Allah wills) and if you further describe it to us,

(لِمُهُنَّدُونَ)

(we will be guided.)

(قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةً لَا دُلُولٌ نَّهِيرُ الأَرْضِ وَلَا تَسْقَى الْحَرَثَ)  

(He says, `It is a cow neither trained to till the soil nor water the fields) meaning, it is not used in farming, or for watering purposes. Rather, it is honorable and fair looking. ` Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma` mar said that Qatadah said that,

(مُسْلَمَةً)

(sound) means, "The cow does not suffer from any defects." This is also the opinion of Abu Al-` Aliyah and Ar-Rabi`. Mujahid also said that the Ayah means the cow is free from defects. Further, ` Ata` Al-Khurasani said that the Ayah means that its legs and body are free of physical defects.

Also, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said that the Ayah,

(فَذَبْحَهُمَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ)
(So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it) means, "They did not want to slaughter it."

This means that even after all the questions and answers about the cow's description, the Jews were still reluctant to slaughter the cow. This part of the Qur'an criticized the Jews for their behavior, because their only goal was to be stubborn, and this is why they nearly did not slaughter the cow. Also, `Ubaydah, Mujahid, Wahb bin Munabbih, Abu Al-`Aliyah and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said, "The Jews bought the cow with a large amount of money." There is a difference of opinion over this.

Bringing the murdered Man back to Life

Al-Bukhari said that,

(فَادَرَ أَنْثُمْ فِيهَا) (And disagreed among yourselves as to the crime) means, "Disputed."

This is also the Tafsir of Mujahid. `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Ad-Dahhak said, "Disputed about this matter." Also, Ibn Jurayj said that,

(وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَرَ أَنْثُمْ فِيهَا) (And disagreed among yourselves as to the crime) means, some of them said, "You killed him," while the others said, "No you killed him." This is also the Tafsir of `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam. Mujahid said that,

(وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْثَمُونَ) (But Allah brought forth that which you were Taktumun) means, "what you were hiding."
Allah said,

(Qulna asturbahu bi‘asibihah)

(So We said: "Strike him (the dead man) with a piece of it (the cow)"”) meaning, "any part of the cow will produce the miracle (if they struck the dead man with it).” We were not told which part of the cow they used, as this matter does not benefit us either in matters of life or religion. Otherwise, Allah would have made it clear for us. Instead, Allah made this matter vague, so this is why we should leave it vague. Allah's statement,

(Kazzilik yuhay allahumma mawtii)

(Thus Allah brings the dead to life) means, "They struck him with it, and he came back to life." This Ayah demonstrates Allah's ability in bringing the dead back to life. Allah made this incident proof against the Jews that the Resurrection shall occur, and ended their disputing and stubbornness over the dead person.

Allah mentioned His bringing the dead back to life in five instances in Surat Al-Baqarah. First Allah said,

(Tum bayathakum min bayad mo’ta’km)

(Then We raised you up after your death). He then mentioned the story about the cow. Allah also mentioned the story of those who escaped death in their land, while they were numbering in the thousands. He also mentioned the story of the Prophet who passed by a village that was destroyed, the story of Abraham and the four birds, and the land that comes back to life after it has died. All these incidents and stories alert us to the fact that bodies shall again become whole, after they were rotten. The proof of Resurrection is also reiterated in Allah's statement,

(Waa‘ayyatuhum al’arzum al mistah shi’riha wa kharijanah minahah habbah qelimah yaa’kullon wa jallana feeha jannat min nakhil wa aqeb wa qabarrihina feeha min al’uwwon laka’lwa min tamarah wa maa uma’illahahai iddehem afala yashkroon)

(And a sign for them is the dead land. We give it life, and We bring forth from it grains, so that they eat thereof. And We have made therein gardens of date palms and grapes, and We have caused springs of water to gush forth therein. So that they may eat of the fruit thereof and their hands made it not. Will they not then give thanks) (36:33-35).
(74. Then after that your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness. And indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which split asunder so that water flows from them, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which fall down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.)

The Harshness of the Jews

Allah criticized the Children of Israel because they witnessed the tremendous signs and the Ayat of Allah, including bringing the dead back to life, yet,

(Then after that your hearts were hardened).

So their hearts were like stones that never become soft. This is why Allah forbade the believers from imitating the Jews when He said,

(Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) to be affected by Allah's Reminder (this Qur'an), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the Scripture (the Tawrah) and the Injil
(Gospel)) before (i.e. Jews and Christians), and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened. And many of them were Fasiqun (the rebellious, the disobedient to Allah)) (57:16).

v In his Tafsir, Al-` Awfi said that Ibn ` Abbas said, "When the dead man was struck with a part of the cow, he stood up and became more alive than he ever was. He was asked, `Who killed you' He said, `My nephews killed me.' He then died again. His nephews said, after Allah took his life away, `By Allah! We did not kill him' and denied the truth while they knew it. Allah said,

(قهيَ كَالحِجَارَةَ أوُّ أَشْدَدْ قَسَوْةً)

And became as stones or even worse in hardness). "

And by the passage of time, the hearts of the Children of Israel were unlikely to accept any admonishment, even after the miracles and signs they witnessed. Their hearts became harder than stones, with no hope of ever softening. Sometimes, springs and rivers burst out of stones, some stones split and water comes out of them, even if there are no springs or rivers around them, sometimes stones fall down from mountaintops out of their fear of Allah. Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَقَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الأَنْهَرُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشْقَقُ قَيْحَرُجُ مِنْهُ المَاءُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَّا يُهْبَطُ مِنْ خَشْبَةِ اللَّهِ

(And indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which split asunder so that water flows from them, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which fall down for fear of Allah), means, "Some stones are softer than your hearts, they acknowledge the truth that you are being called to,

وَمَا اللَّهُ بَعْفِيلٌ عَمَّا تَعْمَلونَ

(And Allah is not unaware of what you do)."

**Solid Inanimate Objects possess a certain Degree of Awareness**

Some claimed that the Ayat mentioned the stones being humble as a metaphor. However, Ar-Razi, Al-Qurtubi and other Imams said that there is no need for this explanation, because Allah creates this characteristic - humbleness - in stones. For instance, Allah said,
(Truly, We did offer Al-Amanah (the trust) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it (i.e. afraid of Allah's torment)) (33:72),

(The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him) (17:44),

(And the stars and the trees both prostrate themselves (to Allah)) (55:6),

(Have they not observed things that Allah has created: (how) their shadows incline) (16:48),

(They both said: "We come willingly.") (41:11),

(Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain) (59:21), and,

(And they will say to their skins, "Why do you testify against us" They will say: "Allah has caused us to speak.") (41:21).

It is recorded in the Sahih that the Prophet said,
(This (Mount Uhud) is a mount that loves us and that we love.)

Similarly, the compassion of the stump of the palm tree for the Prophet as confirmed in authentic narrations. In Sahih Muslim it is recorded that the Prophet said,

إِنَّا لَآٰوَرْفُ حَجِرًا يَمْكَأْ كَانَ يُسَلِّمُ عَلَيْ قَبْلَ
أَنْ أُبْعَثَ إِنَّا لَآٰوَرْفُ الَّآنَ

(I know a stone in Makkah that used to greet me with the Salam before I was sent. I recognize this stone now.)

He said about the Black Stone that,

إِنَّهُ يُشْهَدُ لِمَنِ اسْتَلَمَ بِحَقِّ يَوْمِ الْقَيَّمَةِ

(On the Day of Resurrection it will testify for those who kiss it.)

There are several other texts with this meaning. The scholars of the Arabic language disagreed over the meaning of Allah's statement,

فَهَيِّأْ كَالْحِجَارَةَ أَوْ أَشْدُدٌ قَسْوَةً

(And became as stones or even worse in hardness) after agreeing that `or' here is not being used to reflect doubt. Some scholars said that `or' here means, `and'. So the meaning becomes, "As hard as stones, and harder." For instance, Allah said,

وَلَا تُطَعِّ مِنْهُمْ عَاتِماً أَوْ كَفُورَاءً

(And obey not a sinner or a disbeliever among them) (76:24), and,

عَذَّرَآَ أَوْ نُذَرَآَ

(To cut off all excuses or to warn) (77:6).

Some other scholars said that `or' here means, `rather'. Hence, the meaning becomes, `As hard as stones. Rather, harder.' For instance, Allah said,
(A section of them fear men as they fear Allah or even more) (4:77),

(And We sent him to a hundred thousand (people) or even more) (37:147), and,

(And was at a distance of two bows' length or (even) nearer) (53:9).

Some other scholars said that this Ayah means their hearts are only of two types, as hard as stone or harder than stone. Further, Ibn Jarir commented that this Tafsir means that some of their hearts are as hard as stone and some hearts are harder than stone. Ibn Jarir said that he favored this last Tafsir, although the others are plausible. I - Ibn Kathir - say that the last Tafsir is similar to Allah's statement,

(Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindled a fire) (2:17), and then His statement,

(Or like a rainstorm from the sky) (2:19).

It is also similar to Allah's statement,

(As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert) (24:39), and then His statement,
(Or (the state of a disbeliever) is like the darkness in a vast deep sea) (24:40).

This then means that some of them are like the first example, and some others are like the second example. Allah knows best.
(That they will believe in your religion) meaning, that these people would obey you. They are the deviant sect of Jews whose fathers witnessed the clear signs but their hearts became hard afterwards. Allah said next,

وَقَدْ كَانَ فِرْقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كُلَّمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرَّفُونَهُ

(Inspite of the fact that a party of them (Jewish rabbis) used to hear the Word of Allah (the Tawrah), then they used to change it) meaning, distort its meaning,

وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

(after they understood it). They understood well, yet they used to defy the truth,

(knowingly), being fully aware of their erroneous interpretations and corruption. This statement is similar to Allah's statement,

فِي مَا نَفْضَيْهِمْ مِيتَّهُمْ لَعَنَّهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قَلْوَبَهُمْ قَاَسِيَةً يُحَرَّفُونَ الْكُلَّمَ عَنَّ مَوْضِعِهِ

(So, because of their violation of their covenant, We cursed them and made their hearts grow hard. They change the words from their (right) places) (5:13).

Qatadah commented that Allah's statement;

(ثُمَّ يُحَرَّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(Then they used to change it knowingly after they understood it) "They are the Jews who used to hear Allah's Words and then alter them after they understood and comprehended them." Also, Mujahid said, "Those who used to alter it and conceal its truths; they were their scholars." Also, Ibn Wahb said that Ibn Zayd commented,

يَسْمَعُونَ كُلَّمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرَّفُونَهُ
(used to hear the Word of Allah (the Tawrah), then they used to change it) "They altered the Tawrah that Allah revealed to them, making it say that the lawful is unlawful and the prohibited is allowed, and that what is right is false and that what is false is right. So when a person seeking the truth comes to them with a bribe, they judge his case by the Book of Allah, but when a person comes to them seeking to do evil with a bribe, they take out the other (distorted) book, in which it is stated that he is in the right. When someone comes to them who is not seeking what is right, nor offering them bribe, then they enjoin righteousness on him. This is why Allah said to them,

(Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture (the Tawrah)! Have you then no sense) (2:44)"

The Jews knew the Truth of the Prophet, but disbelieved in Him

Allah said next,

(And when they (Jews) meet those who believe (Muslims), they say, "We believe", but when they meet each other they say, "Do not convey the news about this Prophet to the Arabs, because you used to ask Allah to grant you victory over them when he came, but he was sent to them (not to you)." Allah then revealed,
(And when they (Jews) meet those who believe (Muslims), they say, "We believe," but when they meet one another in private, they say, "Shall you (Jews) tell them (Muslims) what Allah has revealed to you, that they (Muslims) may argue with you (Jews) about it before your Lord") meaning, "If you admit to them that he is a Prophet, knowing that Allah took the covenant from you to follow him, they will know that Muhammad is the Prophet that we were waiting for and whose coming we find foretold of in our Book. Therefore, do not believe in him and deny him."

Allah said,

أولاً يعلمون أن الله يعلم ما يسرُون وَمَا يعللون

(Know they (Jews) not that Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal).

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "When the Jews met the believers they used to say, `We believe.' When they met each other, some of them would say, 'Do not talk to the companions of Muhammad about what Allah has foretold in your Book, so that the news (that Muhammad is the Final Messenger) does not become a proof for them against you with your Lord, and, thus, you will win the dispute.'" Further, Abu Al-`Aliyah said about Allah's statement,

أولاً يعلمون أن الله يعلم ما يسرُون وَمَا يعللون

(Know they (Jews) not that Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal), "Meaning their secret denial and rejection of Muhammad, although they find his coming recorded in their Book." This is also the Tafsir of Qatadah. Al-Hasan commented on,

أن الله يعلم ما يسرُون

(That Allah knows what they conceal), "What they concealed refers to when they were alone with each other away from the Companions of Muhammad. Then they would forbid each other from conveying the news that Allah revealed to them in their Book to the Companions of Muhammad, fearing that the Companions would use this news (about the truth of Muhammad) against them before their Lord."
(And what they reveal) meaning, when they said to the Companions of Muhammad,

(We believe), as Abu Al-

(Amīnā)

(We believe), as Abu Al-

(And there are among them (Jews) `Ummiyun (unlettered) people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon Amani (false desires) and they but guess.) (79. Then woe to those who write the book with their own hands and then say, “This is from Allah,” to purchase with it a little price! Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn thereby.)

The Meaning of `Ummi

Allah said,

(And there are among them Ummiyun people) meaning, among the People of the Book, as Mujahid stated. Ummiyun, is plural for Ummi, that is, a person who does not write, as Abu Al-

(Who know not the Book) meaning, are they not aware of what is in it.
Ummi was one of the descriptions of the Prophet because he was unlettered. For instance, Allah said,

(وَمَا كَنتَ تَتَّلِوَ مِن قَبْلِهِ مِن كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخْطَّةٌ)

(Neither did you (O Muhammad) read any book before it (this Qur'an) nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted) (29:48).

Also, the Prophet said,

«إنَّا أُمَّةٌ أُمِيَّةٌ لَا نَكْتَبُ وَلَا نَحْسِبُ، الْشَّهْرُ هَكَذَا وَهَكَذَا وَهَكَذَا»

(We are an Ummi nation, neither writing nor calculating. The (lunar) month is like this, this and this (i.e. thirty or twenty-nine days.)

This Hadith stated that Muslims do not need to rely on books, or calculations to decide the timings of their acts of worship. Allah also said,

(هُوَ الَّذِى بَعَثَ فِي الأُمَيِّينَ رِسُوْلٍ مِنْهُمْ)

(He it is Who sent among the Ummiyyin ones a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves) (62:2).

The Explanation of Amani

Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's statement,

(إِلَّا أَمَانِىٍّ)

(But they trust upon Amani) means, "It is just a false statement that they utter with their tongues." It was also said that Amani means `wishes and hopes'. Mujahid commented, "Allah described the Ummiyyin as not understanding any of the Book that Allah sent down to Musa, yet they create lies and falsehood." Therefore, the word Amani mentioned here refers to lying and falsehood. Mujahid said that Allah's statement,
(And they but guess) means, "They lie." Qatada, Abu Al-'Aliyah and Ar-Rabi' said that it means, "They have evil false ideas about Allah."

Woe unto Those Criminals among the Jews

Allah said,

(Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn thereby) means, "Woe to them because of what they have written with their own hands, the lies, falsehood and alterations. Woe to them because of the property that they unjustly acquired." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas commented,
(Woe to them), “Means the torment will be theirs because of the lies that they wrote with their own hands,

وَوَيْلٌ لَّهُمْ مَمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ

(And woe to them for that they earn thereby), which they unjustly acquired from people, be they commoners or otherwise.”

وَقَالُوا لَنَتَمَسَّنَا النَّارَ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً قَلْ أَنْخَذَّنَّمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا قَلْنَ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَنْ لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ

(80. And they (Jews) say, “The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days.” Say (O Muhammad to them): “Have you taken a covenant from Allah, so that Allah will not break His covenant Or is it that you say of Allah what you know not”)

The Jews hope They will only remain in the Fire for a Few Days

Allah mentioned the claim of the Jews, that the Fire will only touch them for a few days, and then they will be saved from it. Allah refuted this claim by saying,

قُلْ أَنْخَذَّنَّمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا

(Say (O Muhammad to them): “Have you taken a covenant from Allah”). Hence, the Ayah proclaims, “if you had a promise from Allah for that, then Allah will never break His promise. However, such promise never existed. Rather, what you say, about Allah, you have no knowledge of and you thus utter a lie about Him.” Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said about the Ayah,

وَقَالُوا لَنَتَمَسَّنَا النَّارَ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً

(And they (Jews) say, “The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days.”). "The Jews said, ‘The Fire will only touch us for forty days.’” Others added that this was the period during which the Jews worshipped the calf.

Also, Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr bin Marduwyah reported Abu Hurayrah saying,
«اجمعوا لي من كان من اليهود هنّا»

«من أبوكم»

«كدبتم بل أبوكم فلان»

«هل أنتم صادقين عن شيء إن سالتكم عنه»

«من أهل النار»

«اخسروا والله لا نحلكم فيها أبدًا»

«هل أنتم صادقين عن شيء إن سالتكم عنه؟»

«هل جعلتم في هذه الشَّاة سماً؟»
When Khaybar was conquered, a roasted poisoned sheep was presented to the Prophet as a gift (by the Jews). The Messenger of Allah ordered, "Assemble before me all the Jews who were here." The Jews were summoned and the Prophet said (to them), 'Who is your father?' They replied, 'So-and-so.' He said, 'You have lied; your father is so-and-so.' They said, 'You have uttered the truth.' He said, 'Will you now tell me the truth, if I ask you about something?' They replied, 'Yes, O Abul-Qasim; and if we should tell a lie, you will know our lie as you have about our fathers.' On that he asked, 'Who are the people of the (Hell) Fire?' They said, 'We shall remain in the (Hell) Fire for a short period, and after that you will replace us in it.' Then he asked, 'Will you tell me the truth if I ask you a question?' They said, 'Yes, O Abul-Qasim.' He asked, 'Have you poisoned this sheep?' They said, 'Yes.' He asked, 'What made you do so?' They said, 'We wanted to know if you were a liar, in which case we would get rid of you, and if you were a Prophet then the poison would not harm you.' Imam Ahmad, Al-Bukhari and An-Nasa'i recorded similarly.

(When Khaybar was conquered, a roasted poisoned sheep was presented to the Prophet as a gift (by the Jews). The Messenger of Allah ordered, 'Assemble before me all the Jews who were here.' The Jews were summoned and the Prophet said (to them), 'Who is your father?' They replied, 'So-and-so.' He said, 'You have lied; your father is so-and-so.' They said, 'You have uttered the truth.' He said, 'Will you now tell me the truth, if I ask you about something?' They replied, 'Yes, O Abul-Qasim; and if we should tell a lie, you will know our lie as you have about our fathers.' On that he asked, 'Who are the people of the (Hell) Fire?' They said, 'We shall remain in the (Hell) Fire for a short period, and after that you will replace us in it.' Then he asked, 'Will you tell me the truth if I ask you a question?' They said, 'Yes, O Abul-Qasim.' He asked, 'Have you poisoned this sheep?' They said, 'Yes.' He asked, 'What made you do so?' They said, 'We wanted to know if you were a liar, in which case we would get rid of you, and if you were a Prophet then the poison would not harm you.') Imam Ahmad, Al-Bukhari and An-Nasa'i recorded similarly.

(81. Yes! Whosoever earns evil and his sin has surrounded him, they are dwellers of the Fire (i.e. Hell); they will dwell therein forever). (82. And those who believe and do righteous good deeds, they are dwellers of Paradise, they will dwell therein forever.)

Allah says, the matter is not as you have wished and hoped it to be. Rather, whoever does an evil deed and abides purposefully in his error, coming on the Day of Resurrection with no good deeds, only evil deeds, then he will be among the people of the Fire.

(And those who believe and do righteous good deeds) meaning, "They believe in Allah and His Messenger and perform the good deeds that conform with the Islamic Law. They shall be among the people of Paradise." Allah said in a similar statement,
(It will not be in accordance with your desires (Muslims), nor those of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof, and he will not find any protector or helper besides Allah. And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a (true) believer in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim), such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even the size of a Naqira (speck on the back of a date stone), will be done to them) (4: 123-124).

Also, Abu Hurayrah, Abu Wa'il, 'Ata', and Al-Hasan said that,

(And his sin has surrounded him) means, "His Shirk (polytheism) has surrounded him." Also, Al-A` mash reported from Abu Razin that Ar-Rabi` bin Khuthaym said,

(And his sin has surrounded him), "Whoever dies before repenting from his wrongs." As-Suddi and Abu Razin said similarly. Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

(And his sin has surrounded him) refers to major sins. All of these statements carry similar meanings, and Allah knows best.

When Small Sins gather, They bring about Destruction

Here we should mention the Hadith that Imam Ahmad recorded, in which `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,
(Beware of the belittled sins, because they gather on a person until they destroy him.)

He then said that the Messenger of Allah gave them an example,

«كمثل قوم نزلوا بأرض قلأة، فحضار صنعُ القوَم فجعل الرجل ينطلق فيجئ بالعود والرجل يجيء بالعود حتى جمعوا سوادًا وأججوا نارًا فأضجعوا ما قذفوا فيها»

(This is the example of people who set up camp on a flat land, and then their servants came. One of them collected some wood and another man collected some wood until they collected a great deal. They then started a fire and cooked what they put on it.)

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(والذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات أولئك
أصحاب الجنة هم فيها خالدون)

(And those who believe and do righteous good deeds, they are dwellers of Paradise, they will dwell therein forever) "Whoever believes in what you (Jews) did not believe in and implements what you refrained from implementing of Muhammad's religion, shall acquire Paradise for eternity. Allah stated that the recompense for good or evil works shall remain with its people for eternity."

(إذ أخذنا ميثق بني إسرائيل لا تعبدون إلا الله وبالولدين إحسانًا وزدى الفرّبى واليتمى والمسكين وقولوا للناس حسنًا وأقيموا الصلاة)
(83. And (remember) when We took a covenant from the Children of Israel, (saying): Worship none but Allah (alone) and be dutiful and good to parents, and to kindred, and to orphans and (the poor), and speak good to people and perform As-Salāh and give Zakah. Then you slid back, except a few of you, while you are backsliders.)

The Covenant that Allah took from the Children of Israel

Allah reminded the Children of Israel of the commandments that He gave them, and the covenants that He took from them to abide by those commands, and how they intentionally and knowingly turned away from all of that. Allah commanded them to worship Him and to associate none with Him in worship, just as He has commanded all of His creatures, for this is why Allah created them. Allah said,

وَعَلَى النَّارِ. (21:25), and,

ولَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَعَ الْأَحْدَاثِ وَلاَ تَعْبَدُوا الْأَرْضَ (16:36).

(And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (alone), and avoid the Taghut (all false deities,")(16:36).

This is the highest and most important right, that is, Allah's right that He be worshipped alone without partners.

After that comes the right of the creatures, foremost, the right of the parents. Allah usually mentions the rights of the parents along with His rights. For instance, Allah said,

أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلَوْلَدِيْكَ إِلَىَّ المَصِيرُ. (31:14). Also, Allah said,
(And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents) (17:23), until,

(And give to the kinsman his due and to the Miskeen (poor) and to the wayfarer) (17:26). The Two Sahihs record that Ibn Mas`ud said,

قُلْتُ:

«يا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ الْعَمَلِ أَفْضَلُ؟ قَالَ:

الصُّلُّى عَلَى وَقْتِهَا»

قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ:

يِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ»

قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ:

الجَهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ»

(I said, `O Messenger of Allah! What is the best deed' He said, `Performing the prayer on time.' I said, 'Then what' He said, `Being kind to one's parents.' I said, 'Then what' He said, `Jihad in the cause of Allah.')

Allah then said,
(and to orphans) meaning, the young who have no fathers to fend for them.

(and Al-Masakin (the poor)), plural for Miskin, the one who does not find what he needs to spend on himself and his family. We will discuss these categories when we explain the Ayah of Surat An-Nisa' where Allah said,

(Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents) (4:36).

Allah's statement,

(and speak good to people) meaning, say good words to them and be lenient with them, this includes commanding good and forbidding evil. Al-Hasan Al-Basri commented on Allah's statement,

(Do not belittle any form of righteousness, and even if you did not find any good deed except meeting your brother with a smiling face, then do so.)

This Hadith was also collected by Muslim in his Sahih and At-Tirmidhi, who graded it Sahih.
Allah commands the servants to say good words to people, after He commanded them to be kind to them, thereby mentioning two categories of manners: good speech and good actions. He then emphasized the command to worship Him and the command to do good, ordaining the prayer and the Zakah,

(وَأَقِيمُوا الْصَّلَوَةَ وَآْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ)

(and perform As-Salah and give Zakah). Allah informed us that the People of the Book, except for a few among them, ignored these orders, that is, they knowingly and intentionally abandoned them. Allah ordered this Ummah similarly in Surat An-Nisa’ when He said,

(وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَشْرَكُوا به شِيَّةٌ وَبِاللَّهِ دَينٌ إِحْسَانًا وَيَدُودُ الْمَعْلُومَةِ وَالْمَسْكِينَ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالجَارِ الجَنِّبَ وَالصَّحِيبَ بالجَنِّبِ وَابِنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا)

(Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, Al-Masakin (the poor), the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (servants) whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful) (4:36).

Of these orders, this Ummah has practiced what no other nation before it has, and all praise is due to Allah.

(وَإِذْ أَخْطَبْنَا مُيِّثَقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفَكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارَكُمْ ثُمَّ أَفْرَرْنَهُمْ وَأَنْمُّ تَشْهَدُونَ ثُمَّ أَنْمُّ هُؤُلَاءِ تَقْلِلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ قَرْيَةً مَّنْ كَمْ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ نَظْهُرُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بالإِثَّمِ وَالعُدْوَانِ وَإِنْ يَأْتُوكُمْ أَسْرَى)
Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest (Then do you believe in a part of the Book and reject the rest) Allah said,

(84. And (remember) when We took your covenant (saying): Shed not the blood of your (people), nor turn out your own people from their dwellings. Then, (this) you ratified and (to this) you bore witness.) (85. After this, it is you who kill one another and drive out a party of you from their homes, assist (their enemies) against them, in sin and transgression. And if they come to you as captives, you ransom them, although their expulsion was forbidden to you. Then do you believe in a part of the Book and reject the rest Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.) (86. Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the price of the Hereafter. Their torment shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped.)

The Terms of the Covenant and their Breach of It

Allah criticized the Jews who lived in Al-Madinah during the time of the Messenger of Allah . They used to suffer, because of the armed conflicts between the tribes of Al-Madinah, Aws and Khazraj. Before Islam, the Aws and Khazraj worshipped idols, and many battles took place between them. There were three Jewish tribes in Al-Madinah at that time, Banu Qaynuqa` and Banu An-Nadir, the allies of the Khazraj, and Banu Qurayzah, who used to be the allies of the Aws. When war erupted between Aws and Khazraj, their Jewish allies would assist them. The Jew would kill his Arab enemy, and sometimes they also killed Jews who were the allies of the other Arab tribe, although the Jews were prohibited from killing each other according to clear religious texts in their Books. They would also drive each other from their homes and loot whatever furniture and money they could. When the war ended, the victorious Jews would release the prisoners from the defeated party, according to the rulings of the Tawrah. This is why Allah said,
(And remember) when We took your covenant (saying): 'Shed not the blood of your (people),
or turn out your own people from their dwellings.) meaning, "Do not kill each other, nor expel
one another from their homes, nor participate in fighting against them." Allah mentioned the
word 'your own' here, just as He said in another Ayah.

(So turn in repentance to your Creator and kill yourselves, that will be better for you with your
Creator) (2:54) because the followers of one religion are just like one soul. Also, the Messenger
of Allah said,

(The example of the believers in their kindness, mercy and sympathy to each other is the
example of one body, when an organ of it falls ill, the rest of the body rushes to its aid in fever
and sleeplessness.) Allah's statement,

(Then, (this) you ratified and (to this) you bore witness.) means, "You testified that you know
of the covenant and that you were witnesses to it."

(After this, it is you who kill one another and drive out a party of you from their homes).
Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,
(After this, it is you who kill one another and drive out a party of you from their homes) "Allah mentioned what they were doing, and that in the Tawrah He had prohibited them from shedding each other's blood, and required them to free their prisoners. Now they were divided into two camps in Al-Madinah, Banu Qaynuqa', who were the allies of the Khazraj, and An-Nadir and Qurayzah, who were the allies of the Aws. When fighting erupted between Aws and Khazraj, Banu Qaynuqa' would fight along with the Khazraj, while Banu An-Nadir and Qurayzah would fight along with the Aws. Each Jewish camp would fight against their Jewish brethren from the other camp. They would shed each other's blood, although they had the Tawrah with them, and they knew their rights and dues. Meanwhile, the Aws and Khazraj were polytheists who worshipped idols. They did not know about Paradise, the Fire, Resurrection, Divine Books the lawful and prohibited. When the war would end, the Jews would ransom their prisoners and implement the Tawrah. Consequently, Banu Qaynuqa' would ransom their prisoners who were captured by the Aws, while Banu An-Nadir and Qurayzah would ransom their prisoners who were captured by the Khazraj. They would also ask for blood money. During these wars, they would kill whomever (Jews or Arabs) they could, while helping the polytheists against their brethren. Therefore, Allah reminded them of this when He said,

(Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest) This Ayah means, `Do you ransom them according to the rulings of the Tawrah, yet kill them while the Tawrah forbade you from killing them and from expelling them from their homes The Tawrah also commanded that you should not aid the polytheists and those who associate with Allah in the worship against your brethren. You do all this to acquire the life of this world.' I was informed that the behavior of the Jews regarding the Aws and Khazraj was the reason behind revealing these Ayat."

These noble Ayat criticized the Jews for implementing the Tawrah sometimes and defying it at other times, although they believed in the Tawrah and knew what they were doing was wrong. This is why they should not be trusted to preserve or convey the Tawrah. Further, they should not be believed when it comes to the description of the Messenger of Allah, his coming, his expulsion from his land, and his Hijrah, and the rest of the information that the previous Prophets informed them about him, all of which they hid. The Jews, may they suffer the curse of Allah, hid all of these facts among themselves, and this is why Allah said,

(Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world), because they defied Allah's Law and commandments,
(And on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment) as punishment for defying the Book of Allah that they had.

(And Allah is not unaware of what you do. Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the price of the Hereafter) meaning, they prefer this life to the Hereafter. Therefore,

(Their torment shall not be lightened) not even for an hour,

(Nor shall they be helped), and they shall find no helper who will save them from the eternal torment they will suffer, nor shall they find any to grant them refuge from it.

(And indeed, We gave Musa the Book and followed him up with a succession of Messengers. And We gave `Isa, the son of Maryam, clear signs and supported him with Ruh-il-Qudus. Is it that whenever there came to you a Messenger with what you yourselves desired not, you grew arrogant Some you disbelieved and some you killed.)
and desires. Allah mentioned that He gave Musa the Book, the Tawrah, and that the Jews changed, distorted, and defied its commands, as well as altered its meanings.

Allah sent Messengers and Prophets after Musa who followed his law, as Allah stated,

(إنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا الْتَّوْرَاتُ فِيهَا هَدًى وَنُورُ)

(الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَائِيْنَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بمَا أَسْتَحْفَظُوا مِن كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شَهَدَاءَ)

(Verily, We did reveal the Tawrah (to Musa), therein was guidance and light, by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah's will, judged for the Jews. And the rabbis and the priests (too judged for the Jews by the Tawrah after those Prophets), for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and they were witnesses thereto) (5:44). This is why Allah said here,

(وَقَفَّيْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِ بَالرَّسُولِ)

(And Qaffayna him with Messengers).

As-Suddi said that Abu Malik said that Qaffayna means, "Succeeded", while others said, "Followed". Both meanings are plausible, since Allah said,

(ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَدْرَى)

(Then We sent Our Messengers in succession) (23:44).

Thereafter, Allah sent the last Prophet among the Children of Israel, `Isa the son of Mary, who was sent with some laws that differed with some in the Tawrah. This is why Allah also sent miracles to support `Isa. These included bringing the dead back to life, forming the shape of birds from clay and blowing into them, after which they became living birds by Allah's leave, healing the sick and foretelling the Unseen, as Ibn `Abbas stated. Allah also aided him with Ruh Al-Qudus, and that refers to Jibril. All of these signs testified to the truthfulness of `Isa and what he was sent with. Yet, the Children of Israel became more defiant and envious of him and did not want to differ with even one part of the Tawrah, as Allah said about `Isa,
(And to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you, and I have come to you with a proof from your Lord) (3:50).

Hence, the Children of Israel treated the Prophets in the worst manner, rejecting some of them and killing some of them. All of this occurred because the Prophets used to command the Jews with what differed from their desires and opinions. The Prophets also upheld the rulings of the Tawrah that the Jews had changed, and this is why it was difficult for them to believe in these Prophets. Therefore, they rejected the Prophets and killed some of them. Allah said,

(Is it that whenever there came to you a Messenger with what you yourselves desired not, you grew arrogant Some you disbelieved and some you kill).

Jibril is Ruh Al-Qudus

The proof that Jibril is the Ruh Al-Qudus is the statement of Ibn Mas`ud in explanation of this Ayah. This is also the view of Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Isma`il bin Khalid, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Atiyah Al-Awfi and Qatadah. Additionally, Allah said,

(Which the trustworthy Ruh (Jibril) has brought down. Upon your heart (O Muhammad ) that you may be (one) of the warners) (26:193-194).

Al-Bukhari recorded `A'ishah saying that the Messenger of Allah erected a Minbar in the Masjid on which Hassan bin Thabit (the renowned poet) used to defend the Messenger of Allah (with his poems). The Messenger of Allah said,
(O Allah! Aid Hassan with Ruh Al-Qudus, for he defended Your Prophet.)

Abu Dawud recorded this Hadith in his Sunan as did At-Tirmidhi who graded it Hasan Sahih. Further, Ibn Hibban recorded in his Sahih that Ibn Mas'ud said that the Prophet said,

»إنّ روحّ القُدُّس نفَّت في رُوعي أنهَ لَن تَمُوت نفْسٌ حتَّى تَسْتَكْمِل رزقُهَا وأَجْلِهَا، فَانْتَقِوا الله وَأَجْمِلُوا فِي الطَّلْب

(Ruh Al-Qudus informed me that no soul shall die until it finishes its set provisions and term limit. Therefore, have Taqwa of Allah and seek your sustenance in the most suitable way.)

The Jews tried to kill the Prophet

Az-Zamakhshari commented on Allah's statement,

(فَقَرَّبَهَا كَذَّبْنَمْ وَقَرَّبَهَا تَقْتُلُونَ)

(Some you disbelieved and some you kill), "Allah did not say 'killed' here, because the Jews would still try to kill the Prophet in the future, using poison and magic." During the illness that preceded his death, the Prophet said,

»ما زالت أكلة خيّرٌ تعاوذني، فَهَذَا أوَّانٌ انقطاع أعْهَرَى

(I kept feeling the effect of what I ate (from the poisoned sheep) during the day of Khaybar, until now, when it is the time that the aorta will be cut off (meaning when death is near).)

This Hadith was collected by Al-Bukhari and others

(وقَالُوا قَلْوُبُنَا غَلِفَ بَل لَعَنَّهُمُ الْلَّهُ يَكْفُرُ رُهْمُ قَلْبِيْلا مَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(88. And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf." Nay, Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is that which they believe.)
Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَقَالُوا قَلْوُبُنَا غُلفً)

(And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf.") means, "Our hearts are screened." Mujahid also said that,

(وَقَالُوا قَلْوُبُنَا غُلفً)

(And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf.") means, "They are covered." Ikrimah said, "There is a stamp on them." Abu Al-`Aliyah said, "They do not comprehend." Mujahid and Qatadah said that Ibn `Abbas read the Ayah in a way that means, "Our hearts contain every type of knowledge and do not need the knowledge that you (O Muhammad) have." This is the opinion of `Ata and Ibn `Abbas.

(بَل لَعِنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكَفُّرَةِ هُمْ)

(Nay, Allah has cursed them for their disbelief) meaning, "Allah expelled them and deprived them of every type of righteousness." Qatadah said that the Ayah,

(فَقَلَلَة مَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(So little is that which they believe.) means, "Only a few of them believe." Allah's statement,

(وَقَالُوا قَلْوُبُنَا غُلفً)

(And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf.") is similar to His statement,

(وَقَالُوا قَلْوُبُنَا فِي أكِيَةٍ فِي أكِيَةٍ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَ إلَيْهِ)

(And they say: "Our hearts are under coverings (screened) from that to which you invite us) (41:5).

This is why Allah said here,

(بَل لَعِنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكَفُّرَةِ هُمْ فَقَلَلَة مَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)
(Nay, Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is that which they believe.) meaning, "It is not as they claim. Rather, their hearts are cursed and stamped," just as Allah said in Surat An-Nisa' (4:155),

(وَقُولُواَ فَلَوْبُنَا عَلَى طَبَعِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا بَكْفَرُهُمْ)

(And of their saying: "Our hearts are wrapped (with coverings, i.e. we do not understand what the Messengers say) nay, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts because of their disbelief, so they believe not but a little.)

There is a difference of opinion regarding the meaning of Allah's statement,

(فَقَلَيْلاَ مَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(So little is that which they believe.) and His statement,

(فَلاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَليلاً)

(So they believe not except a few). Some scholars said that the Ayat indicate that a few of them would believe, or that their faith is minute, because they believe in Resurrection and in Allah's reward and punishment that Musa foretold. Yet, this faith will not benefit them since it is overshadowed by their disbelief in what Muhammad brought them. Some scholars said that the Jews did not actually believe in anything and that Allah said,

(فَقَلَيْلاَ مَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(So little is that which they believe), meaning, they do not believe. This meaning is similar to the Arabic expression, "Hardly have I seen anything like this," meaning, "I have never seen anything like this."

(وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ كَتَبُ مِنْ عَنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدَّقٌ لِّمَا مَعُوهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الْذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ مَّا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعَنَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْكَفَّارِينَ)
(89. And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (this Qur'an) from Allah confirming what is with them (the Tawrah) and the Injil (Gospel), although aforetime they had invoked Allah (for the coming of Muhammad) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came to them that which they had recognised, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah be on the disbelievers.)

The Jews were awaiting the Prophet’s coming, but They disbelieved in Him when He was sent

Allah said,

وَلَمَّا جاءَهُمُ (And when there came to them) meaning, the Jews,

كَتَبَ مَنْ عَنَّى الْلَّهِ (a Book from Allah) meaning, the Qur’an that Allah sent down to Muhammad,

مُصَدِّقَ لَمَّا مَعَهُمُ (confirming what is with them) meaning, the Tawrah. Further, Allah said,

وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ يُسَتَّقِتْحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا (although aforetime they had invoked Allah (for coming of Muhammad) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved) meaning, before this Messenger came to them, they used to ask Allah to aid them by his arrival, against their polytheistic enemies in war. They used to say to the polytheists, “A Prophet shall be sent just before the end of this world and we, along with him, shall exterminate you, just as the nations of `Ad and Iram were exterminated.” Also, Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas said, “The Jews used to invoke Allah (for the coming of Muhammad) in order to gain victory over the Aws and Khazraj, before the Prophet was sent. When Allah sent him to the Arabs, they rejected him and denied what they used to say about him. Hence, Mu`adh bin Jabal and Bishr bin Al-Bara` bin Ma`rur, from Bani Salamah, said to them, ‘O Jews! Fear Allah and embrace Islam. You used to invoke Allah for the coming of Muhammad when we were still disbelievers and you used to tell us that he would come and describe him to us.’ Salam bin Mushkim from Bani An-Nadir replied, ‘He did not bring anything that we recognize. He is not the Prophet we told you about.’ Allah then revealed this Ayah about their statement,
(And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (this Qur'an) from Allah confirming what is with them (the Tawrah) and the Injil (Gospel)).

Abu Al-` Aliyah said, “The Jews used to ask Allah to send Muhammad so that they would gain victory over the Arab disbelievers. They used to say, ‘O Allah! Send the Prophet that we read about - in the Tawrah - so that we can torment and kill the disbelievers alongside him.’ When Allah sent Muhammad and they saw that he was not one of them, they rejected him and envied the Arabs, even though they knew that he was the Messenger of Allah. Hence, Allah said,

(Then when there came to them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah be on the disbelievers).”

Mujahid said, 

(How bad is that for which they have sold their own selves, that they should disbelieve in that which Allah has revealed (the Qur'an), grudging that Allah should reveal of His grace unto whom He wills of His servants. So they have drawn on themselves wrath upon wrath. And for the disbelievers, there is disgracing torment.)

As-Suddi said that the Ayah,
(How bad is that for which they have sold their own selves) means, "The Jews sold themselves." meaning, what is worse is what they chose for themselves by disbelieving in what Allah revealed to Muhammad instead of believing, aiding and supporting him. This behavior of theirs is the result of their injustice, envy and hatred.

(And they drew on themselves) is that they deserved and acquired multiplied anger. Also, Abu Al-`Aliyah said, "Allah became angry with them, because of their disbelief in the Injil and `Isa and He became angry with them again, because they disbelieved in Muhammad and the Qur'an." Similar was said by `Ikrimah and Qatadah. Allah said,

(And for the disbelievers, there is disgracing torment). Since their disbelief was a result of their transgression and envy, which was caused by arrogance, they were punished with disgrace and humiliation in this world and the Hereafter. Similarly, Allah said,

(Verily, those who scorn My worship (i.e. do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness) they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!") (40:60) meaning, "Disgraced, degraded and
humiliated." Imam Ahmad narrated that `Amr bin Shu`ayb said that his father said that his grandfather said that the Prophet said,

«ُيُحِشَّرُ الْمَتَكْبِرُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَمْتَالَ الْدُّرِّ فِي صُورِ النَّاسِ، يَعْلُوُهُمْ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الصَّغَارِ حَتَّى يَدْخُلُوا سَجِنًا فِي جَهَنَّمَ يُقَالُ لَهُ: بَوْلَسُ تَعْلُوُهُمْ نَارٌ الأَنْيَارِ يُسْقِفُونَ مِنْ طَيِّبَةِ الْحَبَالِ عُسَارَةَ أَهْلَ النَّارِ»

(The arrogant people will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection in the size of ants, but in the shape of men. Everything shall be above them, because of the humiliation placed on them, until they enter a prison in Jahannam called `Bawlas' where the fire will surround them from above. They shall drink from the puss of the people of the Fire.)

(91. And when it is said to them (the Jews), "Believe in what Allah has sent down," they say, "We believe in what was sent down to us." And they disbelieve in that which came after it, while it is the truth confirming what is with them. Say (O Muhammad to them): "Why then have you killed the Prophets of Allah aforetime, if you indeed have been believers") (92. And indeed Musa came to you with clear proofs, yet you worshipped the calf after he left, and you were Zalimun.)

Although The Jews denied the Truth, They claimed to be Believers!
Allah said,

(وَإِذَا قُلُوكُ لَهُمْ)

(And when it is said to them), meaning, the Jews and the People of the Book,

(عَامِئُوا بِمَآ أُنزِلَ اللَّهُ)

(Believe in what Allah has sent down) to Muhammad, believe in and follow him,

(قَالُوا نَوْمَنُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا)

(They say, "We believe in what was sent down to us.") meaning, it is enough for us to believe in what was revealed to us in the Tawrah and the Injil, and this is the path that we choose,

(وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَأَهُمْ)

(And they disbelieve in that which came after it).

(وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدَّقًا لَّمَا مَعَهُمْ)

(while it is the truth confirming what is with them) meaning, while knowing that what was revealed to Muhammad,

(الْحَقُّ مُصَدَّقًا لَّمَا مَعَهُمْ)

(it is the truth confirming what is with them). This means that since what was sent to Muhammad conforms to what was revealed to the People of the Book, then this fact constitutes a proof against them. Similarly, Allah said,

(الذِّينَ آتَيْنِهِمْ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرَفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرَفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ)

(Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad) as they recognize their sons) (2:146). Allah said next,
(قلِ قَلِمْ تَقُطُّلُونَ أَنيِبَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَبْلٍ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِينِينَ)

("Why then have you killed the Prophets of Allah aforetime, if you indeed have been believers").

This means, "If your claim that you believe in what was revealed to you is true, then why did you kill the Prophets who came to you affirming the Tawrah's Law, although you knew they were true Prophets You killed them simply out of transgression, stubbornness and injustice with Allah's Messengers. Therefore, you only follow your lusts, opinions and desires." Similarly, Allah said,

(أَفْكَلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ يَمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسَكُمْ)

(Is it that whenever there came to you a Messenger with what you yourselves desired not, you grew arrogant Some you disbelieved and some you killed.)

Also, As-Suddi said, "In this Ayah, Allah chastised the People of the Book,

(قُلْ قَلِمْ قَلِمْ تَقُطُّلُونَ أَنيِبَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَبْلٍ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِينِينَ)

(Say (O Muhammad to them): "Why then have you killed the Prophets of Allah aforetime, if you indeed have been believers")."

(وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَى مُوسَى بَالبَيْتَنَتَ)

(And indeed Musa came to you with clear proofs) meaning, with clear signs and clear proofs that he was the Messenger of Allah and that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. The clear signs -or miracles- mentioned here are the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, the blood, the staff and the hand. Musa's miracles also include parting the sea, shading the Jews with clouds, the manna and quails, the gushing stone, etc.

(ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ)

(yet you worshipped the calf) meaning, as a deity instead of Allah, during the time of Musa. Allah's statement,
(after he left) after Musa went to Mount Tur to speak to Allah. Similarly, Allah said,

وَأَتَنِحَدْ قَوْمٌ مُّوسَى مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ حُليِّهِمْ عِجْلاً

(And the people of Musa made in his absence, out of their ornaments, the image of a calf (for worship). It had a sound (as if it was mooing)) (7:148).

(وَأَنْتُمْ ظَلَمُونَ)

(and you were Zalimun) meaning, you were unjust in this behavior of worshipping the calf, although you knew that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. Similarly, Allah said,

وَلِمَا سُقِتْ فِي أَيْدِيْهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنْهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالُوا لَنِّنَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لِتَنْكُونَ مِنَ الخَسِيرِينَ

(And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray, they (repented and) said: "If our Lord have not mercy upon us and forgive us, we shall certainly be of the losers") (7:149).

وَأَذَا أَخْذَنَا مَيْتَفَكَّمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ الطُّورَ خَذُوا مَا ءَاتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقَوْةٍ وَأَسْمَعْنَا قَالُوا سَمَعْنَا وَعَصْبَنَا وَاشْتَرَبُوا فِي قَلْوِيْهِمْ الْعَجْلَ يُكَفَّرُهُمْ قَلْ بَسْمَانَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِهِ إِيَمَنْكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

(93. And (remember) when We took your covenant and We raised above you the Mount (saying), "Hold firmly to what We have given you and hear (Our Word)." They said, "We have heard and disobeyed." And their hearts absorbed (the worship of) the calf because of their disbelief. Say: "Worst indeed is that which your faith enjoins on you if you are believers.")
The Jews rebel after Allah took Their Covenant and raised the Mountain above Their Heads

Allah reminded the Jews of their errors, breaking His covenant, transgression and defiance, when He raised Mount Tur above them so that they would believe and agree to the terms of the covenant. Yet, they broke it soon afterwards,

(قالوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصِينَا)

(They said, "We have heard and disobeyed.") We have mentioned the Tafsir of this subject before. `Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma`mar narrated that Qatadah said that,

(وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قَلْبِهِمُّ العَجْلَ بَكْفَرُهُمْ)

(And their hearts absorbed (the worship of) the calf) means, "They absorbed its love, until its love resided in their hearts." This is also the opinion of Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Allah's statement,

(قُلْ بِنَسَمَةٍ يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيَمَّةً يَكُونُ كَمَّ إِيمَانٍ مُؤْمِنٍ)

(Say: "Worst indeed is that which your faith enjoins on you if you are believers.") means, "Worse yet is the manner in which you behaved in the past and even now, disbelieving in Allah's Ayat and defying the Prophets. You also disbelieved in Muhammad, which is the worst of your deeds and the harshest sin that you committed. You disbelieved in the Final Messenger and the master of all Prophets and Messengers, the one who was sent to all mankind. How can you then claim that you believe, while committing the evil of breaking Allah's covenant, disbelieving in Allah's Ayat and worshipping the calf instead of Allah"
(94. Say to (them): "If the abode of the Hereafter with Allah is indeed for you especially and not for others of mankind, then long for death if you are truthful.") (95. But they will never long for it because of what their hands have sent before them (i.e. what they have done). And Allah is Aware of the Zalimin .) (96. And verily, you will find them (the Jews) the greediest of mankind for life and (even greedier) than those who ascribe partners to Allah. One of them wishes that he could be given a life of a thousand years. But the grant of such life will not save him even a little from (due) punishment. And Allah is Seer of what they do.)

Calling the Jews to invoke Allah to destroy the Unjust Party

Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn ` Abbas said, "Allah said to His Prophet ,

قِلْ إِن كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِندَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مَّنْ دُونَ النَّاسِ قَتَمَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِن كَنْتُمْ صَدِيقِينَ

(Say to (them): "If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is indeed for you especially and not for others, of mankind, then long for death if you are truthful.") meaning, "Invoke Allah to bring death to the lying camp among the two (Muslims and Jews). The Jews declined this offer by the Messenger of Allah ."

وَلَن يَتَمَّ النَّاسُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيُّمُ

(But they will never long for it because of what their hands have sent before them (i.e. what they have done). And Allah is Aware of the Zalimīn (polytheists and wrongdoers),) meaning, "Since they know that they recognize you, and yet disbelieve in you." Had they wished death that day, no Jew would have remained alive on the face of the earth. Moreover, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

فَقَتَمَّوْا الْمَوْتَ

(Then long for death), means, "Invoke (Allah) for death." Also, ` Abdur-Razzaq narrated that ` Ikrimah said that Ibn ` Abbas commented,
(Then long for death if you are truthful), "Had the Jews invoked Allah for death, they would have perished." Also, Ibn Abi Hatim recorded Sa`id bin Jubayr saying that Ibn `Abbas said, "Had the Jews asked for death, one of them would have choked on his own saliva." These statements have authentic chains of narration up to Ibn `Abbas. Further, Ibn Jarir said in his Tafsir, "We were told that the Prophet said,

«لَوْ أَنَّ الْيَهُودَ تَمَنَّوْا المَوْتَ لِمَاتُوا وَلَرَأَوْا مَقَاعِدَهُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَلَوْ خَرَجَ الْذِّينَ يَبَاهِلُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَرَجَعُوا لَيَجِدُونَ أَهْلًا وَلَاءَ مَالًا»

(Had the Jews wished for death, they would have died and seen their seats in the Fire. And, those who invoked such curse against Allah's Messenger would have found no families or property had they returned to their homes)."

Similar to this Ayah is Allah's statement in Surat Al-Jumu`ah,

قُلْ يَا بَيْتِهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ أَنْتَمُوْ أُولِيَائُهُمْ لِلَّهِ مِن دُونَ النَّاسِ قَتَّمَّنَّوا الْمَوْتَ إِن كَنْتُمْ صَدِيقِينَ- وَلَا قَتَّمَّنَوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمْتُ أَيْدِيهمُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّلِيمِينَ- قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَقْرُونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلْقِيُّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرْدُونَ إِلَى عَالِمِ الْعَيْبِ وَالْشَّهِيْدَةِ قَبِيْبِنَّكُمْ بِمَا كَنْتُمْ تَعَمَّلُونَ

((Say (O Muhammad ): "O you Jews! If you pretend that you are friends of Allah, to the exclusion of (all) other mankind, then long for death if you are truthful. "But they will never long for it (death), because of what (deeds) their hands have sent before them! And Allah knows well the Zalimin. Say (to them): "Verily, the death from which you flee will surely meet you, then you will be sent back to (Allah) the Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will tell you what you used to do.")(62:6-8).
So they claimed that they are Allah's sons and loved ones and said, "Only those who are Christian or Jews shall enter Paradise." Therefore, they were called to invoke Allah to destroy the lying group, be it them or the Muslims. When the Jews declined, every one was sure of their wrong, for had they been sure of their claims, then they would have accepted the proposal. Their lies were thus exposed after they declined the offer to invoke the curse.

Similarly, the Messenger of Allah called a delegation of Najran's Christians to curse after he refuted them in a debate in which they demonstrated stubbornness and defiance. Allah said,

(Then whoever disputes with you concerning him (Isa) after (all this) knowledge that has come to you (i.e. Isa) being a servant of Allah, and having no share in divinity), say (O Muhammad): "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves then we pray and invoke (sincerely) the curse of Allah upon those who lie.") (3:61).

When the Christians heard this challenge, some of them said to each other, "By Allah! If you do such with this Prophet, none of you will have an eye that blinks." This is when they resorted to peace and gave the Jizyah (tax) in disgrace. The Prophet accepted the Jizyah from them and sent Abu `Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrah with them as a trustee. Similar to this meaning is Allah's command to His Prophet to proclaim to the polytheists:

(قل من كان في الضلاله قل يمد د له الرحمن مداً)

(Say (O Muhammad) whoever is in error, the Most Gracious (Allah) will prolong him (in it).) (19:75) meaning, "Whoever among us has deviated, may Allah increase and prolong his deviation." We will mention this subject later, Allah willing.

The Mubahalah (invocation to Allah to destroy the liars) was called a 'wish' here, because every just person wishes that Allah destroy the unjust opponent who is debating with him, especially when the just person has a clear, apparent proof for the truth he is calling to. Also, the Mubahalah involves invoking Allah for death of the unjust group, because to disbelievers, life is the biggest prize, especially when they know the evil destination they will meet after death.

Disbelievers wish They could live longer
This is why Allah said next,

(ولن يَتَمَّوْهُ أَبْدًا يَمًا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ

بالظلمين وللحمد لم أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَوَةٍ)

(But they will never long for it because of what their hands have sent before them (i.e. what they have done). And Allah is Aware of the Zalimin. And verily, you will find them (the Jews) the greediest of mankind for life.) meaning, greedy to live longer, because they know their evil end, and the only reward they will have with Allah is total loss. This life is a prison for the believer and Paradise for the disbeliever. Therefore, the People of the Book wish they could delay the Hereafter, as much as possible. However, they shall certainly meet what they are trying to avoid, even if they are more eager to delay the Hereafter than the polytheists who do not have a divine book.

Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas commented on,

(ومَّا هَوَّلِ يَمُرُّ حُزْرَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَّابِ أَن يُعْمَرُ)

(But the grant of such life will not save him even a little from (due) punishment.) "Long life shall not save them from torment. Certainly, the polytheists do not believe in resurrection after death, and they would love to enjoy a long life. The Jews know the humiliation they will suffer in the Hereafter for knowingly ignoring the truth." Also, `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said, "The Jews are most eager for this life. They wish they could live for a thousand years. However, living for a thousand years will not save them from torment, just as Iblis' - Satan - long life did not benefit him, due to being a disbeliever." t

(وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(And Allah is Seer of what they do.) meaning, "Allah knows what His servants are doing, whether good or evil, and will compensate each of them accordingly."

(قِلْ مَن كَانَ عِدُوًا لِجَبْرِيلَ فَأَنَّ اللَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ

بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُصَدِّقٌ لَمْ أَبْنَ بَيْنَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهَذَى وَبُشَرَى

لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ - مَن كَانَ عِدُوًا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَّكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

وَجَبْرِيلَ وَمِيَكَلٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عِدُوٌّ لِلْكَفَرِينَ)

(97. Say (O Muhammad): "Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart by Allah's permission, confirming what
The Jews are the Enemies of Jibril

Imam Abu Ja`far bin Jarir At-Tabari said, "The scholars of Tafsir agree that this Ayah (2: 97-98) was revealed in response to the Jews who claimed that Jibril (Gabriel) is an enemy of the Jews and that Mika'il (Michael) is their friend." Al-Bukhari said, "Allah said,

(Whoever is an enemy of Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury)). 'Ikrimah said, "Jibr, Mik and Israf all mean, worshipper, while il means, Allah'. Anas bin Malik said, "When `Abdullah bin Salam heard of the arrival of the Prophet in Al-Madinah, he was working on his land. He came to the Prophet and said, 'I am going to ask you about three things which nobody knows except a Prophet. What will be the first portent of the Hour, What will be the first meal taken by the people of Paradise Why does a child resemble its father, and why does it resemble its maternal uncle' Allah's Messenger said, (Jibril has just told me the answers.) 'Abdullah said, 'He (i.e. Jibril), among all the angels, is the enemy of the Jews.' Allah's Messenger recited the Ayah,

(Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (let him die in his fury)), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart). Allah's Messenger then said, (The first portent of the Hour will be a fire that will bring together the people from the east to the west; the first meal of the people of Paradise will be the caudate lobe of the liver of fish. As for the child resembling his parents: If a man has sexual intercourse with his wife and his discharge is first, the child will resemble the father. If the woman has a discharge first, the child will resemble her side of the family.) On that 'Abdullah bin Salam said, 'I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and you are the Messenger of Allah.' 'Abdullah bin Salam further said, 'O Allah's Messenger! The Jews are liars, and if they should come to know about my conversion to Islam before you ask them (about me), they will tell a lie about me.' The Jews came to Allah's Messenger, and 'Abdullah went inside the house. Allah's Messenger asked (the Jews), ('What kind of man is 'Abdullah bin Salam?) They replied, 'He is the best among us, the son of the best among us, our master and the son of our master.' Allah's Messenger said, (What do you think if he would embrace Islam) The Jews said, 'May Allah save him from it.' Then 'Abdullah bin Salam came out in front of them saying, 'I testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.' Thereupon they said, 'He is the evildest among us, and the son of the evildest among us.' And they continued talking badly about him. Ibn Salam said, 'This is what I feared, O Messenger of Allah.' Only Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith with this chain of narration. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded this Hadith from Anas using another chain of narration.

Some people say that 'il' means worshipper while whatever word that is added to it becomes Allah's Name, because 'il' is a constant in such conjunction. This is similar to the names 'Abdullah, 'Abdur-Rahman, 'Abdul-Malik, 'Abdul-Quddus, 'Abdus-Salam, 'Abdul-Kafi, 'Abdul-
Jalil, and so forth. Hence, `Abd' is constant in these compound names, while the remainder differs from name to name. This is the same case with Jibril, Mika'il, `Azra'il, Israfil, and so forth. Allah knows best.

**Choosing Some Angels to believe in over Others is Disbelief like choosing Some Prophets over Others**

Allah said,

(من كان عدواً لِجَبَرِيلَ فَانَزلَهُ نَزْلَةً عَلَى قَلْبِكَ

(بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart by Allah's permission,) meaning, whoever becomes an enemy of Jibril, let him know that he is Ruh Al-Qudus who brought down the Glorious Dhikr (Qur'an) to your heart from Allah by His leave. Hence, he is a messenger from Allah. Whoever takes a messenger as an enemy, will have taken all the messengers as enemies. Further, whoever believes in one messenger, is required to believe in all of the messengers. Whoever rejects one messenger, he has rejected all of the messengers. Similarly, Allah said,

(إنَّ الَّذينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَرِيدُونَ أَن يُفَرِّقُوا بِيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقْوُلُونَ نَوْمِنُ بَعْضٍ وَاًرْتَكَبُ بَعْضٍ)

(Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers (by believing in Allah and disbelieving in His Messengers) saying, "We believe in some but reject others.") (4:150)

Allah decreed that they are disbelievers, because they believe in some Prophets and reject others. This is the same with those who take Jibril as an enemy, because Jibril did not choose missions on his own, but by the command of his Lord,

(وَمَا نَنْزَلَلْ إِلَّاً بَيْنَ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكَ)

(And we (angels) descend not except by the command of your Lord) (19:64), and,
(And truly, this (the Qur'an) is a revelation from the Lord of all that exists. Which the trustworthy Ruh (Jibril) has brought down. Upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be (one) of the warners) (26:192-194).

Al-Bukhari reported that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

»منْ عَادِىٓ لِي وَلِيَّا فَقَدْ بَارَزْنِي بِالحَرْبِ»

(Allah said, `Whoever takes a friend of Mine as an enemy, will have started a war with Me.)

Therefore, Allah became angry with those who took Jibril as an enemy. Allah said,

(وَهَدَىٰ وَبَشَّرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart by Allah's permission, confirming what came before it) meaning, the previous Books,

(قلُ هُوَ لِلْذِينَ آمَنُوا هَدْىٰ وَشِيَافَاءٌ)

(Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing.") (41:44), and,

(وُنَزِّلَ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شَفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ

(للْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(وَبُشْرَىٰ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَهُوَ حَقًّا وَمَلَائِكَةٌ

(And a reminder of the Children of Israel that it is a truth and a Messenger) (64:2).
(And We send down of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe)
(17:82).

Allah then said,

(من كان عدوا الله وملئكته ورسليه وجبريل وميكيل فإن الله عدوا لكافرين)

(Whoever is an enemy to Allah, His Angels, His Messengers, Jibril and Mika'il (Michael), then

verily, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers.)

Allah stated that whoever takes Him, His angels and messengers as enemies, then...Allah's

messengers include angels and men, for Allah said,

(الله يصطفى من المليكاء رسلًا ومن الناس)

(Allah chooses Messengers from angels and from men) (22:75). Allah said,

(وجبريل وميكيل)

(Jibril (Gabriel) and Mka'il (Michael)). Allah mentioned Jibril and Mka'il specifically - although

they are included among the angels who were messengers - only because this Ayah was meant
to support Jibril the emissary between Allah and His Prophets. Allah also mentioned Mka'il

here, because the Jews claimed that Jibril was their enemy and Mka'il was their friend. Allah

informed them that whoever is an enemy of either of them, then he is also an enemy of the

other as well as Allah. We should state here that Mka'il sometimes descended to some of

Allah's Prophets, although to a lesser extent than Jibril, because this was primarily Jibril's task,

and Israfil is entrusted with the job of blowing the Trumpet for the commencement of

Resurrection on the Day of Judgment. It is recorded in the Sahih that whenever the Messenger

of Allah would wake up at night, he would supplicate,

«اللهم رب جبرائيل وميكائيل وإسرافيل قاطر السموات والأرض عالم الغيب والشهادة، أنت

تحكم بين عبادك فيما كانوا فيه يختلفون، إهدني لما اختلف فيه من الحق بإذنك إلّا

بم تشاء إلى صراط مستقيم»
(O Allah, Lord of Jibril, Mika'il and Israfil, Creator of the heavens and earth and Knower of the seen and the unseen! You judge between Your servants regarding what they differ in, so direct me to the truth which they differ on, by Your leave. Verily, You guide whom You will to the straight path.)

Allah's statement,

(قلِ اللَّهُ عَدُوُّ الْكُفَّارِ)

(then verily, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers) informed the disbelievers that whoever takes a friend of Allah as an enemy, then he has taken Allah as an enemy, and whoever treats Allah as an enemy, then he shall be Allah's enemy. Indeed, whoever is an enemy of Allah then he will lose in this life and the Hereafter, as stated earlier;

(من عادى لي ولياً فقد أدمِّنته بالمُحَارَّبةَ)

(Whoever takes a friend of Mine as an enemy, I shall wage war on him.)
(99. And indeed We have sent down to you manifest Ayat and none disbelieve in them but Fasigun (those who rebel against Allah's command).) (100. Is it not (the case) that every time they make a covenant, some party among them throw it aside Nay! (the truth is:) most of them believe not.) (101. And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah (i.e. Muhammad) confirming what was with them, a party of those who were given the Scripture threw away the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know!) (102. They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulayman (Solomon). Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew.) (103. And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord, if they but knew!)

Proofs of Muhammad's Prophethood

Imam Abu Ja'far bin Jarir said that Allah's statement,

(وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ عَايَتَ عَيْيَنَتْ)

(And indeed We have sent down to you manifest Ayat) means, "We have sent to you, O Muhammad, clear signs that testify to your prophethood." These Ayat are contained in the Book of Allah (Qur'an) which narrates the secrets of the knowledge that the Jews possess, which they hid, and the stories of their earlier generations. The Book of Allah also mentions the texts in the Books of the Jews that are known to only the rabbis and scholars, and the sections where they altered and distorted the rulings of the Tawrah. Since Allah mentioned all of this in His
Book revealed to His Prophet Muhammad, then this fact alone should be enough evidence for those who are truthful with themselves and who wish to avoid bringing themselves to destruction due to envy and transgression. Further human instinct testifies to the truth that Muhammad was sent with and the clear signs that he brought which he did not learn or acquire from mankind. Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(ولَقدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ عَلَىٰ بُيُنَتٍ)

(And indeed We have sent down to you manifest Ayat) means, "You recite and convey this Book to them day and night, although you are an Ummi (unlettered) who never read a book. Yet, you inform them of what they have (in their own Books). Allah stated that this fact should serve as an example, a clear sign and a proof against them, if they but knew."

The Jews break Their Covenants

When the Messenger of Allah was sent and Allah reminded the Jews of the covenant that they had with Him, especially concerning Muhammad, Malik bin As-Sayf said, "By Allah! Allah never made a covenant with us about Muhammad, nor did He take a pledge from us at all." Allah then revealed,

(أَوْكَلَّمَا عَهَدُوا عَهْدًا فَبَذَّهُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ)

(Is it not (the case) that every time they make a covenant, some party among them throw it aside) Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that Allah's statement,

(بَلْ أُكْثَرُ هُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Nay! (the truth is:) most of them believe not) means, "There is not a promise that they make, but they break it and abandon it. They make a promise today and break it tomorrow."

The Jews abandoned the Book of Allah and practiced Magic

As-Suddi commented on,

(وَلَمَا جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّهِ مُصَدِّقٍ لَّمَأَ مَعَهُمْ)

(And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah (i.e. Muhammad) confirming what was with them), "When Muhammad came to them, they wanted to contradict and dispute with him using the Tawrah. However, the Tawrah and the Qur'an affirmed each other. So the Jews gave
up on using the Torah, and took to the Book of Asaf, and the magic of Harut and Marut, which
indeed did not conform to the Qur'an. Hence Allah's statement,

كأنهم لا يعلمون

(As if they did not know!)."

Also, Qatadah said that Allah's statement,

كأنهم لا يعلمون

(As if they did not know!) means, "They knew the truth but abandoned it, hid it and denied the
fact that they even had it."

**Magic existed before Sulayman (Solomon)**

As-Suddi said that Allah's statement,

وأتبعوا ما تثلو الشياطين على ملك سليمان

(They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of
Sulayman) means, "During the time of Prophet Solomon.' Beforehand, the devils used to
ascend to heaven and eavesdrop on the conversations of the angels about what will occur on
the earth regarding death, other incidents or unseen matters. They would convey this news to
the soothsayers, and the soothsayers would in turn convey the news to the people. The people
would believe what the soothsayers told them as being true. When the soothsayers trusted the
devils, the devils started to lie to them and added other words to the true news that they
heard, to the extent of adding seventy false words to each true word. The people recorded
these words in some books. Soon after, the Children of Israel said that the Jinns know matters
of the Unseen. When Solomon was sent as a Prophet, he collected these books in a box and
buried it under his throne; any devil that dared get near the box was burned. Solomon said, `I
will not hear of anyone who says that the devils know the Unseen, but I will cut off his head.'
When Solomon died and the scholars who knew the truth about Solomon perished, there came
another generation. To them, the devil materialized in the shape of a human and said to some
of the Children of Israel, `Should I lead you to a treasure that you will never be able to use up'
They said, `Yes.' He said, `Dig under this throne,' and he went with them and showed them
Solomon's throne. They said to him, `Come closer.' He said, `No. I will wait for you here, and if
you do not find the treasure then kill me.' They dug and found the buried books, and Satan
said to them, `Solomon only controlled the humans, devils and birds with this magic.'
Thereafter, the news that Solomon was a sorcerer spread among the people, and the Children
of Israel adopted these books. When Muhammad came, they disputed with him relying on these
books. Hence Allah's statement,
(وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُواُ)

(Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved).

The Story of Harut and Marut, and the Explanation that They were Angels

Allah said,

(وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكِينَ بَابَالْهَرُوتِ وَمَرُوتَ)

(وَمَا يَعْلَمُانَ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنِّي نَحْنُ فَضَّلْنَا)

فَلَا تَكْفُرُوْنَ فِي تَعْلُمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يَقُولُونَ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ)

(And such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).'' And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife).

There is a difference of opinion regarding this story. It was said that this Ayah denies that anything was sent down to the two angels, as Al-Qurtubi stated and then referred to the Ayah,

(وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ)

(Sulayman did not disbelieve) saying, "The negation applies in both cases. Allah then said,

(وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُواُ يَعْلُمُونَ النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ)

(وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكِينَ)

(But the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels).

The Jews claimed that Gabriel and Michael brought magic down to the two angels, but Allah refuted this false claim." 

Also, Ibn Jarir reported, that Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said about Allah's statement,
(And such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels)

"Allah did not send magic down."

Also, Ibn Jarir narrated that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said about,

(And such things that came down to the two angels), "Allah did not send magic down to the them." Ibn Jarir commented, "This is the correct explanation for this Ayah.

(They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely) in the lifetime of Sulayman.) meaning, magic. However, neither did Solomon disbelieve nor did Allah send magic with the two angels. The devils, on the other hand, disbelieved and taught magic to the people of the Babylon of Harut and Marut."

Ibn Jarir continued; "If someone asks about explaining this Ayah in this manner, we say that,

(They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely) in the lifetime of Sulayman.) means, magic. Solomon neither disbelieved nor did Allah send magic with the two angels. However, the devils disbelieved and taught magic to the people in the Babylon of Harut and Marut, meaning Gabriel and Michael, for Jewish sorcerers claimed that Allah sent magic by the words of Gabriel and Michael to Solomon, son of David. Allah denied this false claim and stated to His Prophet Muhammad that Gabriel and Michael were not sent with magic. Allah also exonerated Solomon from practicing magic, which the devils taught to the people of Babylon by the hands of two men, Harut and Marut. Hence, Harut and Marut were two ordinary men (not angels or Gabriel or Michael)." These were the words of At-Tabari, and this explanation is not plausible.

Many among the Salaf, said that Harut and Marut were angels who came down from heaven to earth and did what they did as the Ayah stated. To conform this opinion with the fact that the angels are immune from error, we say that Allah had eternal knowledge what these angels would do, just as He had eternal knowledge that Iblis would do as he did, while Allah refered to him being among the angels,
(And remember) when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves before Adam." And they prostrated except Iblīs (Satan), he refused (20:116) and so forth. However, what Harūt and Maṛūt did was less evil than what Iblīs, may Allah curse him, did. Al-Qurtubi reported this opinion from ʿAlī, Ibn Masʿūd, Ibn ʿAbbas, Ibn ʿUmar, Kaʿb Al-Aḥbar, As-Suddī and Al-Kalbī.

**Learning Magic is Kufr**

Allah said,

(But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)."

Abū Jaʿfar Al-Rāzī said that Al-Rābiʿ bin Anas said that Qays bin ʿAbbad said that Ibn ʿAbbas said, "When someone came to the angels to learn magic, they would discourage him and say to him, `We are only a test, so do not fall into disbelief.' They had knowledge of what is good and evil and what constitutes belief or disbelief, and they thus knew that magic is a form of disbelief. When the person who came to learn magic still insisted on learning it, they commanded him to go to such and such place, where if he went, Satan would meet him and teach him magic. When this man would learn magic, the light (of faith) would depart him, and he would see it shining (and flying away) in the sky. He would then proclaim, `O my sorrow! Woe unto me! What should I do.' Al-Ḥasan Al-Bāṣrī said that this Ayah means, "The angels were sent with magic, so that the people whom Allah willed would be tried and tested. Allah made them promise that they would not teach anyone until first proclaiming, `We are a test for you, do not fall into disbelief.'" It was recorded by Ibn Abī Hatīm. Also, Qatadah said, "Allah took their covenant to not teach anyone magic until they said, `We are a test. Therefore, do not fall in disbelief.'"

Also, As-Suddī said, "When a man would come to the two angels they would advise him, `Do not fall into disbelief. We are a test. ' When the man would ignore their advice, they would say, 'Go to that pile of ashes and urinate on it.' When he would urinate on the ashes, a light, meaning the light of faith, would depart from him and would shine until it entered heaven. Then something black that appeared to be smoke would descend and enter his ears and the rest of his body, and this is Allah's anger. When he told the angels what happened, they would teach him magic. So Allah's statement,
(But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)."

Sunayd said that Hajjaj said that Ibn Jurayj commented on this Ayah (2:102), "No one dares practice magic except a disbeliever. As for the Fitnah, it involves trials and freedom of choice." The scholars who stated that learning magic is disbelief relied on this Ayah for evidence. They also mentioned the Hadith that Abu Bakr Al-Bazzar recorded from `Abdullah, which states,

(Whoever came to a soothsayer or a sorcerer and believed in what he said, will have disbelieved in what Allah revealed to Muhammad.)

This Hadith has an authentic chain of narration and there are other Hadiths which support it.

**Causing a Separation between the Spouses is One of the Effects of Magic**

Allah said,

(And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife.) This means, "The people learned magic from Harut and Marut and indulged in evil acts that included separating spouses, even though spouses are close to, and intimately associate with each other. This is the devil's work." Muslim recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

(And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife,) This means, "The people learned magic from Harut and Marut and indulged in evil acts that included separating spouses, even though spouses are close to, and intimately associate with each other. This is the devil's work." Muslim recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,
Satan erects his throne on water and sends his emissaries among the people. The closest person to him is the person who causes the most Fitnah. One of them (a devil) would come to him and would say, "I kept inciting so-and-so, until he said such and such words." Iblis says, "No, by Allah, you have not done much." Another devil would come to him and would say, "I kept inciting so-and-so, until I separated between him and his wife." Satan would draw him closer and embrace him, saying, "Yes, you did well.")

Separation between a man and his wife occurs here because each spouse imagines that the other spouse is ugly or ill-mannered, etc.

Allah’s Appointed Term supercedes Everything

Allah said,

(وَمَا هُمْ بِبَضَارِئِينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave). Sufyan Ath-Thawri commented, "Except by Allah's appointed term." Further, Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that,

(وَمَا هُمْ بِبَضَارِئِينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave) means, "Allah allows magicians to adversely affect whomever He wills and saves whomever He wills from them. Sorcerers never bring harm to anyone except by Allah's leave." Allah's statement,

(وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضْرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ)

(And they learn that which harms them and profits them not.) means, it harms their religion and does not have a benefit compared to its harm.
(And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no (Khalaq) share in the Hereafter.) meaning, "The Jews who preferred magic over following the Messenger of Allah knew that those who commit the same error shall have no Khalaq in the Hereafter." Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and As-Suddi stated that `no Khalaq' means, `no share.'

Allah then said,

وَأَنَّبَعُوا مَنْ تَنَّفَعُ فِي الْجَاهِلِينَ عَلَى مُلُكٍ سَلِيمٍ وَمَا كَفَرْ سَلِيمَانَ وَلَكِنَّ الْشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يَعَلُّمُونَ النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ وَمَا آَنَزَلْ عَلَى المُلُكِينَ بِبَابِلِ هَرُوْتُ وَمَرُوتُ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حُتَّى يَفْوَلَ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فَتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكَفَّرُ فَيَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يَقْرَفُونَ بِهِ بِيَنِّيَالِمْرَءْ وَزُوْجَةَ وَمَا هُمْ بِبَصَارِينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِذِنَالِلِّهِ وَيَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لِمَنْ اشْتَرَأَهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْأَخَرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ وَلَبِنسِ مَا شَرِوْا بِهِ أَنْفَسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ - وَلَوْ أَنْفَسَهُمْ أَعَامَّلُوْا وَانْقَوَا لِمَثْوَبَةٍ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ (And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew. And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord, if they but knew!). Allah stated, o
(And how bad) meaning, what they preferred, magic, instead of faith and following the Messenger, if they but comprehend the advice.

(And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord,) meaning, "Had they believed in Allah and His Messenger and avoided the prohibitions, then Allah's reward for these good deeds would have been better for them than what they chose and preferred for themselves." Similarly, Allah said,

(But those who had been given (religious) knowledge said: "Woe to you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this none shall attain except As-Sabirun (the patient in following the truth)."") (28:80).

(O you who believe! Say not (to the Messenger) R`ina but say Unzurna (make us understand) and hear. And for the disbelievers there is a painful torment.) (105. Neither those who disbelieve among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) nor Al-Mushrikin (the idolaters) like that there should be sent down unto you any good from your Lord. But Allah chooses for His mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of great bounty.)
Manners in Speech

Allah forbade His believing servants from imitating the behavior and deeds of the disbelievers. The Jews used to use devious words that hide what they really meant. May Allah's curse be upon them. When they wanted to say, `hear us,' they would use the word Ra` ina, which is an insult (in Hebrew, but means `hear us' in Arabic). Allah said,

(مَنِ الْذِّينَ هَادُوْا يُحْرِقُونَ الْكُلُّمَ عِنْ مَوَاضِيْعِهِ وَيَفْقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصِبَنَا إِنَّمَا سَمَعْنَاهُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنْهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطْعَنَا وَاسْمَعْنَا وَانْظُرُنَا لِكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِنْ لَعْنَاهُمُ اللَّهُ بَكْفَرْهُمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (إِلاَّ قَلِيلًا)

(Among those who are Jews, there are some who displace words from (their) right places and say: "We hear your word (O Muhammad) and disobey," and "Hear and let you (O Muhammad) hear nothing." And Ra` ina with a twist of their tongues and as a mockery of the religion (Islam). And if only they had said: "We hear and obey," and "Do make us understand," it would have been better for them, and more proper; but Allah cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not except a few) (4:46).

Also, the Hadiths stated that when they would greet Muslims, they would say, `As-Samu `alaykum,' meaning, `death be to you'. This is why we were commanded to answer them by saying, `Wa `alaykum,' meaning, `and to you too', then our supplication against them shall be answered, rather than theirs against us.

Allah forbade the believers from imitating the disbelievers in tongue or deed. Allah said,

(يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَفْوَلُوا رَعِينًا وَقُولُوا انْظُرُنَا وَأَسْمَعْنَا وَلَكُمْ فَرِيقٌ عَدِيدٌ أَلِيمُ)

(O you who believe! Say not (to the Messenger ) Ra` ina but say Unzurna (make us understand) and hear. And for the disbelievers there is a painful torment) (2:104).

Also, Imam Ahmad narrated that Ibn `Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said,
(I was sent with the sword just before the Last Hour, so that Allah is worshipped alone without partners. My sustenance was provided for me from under the shadow of my spear. Those who oppose my command were humiliated and made inferior, and whoever imitates a people, he is one of them.)

Abu Dawud narrated that the Prophet said,

(Whoever imitates a people is one of them.)

These Hadiths indicate, along with their threats and warnings, that we are not allowed to imitate the disbelievers in their statements, deeds, clothes, feasts, acts of worship, etc., whatever actions of the disbelievers that were not legislated for us.

Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(Say not (to the Messenger) R`ina) "They used to say to the Prophet, Ar`ina samak (which is an insult)." Ibn Abu Hatim said that it was reported that Abu Al-`Aliyah, Abu Malik, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Atiyah Al-Awfi and Qatadah said similarly. Further, Mujahid said, "Do not say R`ina' means, `Do not dispute'." Mujahid said in another narration, "Do not say, We hear from you, and you hear from us." Also, `Ata' said, "Do not say, R`ina), which was a dialect that the Ansar used and which was forbidden from use by Allah."

Also, As-Suddi said, "Rifa`ah bin Zayd, a Jewish man from the tribe of Qaynuqa`, used to come to the Prophet and say to him, `Hear, Ghayr Musma'in (let you hear nothing).' The Muslims used to think that the Prophets are greeted and honored with this type of speech, and this is why some of them used to say, `Hear, let you hear nothing,' and so on, as mentioned in Surat An-
Thereafter, Allah forbade the believers from uttering the word Ra`ina. `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam also said similarly.

The extreme Enmity that the Disbelievers and the People of the Book have against Muslims

Allah said next (2:105),

(مَا يَوْدُ الَّذِينَ كَفَّرُواَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا}

(الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يَنَزِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ)

(Neither those who disbelieve among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) nor Al-Mushrikin (the idolaters), like that there should be sent down unto you any good from your Lord).

Allah described the deep enmity that the disbelieving polytheists and People of the Scripture, whom Allah warned against imitating, have against the believers, so that Muslims should sever all friendship with them. Also, Allah mentioned what He granted the believers of the perfect Law that He legislated for their Prophet Muhammad. Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مِنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ دُوَ)

(الفَضِّلِ العَظِيمِ)

(But Allah chooses for His mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of great bounty) (2:105).

(مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ عَايَةٍ أَوْ نُسِبْهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ}

(مِثْلِهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٍ - أَلَمْ)

(تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمُوتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ}

(مَنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ)

(106. Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh (We abrogate) or Nunsihah (cause to be forgotten), We bring a better one or similar to it. Know you not that Allah is Able to do all things) (107. Know you not that it is Allah to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth And besides Allah you have neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper.)
The Meaning of Naskh

Ibn Abi Talhah said that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "Whatever an Ayah We abrogate." Also, Ibn Jurayj said that Mujahid said that,

Ibn Abi Najih said that Mujahid said that,

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "Whatever an Ayah We erase." Also, Ibn Abi Najih said that Mujahid said that,

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "We keep the words, but change the meaning." He related these words to the companions of ` Abdurrahman bin Mas` ud. Ibn Abi Hatim said that similar statements were mentioned by Abu Al-` Aliyah and Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi. Also As-Suddi said that,

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "We erase it." Further, Ibn Abi Hatim said that it means, "Erase and raise it, such as erasing the following wordings (from the Qur'an), ` The married adulterer and the married adulteress: stone them to death,' and, `If the son of Adam had two valleys of gold, he would seek a third.'"

Ibn Jarir stated that,

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "Whatever ruling we repeal in an Ayah by making the allowed unlawful and the unlawful allowed." The Nasakh only occurs with commandments, prohibitions, permissions, and so forth. As for stories, they do not undergo Nasakh. The word, ` Nasakh' literally means, `to copy a book'. The meaning of Nasakh in the case of commandments is removing the commandment and replacing it by another. And whether the Nasakh involves the wordings, the ruling or both, it is still called Nasakh.

Allah said next,
(ٌأَوْ ٌنُسِيَهَا)
(or Nunsiha (cause it to be forgotten)). `Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(مَا نَنْسَحُ مِنْ عَآيَةٍ أَوْ ٌنُسِيَهَا)
(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh or Nunsiha) means, "Whatever Ayah We repeal or uphold without change." Also, Mujahid said that the companions of Ibn Mas`ud (who read this word Nansa'ha) said that it means, "We uphold its wording and change its ruling." Further, `Ubayd bin `Umayr, Mujahid and `Ata` said, "Nansa'ha means, "We delay it (i.e., do not abrogate it)." Further, `Atiyah Al-` Awfi said that the Ayah means, "We delay repealing it." This is the same Tafsir provided by As-Suddi and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. `Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma`mar said that Qatadah said about Allah's statement,

(مَا نَنْسَحُ مِنْ عَآيَةٍ أَوْ ٌنُسِيَهَا)
(Whatever a verse (revelation) do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten) "Allah made His Prophet forget what He willed and He abrogated what He will."

Allah's said,

(نَآْتِ بِحَيْرَر مَنْهَا أَوْ مَثْلِهَا)
(We bring a better one or similar to it), better, relates to the benefit provided for the one it addresses, as reported from `Ali bin Abi Talhah that Ibn `Abbas said,

(نَآْتِ بِحَيْرَر مَنْهَا)
(We bring a better one) means, "We bring forth a more beneficial ruling, that is also easier for you." Also, As-Suddi said that,

(نَآْتِ بِحَيْرَر مَنْهَا أَوْ مَثْلِهَا)
(We bring a better one or similar to it) means, "We bring forth a better Ayah, or similar to that which was repealed." Qatadah also said that,
We bring a better one or similar to it means, “We replace it by an Ayah more facilitating, permitting, commanding, or prohibiting.”

Naskh occurs even though the Jews deny it

Allah said,

(كَيْنَا نُسِخْ مَنْ عَلَىَّ أَوْ نُسِخَتْ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أوْ مِثْلِهَا أَلِمْ نَعَلَمْ أَنَّ الْلَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٍ – أَلِمْ نَعَلَمْ أَنَّ الْلَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ)

(Know you not that Allah is Able to do all things Know you not that it is Allah to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth And besides Allah you have neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper).

Allah directed His servants to the fact that He alone is the Owner of His creatures and that He does with them as He wills. Indeed, His is the supreme authority and all creation is His, and just as He created them as He wills, He brings happiness to whom He wills, misery to whom He wills, health to whom He wills and ailment to whom He wills. He also brings success to whom He wills and failure to whom He wills. He judges between His servants as He wills, allows what He wills and disallows what He wills. He decides what He wills, there is no opponent for His judgment, and no one can question Him about what He does, while they shall be questioned. He tests His servants and their obedience to His Messengers by the Naskh. He commands a matter containing a benefit which He knows of, and then He out of His wisdom, prohibits it. Hence, perfect obedience is realized by adhering to His commands, following His Messengers, believing in what ever they convey, implementing their commands and avoiding what they prohibit.

The statements of Allah here contain tremendous benefit, prove that the Jews are disbelievers and refute their claim that Naskh does not occur, may Allah curse the Jews. In ignorance and arrogance they claimed that the sound mind stipulates that Naskh does not occur. Some of them falsely claimed that there are divine texts that dismiss the possibility that Naskh occurred.

Imam Abu Ja’far bin Jarir said, ”The Ayah means, `Do you not know, O Muhammad, that I alone own the heavens and the earth and that I decide whatever I will in them I forbid whatever I will, change and repeal whatever I will of My previous rulings, whenever I will. I also uphold whatever I will.”

Ibn Jarir then said, ”Although Allah directed His statement indicating His greatness towards His Prophet , He also rejected the lies of the Jews who denied that the rulings of the Torah could undergo Naskh. The Jews also denied the prophethood of Jesus and Muhammad, because of their dislike for what they brought from Allah, such as changing some rulings of the Torah, as Allah commanded. Allah thus proclaimed to the Jews that He owns the heavens and earth and
also all authority in them. Further, the subjects in Allah's kingdom are His creation, and they are required to hear and obey His commands and prohibitions. Allah has full authority to command the creation as He wills, forbidding them from what He wills, abrogating what He wills, upholding what He wills, and decide whatever commandments and prohibitions He wills."

I (Ibn Kathir) say that the Jews' dismissal of the occurrence of the Naskh is only a case of their disbelief and rebellion. The sound mind does not deny that there could be a Naskh in Allah's commandments, for He decides what He wills, just as He does what He wills. Further, Naskh occurred in previous Books and Law. For instance, Allah allowed Adam to marry his daughters to his sons and then later forbade this practice. Allah also allowed Nuh to eat from all kinds of animals after they left the ark, then prohibited eating some types of foods. Further, marrying two sisters to one man was allowed for Israel and his children, but Allah prohibited this practice later in the Torah. Allah commanded Abraham to slaughter his son, then repealed that command before it was implemented. Also, Allah commanded the Children of Israel to kill those who worshipped the calf and then repealed that command, so that the Children of Israel were not all exterminated. There are many other instances that the Jews admit have occurred, yet they ignore them. Also, it is a well-known fact that their Books foretold about Muhammad and contained the command to follow him. These texts, in their Books, indicate that the Jews were required to follow the Prophet Muhammad and that no good deed would be accepted from them, unless it conformed to Muhammad's Law. The Prophet brought another Book, - the Qur'an -, which is the last revelation from Allah.

(O you who believe! Ask not about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble. But if you ask about them while the Qur'an is being revealed, they will be made plain to you) (5:101).

The Prohibition of Unnecessary Questions

In this Ayah, Allah forbade the believers from asking the Prophet numerous questions about matters that did not occur yet. Similarly, Allah said,

(108. Or do you want to ask your Messenger (Muhammad) as Musa (Moses) was asked before (i.e. show us openly our Lord) And he who changes faith for disbelief, verily, he has gone astray from the right way.)
This Ayah means, "If you ask about a matter after it is revealed, it shall be duly explained to you. Therefore, do not ask about matters that have not occurred yet, for they might become prohibited, due to your questions." This is why the Sahih narrated,

" وإن أعظم المسلمين جرما من سأل عن شيء لم يحرم فحرم من أجل مسالتته "

(The greatest criminal among the Muslims is the one who asks if a thing is prohibited, which is not prohibited, and it becomes prohibited because of his asking about it.)

This is why when the Messenger of Allah was asked about a husband who finds another man with his wife; if he exposes the adultery, he will be exposing a major incident; if he is quiet about it, he will be quiet about a major matter. The Messenger of Allah did not like such questions. Later on, Allah revealed the ruling of Mula`anah Refer to Nur 24:6-9 in the Qur'an.
The Two Sahihs recorded that Al-Mughirah bin Shu`bah said that the Messenger of Allah "Forbade saying, ` It was said' and ` He said,' and wasting money and asking many questions." Muslim recorded that the Prophet said,

"ذروني ما تركتكم فإنما هلك من كان قبلكم بكثرة سؤالهم واحتمالهم على أنبيائهم فإذا أمرتكم بأمر قالوا مئة ما استطعتم وإن نهيتكم عن شيء فاجتنبوه"

(Leave me as I leave you; those before you were only destroyed because of their excessive questioning and disputing with their Prophets. Therefore, when I command you with a matter, adhere to it as much as you can, and when I forbid from something, avoid it.)

The Prophet only said this after he told the Companions that Allah has ordered them to perform Hajj. A man asked, "Every year, O Messenger of Allah" The Prophet did not answer him, but he repeated his question three times. Then the Prophet said,

"لا وله قلت: نعم لوجب ولله وجبت لما استطعتم"

(No. Had I said yes, it would have been ordained, and you would not have been able to implement it.)
This is why Anas bin Malik said, "We were forbidden from asking the Messenger of Allah about things. So we were delighted when a bedouin man would come and ask him while we listened."

Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Muhammad bin Abi Muhammad told him that `Ikrimah or Sa`id said that Ibn `Abbas said that Rafi` bin Huraymilah or Wahab bin Zayd said, "O Muhammad! Bring us a Book sent down from heaven and which we could read, and make some rivers flow for us, then we will follow you and believe in you." Allah sent down the answer to this challenge,

(أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْلُوا رَسُولَكَ كَمَا سَلَى مُوسَى
مِنْ قِبْلٍ وَمَنْ يَتَبَيَّنَ الْكَفَرُ بِالإِيمَانِ فَقْدُ ضَلَّ
سَوْآَةَ السَّبِيلِ)

(Or do you want to ask your Messenger (Muhammad) as Musa was asked before (i.e. show us openly our Lord) And he who changes faith for disbelief, verily, he has gone astray from the right way).

Allah criticized those who ask the Messenger of Allah about a certain matter just for the purpose of being difficult, just as the Children of Israel asked Musa out of stubbornness, rejection and rebellion. Allah said,

(وَمَنْ يَتَبَيَّنَ الْكَفَرُ بِالإِيمَانِ
فَقْدُ ضَلَّ ضَلَّ سَوْآَةَ السَّبِيلِ)

(And he who changes faith for disbelief) meaning, whoever prefers disbelief to faith,

(فَقْدُ ضَلَّ ضَلَّ سَوْآَةَ السَّبِيلِ)

(And he who changes faith for disbelief) meaning, whoever prefers disbelief to faith,

(فَقْدُ ضَلَّ ضَلَّ سَوْآَةَ السَّبِيلِ)

(And he who changes faith for disbelief) meaning, whoever prefers disbelief to faith,

(فَقْدُ ضَلَّ ضَلَّ سَوْآَةَ السَّبِيلِ)

(And he who changes faith for disbelief) meaning, whoever prefers disbelief to faith,
Have you not seen those who have changed the blessings of Allah into disbelief (by denying Prophet Muhammad and his Message of Islam), and caused their people to dwell in the house of destruction Hell, in which they will burn and what an evil place to settle in!) (14:28-29).

Abu Al-` Aliyah commented, "They exchanged comfort for hardship."

The Prohibition of following the Ways of the People of the Book

Allah warned His believing servants against following the ways of the People of Book, who publicly and secretly harbor enmity and hatred for the believers, and who envy the believers, while they recognize the virtue of the believers and their Prophet. Allah also commanded His believing servants to forgive them and to be patient with them, until Allah delivers His aid and victory to them. Allah commanded the believers to perform the prayer perfectly, to pay the Zakah and He encouraged them to preserve the practice of these righteous deeds.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that ` Abd ullah bin Ka` b bin Malik said that Ka` b bin Al-Ashraf, who was a Jew and a poet, used to criticize the Prophet in his poems, so Allah revealed,

(Many of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) wish that they could turn you away..) regarding his matter.

Also, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said, "An unlettered Messenger came to the People of the Scriptures confirming what they have in their own Books about the Messengers and the Ayat of
Allah. He also believes in all of this, just as they believe in it. Yet, they rejected the Prophet out of disbelief, envy and transgression. This is why Allah said,

(كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مَّنْ عَنَّدُ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَّ
لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ)

(out of envy from their own selves, even after the truth (that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger) has become manifest unto them).

Allah said that after He illuminated the truth for them, such that they were not ignorant of any of it, yet their envy made them deny the Prophet. Thus Allah criticized, chastised and denounced them. Allah legislated the characteristics that His Prophet and the believers should adhere to: belief, faith and accepting what Allah revealed to them and to those before them out of His generosity and tremendous kindness.

Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

(مَنْ عَنَّدُ أَنْفُسِهِمْ)

(from their own selves) means, "of their making." Also, Abu Al-` Aliyah said that,

(مَنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَّ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ)

(even after the truth (that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger) has become manifest unto them) means, "After it became clear that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah whom they find written of in the Torah and the Injil. They denied him in disbelief and transgression because he was not one of them." Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said similarly. Allah said,

(فَأَعْفُوْاْ وَأَسْفَحُواْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَكُمْ
(But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command.) this is similar to His saying;

(وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
(And you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah) (3: 186).

` Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn ` Abbas said that Allah's statement,
(But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command.) was abrogated by the Ayah,

(فَاقِعُوا وَأَصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ يَأْمُرَهُ)

(Then kill the Mushrikin wherever you find them) (9:5), and,

(ۚفَقِيِّلَوا الْمُشَرِّكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدَنَّمُوهُمُۖ)

(Fight against those who believe not in Allah, nor in the Last Day) (9:29) until,

(ۚوَهُمْ صَغِّرُونَ)

(And feel themselves subdued) (9:29).

Allah's pardon for the disbelievers was repealed." Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and As-Suddi said similarly: It was abrogated by the Ayah of the sword." (Mentioned above). The Ayah,

(ۚحَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ يَأْمُرَهُ)

(till Allah brings His command.) gives further support for this view.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded Usamah bin Zayd saying that the Messenger of Allah and his Companions used to forgive the disbelievers and the People of the Book, just as Allah commanded in His statement,

(فَاقِعُوا وَأَصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ يَأْمُرَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command. Verily, Allah is able to do all things).

The Messenger of Allah used to forgive them and was patient with them as Allah ordered him, until Allah allowed fighting them. Then Allah destroyed those who He decreed to be killed among the strong men of Quraysh, by the Prophet's forces. The chain of narration for this text is Sahih, but I did not see its wordings in the six collections of Hadith, although the basis of it is in the Two Sahihs, narrated from Usamah bin Zayd.
The Encouragement to perform Good Deeds

Allah said,

(And perform the Salah and give the Zakah, and whatever of good you send forth for yourselves before you, you shall find it with Allah).

Allah encouraged the believers to busy themselves in performing deeds that would bring them benefit and reward on the Day of Resurrection, such as prayer and paying Zakah. This way, they will gain Allah's aid in this life and on a Day when the witnesses testify,

(The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to the Zalimin (wrongdoers). Theirs will be the curse, and theirs will be the evil abode (i.e. painful torment in Hell-fire)) (40:52).

This is why Allah said,

(Certainly, Allah sees what you do), meaning, that He is never unaware of the deeds of any person, nor will these deeds be lost by Him. Whether deeds are righteous or evil, Allah will award each according to what he or she deserves based on their deeds.
And they say, "None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian." These are their own desires. Say (O Muhammad), "Produce your Burhan if you are truthful.") (112. Yes! But whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah (i.e. follows Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism) and he is a Muhsin then his reward is with his Lord (Allah), on such shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.) (113. The Jews said that the Christians follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); and the Christians said that the Jews follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); though they both recite the Scripture. Like unto their word, said those (the pagans) who know not. Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they have been differing.)

The Hopes of the People of the Book

Allah made the confusion of the Jews and the Christians clear, since they claim that no one will enter Paradise, unless he is a Jew or a Christian. Similarly, Allah mentioned their claims in Surat Al-Ma'ida:

(We are the children of Allah and His loved ones) (5:18).

Allah refuted this false claim and informed them that they will be punished because of their sins. Previously we mentioned their claim that the Fire would not touch them for more than a few days, after which they would be put in Paradise. Allah rebuked this claim, and He said about this baseless claim, m

(These are their own desires). Abu Al-`Aliyah commented, "These are wishes that they wished Allah would answer, without basis." Similar was stated by Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Allah then said,
(Say) meaning, "Say O Muhammad:"

(هَاتَنَّوا بِرَوْنَأٍ)

("Produce your Burhan...") meaning, "Your proof", as Abu Al-` Aliyah, Mujahid, As-Suddi and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas stated. Qatadah said that the Ayah means, "Bring the evidence that supports your statement,

(إن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ)

(if you are truthful) in your claim."

Allah then said,

(بَلَى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجَهَّهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ)

(Yes! But whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah (i.e. follows Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism) and he is a Muhsin) meaning, "Whoever performs deeds in sincerity, for Allah alone without partners." In a similar statement, Allah said,

(فَإِنَّ حَاجُّوْكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجَهَّهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ اتَّبَعَنَّ)

(Yes! But whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah) means, "Whoever is sincere with Allah."

Also, Sa`id bin Jubayr said that,

(بَلَى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجَهْهَهُ لِلَّهِ)

(Yes! But whoever submits) means, he is sincere,
(his face (himself)) meaning, in his religion.

(and he is a Muhsin) following the Messenger. For there are two conditions for deeds to be accepted; the deed must be performed for Allah's sake alone and conform to the Shari'ah. When the deed is sincere, but does not conform to the Shari'ah, then it will not be accepted.

The Messenger of Allah said,

»من عمل عملًا ليس عليه أمرنا فهو رد«

(Whoever performs a deed that does not conform with our matter (religion), then it will be rejected.)

This Hadith was recorded by Muslim. Therefore, the good deeds of the priests and rabbis will not be accepted, even if they are sincerely for Allah alone, because these deeds do not conform with the method of the Messenger, who was sent for all mankind. Allah said regarding such cases,

(وقدمنا إلى ما عملوا من عمل فجعلناه هباءً مبتورًا)

(And We shall turn to whatever deeds they (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) did, and We shall make such deeds as scattered floating particles of dust.) (25:23)

(والذين كفروا أعملهم كسراب بقعة يحسبه الظلمان ماءً حتى إذا جاءه لم يجده شيناً)

(As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water, until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing.) (24:39) and,

(وجوه يومئذ خشعة - عاملة ناصبة - تصلى نارا حامية - تُسقى من عين عانية)
(Some faces, that Day will be humiliated. Laboring, weary. They will enter in the hot blazing Fire. They will be given to drink from a boiling spring) (88:2-5).

When the deed conforms to the Shari`ah outwardly, but the person did not perform it sincerely for Allah alone, the deed will also be rejected, as in the case of the hypocrites and those who do their deeds to show off. Similarly, Allah said,

(إنَّ الْمُنْفِقِينَ يَخْدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذًا قَامُوا إِلَى الْصَّلَوَةِ قَامُوْا كَسَالِى يُرَآؤُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَليلاً)

(Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for As-Salāh (the prayer), they stand with laziness to be seen by people, and they do not remember Allah but little.) (4:142) and,

(فَوَيْلُ لِلْمُصْلِّينَ - الْذِّينَ هُمْ عَنَ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ - الْذِّينَ هُمْ يُرَآؤُونَ - وَيَمْنُونَ الْمَاعُونَ)

(Verily, those performers of Salah (prayers) (hypocrites). Those who delay their Salah (from their stated fixed times). Those who do good deeds only to be seen (of men). And withhold Al-Ma`un (small kindnesses)) (107:4-7).

This is why Allah said,

(فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلاً صَلِحَةً وَلَا يَشْرَكَ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا)

(So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord) (18: 110).

He also said in this Ayah,

(بَلِى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجَهَةُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ)

(Yes, but whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah (follows Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism) and he is a Muhsin).
Allah's statement,

(قلهُم أجرُهُم عند ربَّهم ولا خَوْفٌ عليهم ولا هُم يَحْزَنُون

(Shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve) guaranteed them the rewards and safety from what they fear and should avoid.

(قَالَ حَوْفَ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(There shall be no fear on them) in the future,

(وَلَا هُم يَحْزَنُون)

(nor shall they grieve) about what they abandoned in the past. Moreover, Sa`id bin Jubayr said,

(قَالَ حَوْفَ عَلَيْهِمْ)

"(There shall be no fear on them) in the Hereafter, and

(وَلَا هُم يَحْزَنُون)

(nor shall they grieve) about their imminent death."

The Jews and Christians dispute among Themselves out of Disbelief and Stubbornness

Allah said,

(وَقَالَت الْيَهُود لَا يَسْتَنتِ النَّصَرَى عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَقَالَت النَّصَرَى لَا يَسْتَنتِ الْيَهُود عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتَّلُون الْكِتَاب)

(And the Jews said, 'We will not fight for the cause, and the An-Nasir said, 'We will not fight for the Jews, and they read the Book.)
(The Jews said that the Christians follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); and the Christians said that the Jews follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); though they both recite the Scripture.)

Allah explained the disputes, hatred and stubbornness that the People of the Book have towards each other. Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When a delegation of Christians from Najran came to the Messenger of Allah, the Jewish rabbis came and began arguing with them before the Messenger of Allah. Rafi` bin Huraymilah said, ‘You do not follow anything,’ and he reiterated his disbelief in Jesus and the Injil. Then a Christian man from Najran's delegation said to the Jews, ‘Rather, you do not follow anything,’ and he reiterated his rejection of Musa's prophethood and his disbelief in the Torah. So Allah revealed the Ayah,

وَقَالَتِ الْيُهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصْرَىُّ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكُتْبَ

وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَىُّ لَيْسَتِ الْيُهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ

(The Jews said that the Christians follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); and the Christians said that the Jews follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); though they both recite the Scripture.)"

Allah made it clear that each party read the affirmation of what they claimed to reject in their Book. Consequently, the Jews disbelieve in Jesus, even though they have the Torah in which Allah took their Covenant by the tongue of Moses to believe in Jesus. Also, the Gospel contains Jesus' assertion that Moses' prophethood and the Torah came from Allah. Yet, each party disbelieved in what the other party had.

Allah said,

(كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ الْذِّينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قُوَّلِهِمْ)

(Like unto their word, said those who know not) thus exposing the ignorance displayed by the Jews and the Christians concerning their statements that we mentioned. There is a difference of opinion regarding the meaning of Allah's statement,

(الْذِّينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(who know not)

For instance, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah said that,
(Like unto their word, said those said those who know not) means, "The Christians said similar statements to the Jews." Ibn Jurayj asked `Ata' "Who are those `who know not"' `Ata' said, "Nations that existed before the Jews and the Christians and before the Torah and the Gospel." Also, As-Suddi said that,

(said those who know not) is in reference to the Arabs who said that Muhammad was not following anything (i.e. did not follow a true or existing religion). Abu Ja'far bin Jarir chose the view that this Ayah is general and that there is no evidence that specifically supports any of these explanations. So interpreting the Ayah in a general way is better. Allah knows best.

Allah said,

(Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they have been differing.) meaning, that Allah will gather them all on the Day of Return. On that Day, Allah will justly judge between them, for He is never unjust with anyone, even as little as the weight of an atom. This Ayah is similar to Allah's statement in Surat Al-Hajj (22:17),

(Verily, those who believe (in Allah and in His Messenger Muhammad), and those who are Jews, the Sabians, and the Christians, and the Majus, and those who associate partners with Allah; truly, Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, Allah is over all things a Witness).
(Say: "Our Lord will assemble us all together (on the Day of Resurrection), then He will judge between us with truth. And He is the Just Judge, the Knower of the true state of affairs.")

(34:26).

(And who are more unjust than those who forbid that Allah's Name be mentioned (i.e. prayers and invocations) in Allah's Masjids and strive for their ruin? It was not fitting that such should themselves enter them (Allah's Masjids) except in fear. For them there is disgrace in this world, and they will have a great torment in the Hereafter.)

Of the Most Unjust are Those Who prevent People from the Masjids and strive for their Ruin

The Quraysh idolators are those who hindered the people from the Masjids of Allah and wanted to destroy them. Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn Zayd said that Allah's statement,

(And who are more unjust than those who forbid that Allah's Name be mentioned (i.e. prayers and invocations) in Allah's Masjids and strive for their ruin) is about the Quraysh idolators who prevented the Prophet from entering Makkah from Al-Hudaybiyyah, until he slaughtered the Hadi (animal for sacrifice) at Dhi-Tuwa. He then agreed to a peace treaty with the idolators and said to them, (No one before has ever prevented people from entering the House. One would even see the killer of his father and brother, but would not prevent him (from entering the House of Allah).) They said, "Whoever killed our fathers at Badr, shall never enter it while there is one of us alive." Allah's statement,
(And strive for their ruin) means those who prevent whoever maintain the Masjids with Allah's remembrance and who visit Allah's House to perform Hajj and `Umrah. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Quraysh prevented the Prophet from praying at the Ka`bah in Al-Masjid Al-Haram, so Allah revealed,

(And who are more unjust than those who forbid that Allah's Name be mentioned (i.e. prayers and invocations) in Allah's Masjids)

After Allah chastised the Jews and Christians, He also criticized the idolators who expelled the Messenger of Allah and his Companions from Makkah, preventing them from praying in Al-Masjid Al-Haram, which they kept exclusively for their idols and polytheism. Allah said,

(And why should not Allah punish them while they hinder (men) from Al-Masjid Al-Haram, and they are not its guardians None can be its guardians except Al-Muttaqun (the pious), but most of them know not.) (8:34)

(And who are more unj ust than those who forbid that Allah's Name be mentioned (i.e. prayers and invocations) in Allah's Masjids)
(It is not for the Mushrikin (polytheists), to maintain the Masjids of Allah while they witness against their own selves of disbelief. The works of such are in vain and in Fire shall they abide. The Masjids of Allah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day; perform the Salah, and give the Zakah and fear none but Allah. It is they who are on true guidance.) (9:17-18)

(They are the ones who disbelieved and hindered you from Al-Masjid-Al-Haram (at Makkah) and detained the sacrificial animals, from reaching their place of sacrifice. Had there not been believing men and believing women whom you did not know, that you may kill them and on whose account a sin would have been committed by you without (your) knowledge, that Allah might bring into His mercy whom He wills if they (the believers and the disbelievers) had been apart, We verily, would have punished those of them who disbelieved with painful torment) (48:25). Therefore, Allah said here,

(The Masjids of Allah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day; perform the Salah, and give the Zakah and fear none but Allah). Therefore, if those believers
who follow the virtues mentioned in the Ayah were prevented from attending the Masjid, then what cause for destruction is worse than this? Maintaining the Masjids not only means beautifying them, but it involves remembering Allah, establishing His Shari'ah in the Masjids and purifying them from the filth of Shirk.

**The Good News that Islam shall prevail**

Allah said next,

(أوْلِئِكَ مَا كَانْتُمْ لَهُمْ أَن يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا حَايِفِينَ)

(It was not fitting that such should themselves enter them (Allah's Masjids) except in fear).

This Ayah means, "Do not allow them - the disbelievers - to enter the Masjids, except to satisfy the terms of an armistice or a treaty." When the Messenger of Allah conquered Makkah in 9 H, he commanded that someone announce at Mina, "After the current year, no idolators shall perform Hajj, and no naked persons shall perform Tawaf around the House, except for those who have a treaty. In this case, the treaty will be carried to the end of its term." This Ayah supports the Ayah,

(يَأُوتِيَاهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجْسُ فَلاَ يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ آمَنُهُمْ هَذَا)

(O you who believe! (in Allah's Oneness and in His Messenger Muhammad)! Verily, the Mushrikun (idolators) are Najasun (impure). So let them not come near Al-Masjid-Al-Haram (at Makkah) after this year) (9:28).

It was also said that this Ayah (2:114) carries the good news for the Muslims from Allah that He will allow them to take over Al-Masjid Al-Haram and all the Masjids and disgrace the idolators. Soon after, the Ayah indicated, no idolator shall enter the House, except out of fear of being seized or killed, unless he embraces Islam. Allah fulfilled this promise and later decreed that idolators not be allowed to enter Al-Masjid Al-Haram. The Messenger of Allah stated that no two religions should remain in the Arabian Peninsula, and the Jews and Christians should be expelled from it, all praise is due to Allah. All of these rulings ensure maintaining the honor of Al-Masjid Al-Haram and purifying the area where Allah sent His Messenger to warn and bring good news to all of mankind, may Allah's peace and blessings be on him.

This Ayah also described the disgrace that the disbelievers earn in this life, and that the punishment comes in a form comparable to the deed. Just as they prevented the believers from entering Al-Masjid Al-Haram, they were prevented from entering it in turn. Just as they expelled the believers from Makkah, they were in turn expelled from Makkah,
(and they will have a great torment in the Hereafter) because they breached the sanctity of the House and brought filth to it by erecting idols all around it, invoking other than Allah and performing Tawaf around it while naked, etc.

Here it is worth mentioning the Hadith about seeking refuge from disgrace in this life and the torment of the Hereafter. Imam Ahmad recorded that Busr bin Artah said that the Messenger of Allah used to supplicate,

»اللَّهُمَّ أَحْسِنَ عَاقِبَتَنَا فِي الأَمْوَرِ كُلُّهَا وَأَجْرُنَا مِنْ خَزْيِ الدُّنْيَا وَعَذَابِ النَّارِهَا"

(O Allah! Make our end better in all affairs, and save us from disgrace in this life and the torment of the Hereafter.)

This Hadith is Hasan.

Facing the Qiblah (Direction of the Prayer)

This ruling brought comfort to the Messenger of Allah and his Companions, who were driven out of Makkah and had to depart from the area of Al-Masjid Al-Haram. In Makkah, the Messenger of Allah used to pray in the direction of Bayt Al-Maqdis, while the Ka`bah was between him and the Qiblah. When the Messenger migrated to Al-Madinah, he faced Bayt Al-Maqdis for sixteen or seventeen months, and then Allah directed him to face Al-Ka`bah in prayer. This is why Allah said,

وللهِ المَشْرَقُ وَالمَغْرَبُ فَأَيْنَمَا نُولُوْا قُطُّمَ وَجَهَّهُ

(And to Allah belong the east and the west, so wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces) there is the Face of Allah (and He is High above, over His Throne)).
Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said, "The first part of the Qur'an that was abrogated was about the Qiblah. When the Messenger of Allah migrated to Al-Madinah, which was inhabited by the Jews, he was at first commanded to face Bayt Al-Maqdis. The Jews were happy, and the Messenger of Allah faced Bayt Al-Maqdis for some ten months. However, the Messenger of Allah liked to face the Qiblah of Ibrahim (Al-Ka'bah at Makkah), and he used to look to the sky and supplicate. So Allah revealed,

(قد نرى تقلب وجهك في السماء)

(Verily, We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's) face towards the heaven) until,

(قولوا ووجهكم شطره)

(turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction) (2:144).

The Jews were disturbed by this development and said, `What made them change the direction of the Qiblah that they used to face' Allah revealed,

(قل لله المشرق والمغرب)

(Say (O Muhammad): "To Allah belong both, east and the west") and,

(فإيما نولوا قتم وجه الله)

(So wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces) there is the Face of Allah (and He is High above, over His Throne))."

`Ikrimah said that Ibn `Abbas said,

(فإيما نولوا قتم وجه الله)

(So wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces) there is the Face of Allah (and He is High above, over His Throne)) means, "Allah's direction is wherever you face, east or west." Mujahid said that,
means, "Wherever you may be, you have a Qi`lah to face, that is, Al-Ka`bah."

However, it was said that Allah sent down this Ayah before the order to face the Ka`bah. Ibn Jarir said, "Others said that this Ayah was revealed to the Messenger of Allah permitting the one praying voluntary prayers to face wherever they wish in the east or west, while traveling, when in fear and when facing the enemy." For instance, Ibn `Umar used to face whatever direction his animal was headed and proclaim that the Messenger of Allah did the same, explaining the Ayah,

(قَوْيِنْمَا نُولُوْنَ أَقُىْمَ وَجاَّهُ اللَّهِ)

(So wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces) there is the Face of Allah)."

That Hadith was also collected by Muslim, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa`i, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduwyah, and its origin is in the Two Sahihs from Ibn `Umar and `Amr bin Fabi`ah without mentioning the Ayah. In his Sahih, Al-Bukhari recorded that Nafi` said that whenever Ibn `Umar was asked about the prayer during times of fear, he used to describe it and would then say, "When the sense of fear is worse than that, pray while standing, or while riding, whether facing the Qi`lah or not." Nafi` then said, "I think Ibn `Umar mentioned that from the Prophet ." It was also said that the Ayah was revealed about those who are unable to find the correct direction of the Qi`lah in the dark or due to cloudy skies and, thus, prayed in a direction other than the Qi`lah by mistake.

The Qi`lah for the People of Al-Madinah is what is between the East and the West

In his Tafsir of this Ayah (2:115), Al-Hafiz Ibn Marduwyah recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرَقِ وَالمَغْرِبِ قِبْلَةً لَّا لِلَّهِ المَدِينَةُ وَأَهْلِ الْشَّامِ وَأَهْلِ الْعَرَاقٍ»

(What is between the east and the west is the Qi`lah for the people of Al-Madinah, Ash-Sham and `Iraq.)

At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith with the wording,

«مَا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرَقِ وَالمَغْرِبِ قِبْلَةً»

(What is between the east and the west is a Qi`lah.)

Ibn Jarir said, "The meaning of Allah's statement;
(Surely, Allah is Sufficient (for His creatures' needs), Knowing) is that Allah encompasses all His Creation by providing them with sufficient needs and by His generosity and favor. His statement,

(Knowing) means He is knowledgeable of their deeds and nothing escapes His watch, nor is He unaware of anything. Rather, His knowledge encompasses everything."

(116. And they (Jews, Christians and pagans) say: Allah has begotten a son (children or offspring). Glory to Him (Exalted is He above all that they associate with Him). Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and all are Qanitun to Him.) (117. The Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: "Be! and it is."

Refuting the Claim that Allah has begotten a Son

This and the following Ayat refute the Christians, may Allah curse them, and their like among the Jews and the Arab idolators, who claimed that the angels are Allah's daughters. Allah refuted all of them in their claim that He had begotten a son. Allah said,

(Glory is to Him.)

meaning, He is holier and more perfect than such claim;
(Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth,) meaning, the truth is not as the disbelievers claimed, rather, Allah's is the kingdom of the heavens and earth and whatever and whoever is in, on and between them. Allah is the Supreme Authority in the heavens and earth, and He is the Creator, Provider and Sustainer Who decides all the affairs of the creation as He wills. All creatures are Allah's servants and are owned by Him. Therefore, how could one of them be His son The son of any being is born out of two comparable beings. Allah has no equal or rival sharing His grace and greatness, so how can He have a son when He has no wife Allah said,

(بِدْيْعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنِّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلْدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بَكْلُ شَيْءٍ (عَلِيمٌ)

(He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How can He have children when He has no wife He created all things and He is the Knower of everything) (6:101).

(وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلْدًا - لَقَدْ حَنَّمَ شَيْئًا إِذَا - نَكَادُ السَّمَوَاتُ يَنْفَطَرُنَّ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الأَرْضُ - وَتَمَخَّرُ الْجِبَالُ هَذَا - أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدًا - وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخَذَ وَلَدًا - إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ إِلَّا أَنْى الْرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا - لَقَدْ أَحْصَسْهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا - وَكَلْهُمْ عَائِثِيٌّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فَرَداً)

(And they say: "The Most Gracious (Allah) has begotten a son (offspring or children)." Indeed you have brought forth (said) a terrible evil thing. Whereby the heavens are almost torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins. That they ascribe a son (or offspring or children) to the Most Gracious (Allah). But it is not suitable for (the majesty of) the Most Gracious (Allah) that He should beget a son (or offspring or children). There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Gracious (Allah) as a servant. Verily, He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting. And everyone of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection (without any helper, or protector or defender)) (19:88-95), and,
(Say: "He is Allah (the) One, Allah the Samad (the Self-Sufficient, upon whom all depend), He begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable to Him.") (112).

In these Ayat, Allah stated that He is the Supreme Master Whom there is no equal or rival, everything and everyone was created by Him, so how can He have a son from among them? This is why, in the Tafsir of this Ayah, Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Prophet said,

« قال الله تعالى: كذبني ابن آدم ولم يكن له ذلك، وشئمني ولم يكن له ذلك، فأما تكذيبه فإياع قريب، أني لا أقدر أن أعيده كما كان، وأما شتمه فإياع ققوله لي ولدا فسبحانني أن أتخذ صاحبة أو ولدا.»

(Allah said, `The son of Adam has denied Me, and that is not his right. He has insulted Me, and that is not his right. As for the denial of Me, he claimed that I am unable to bring him back as he used to be (resurrect him). As for his insulting Me, he claimed that I have a son. All praise is due to Me, it is unbefitting that I should have a wife or a son.' )

This Hadith was recorded by Al-Bukhari.

It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that the Messenger of Allah said,

« لا أحد أصبر على أذى سمعته من الله: إنهم يجعلون له ولدا وهو يرزقهم ويعلاؤهم»

(e(No one is more patient when hearing an insult than Allah. They attribute a son to Him, yet He still gives them sustenance and health.)

Everything is within Allah's Grasp

Allah said,
Ibn Abi Hatim said that Abu Sa`id Al-Ashaj informed them that Asbat informed them from Mutarrif, from `Atiyah, from Ibn `Abbas who said that,

(Qantin) (2:238) means, they pray to Him. `Ikrimah and Abu Malik also said that,

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And unto Allah (alone) falls in prostration whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and so do their shadows in the mornings and in the (late) afternoons (13:15).

The Meaning of Bad 299 "

Allah said,

(Qa'in kull Mana'daahahas yad'ahah)

(The Badi` (Originator) of the heavens and the earth.) which means, He created them when nothing resembling them existed. Mujahid and As-Suddi said that this is the linguistic meaning, for all new matters are called Bid`ah. Muslim recorded the Messenger of Allah saying,

(Qa'in kull Mana'daahahas yad'ahah bi'dahah)

(...every innovation (in religion) is a Bid`ah.)

There are two types of Bid`ah, religious, as mentioned in the Hadith:

(Qa'in kull Mana'daahahas yad'ahah bi'dahah wa kull bi'dahah ishtahah)

(...every innovation is a Bid`ah and every Bid`ah is heresy.)

And there is a linguistic Bid`ah, such as the statement of the Leader of the faithful `Umar bin Al-Khattab when he gathered the Muslims to pray the Tarawih prayer in congregation (which was also an earlier practice of the Prophet ) and said, "What a good Bid`ah this is."

Ibn Jarir said, "Thus the meaning of the Ayat (2:116-117) becomes, `Allah is far more glorious than to have a son, for He is the Owner of everything that is in the heavens and earth. All testify to His Oneness and to their submissiveness to Him. He is their Creator and Maker. Without created precedence, He shaped the creatures in their current shapes. Allah also bears witness to His servants that Jesus, who some claimed to be Allah's son, is among those who testify to His Oneness. Allah stated that He created the heavens and earth out of nothing and without precedent. Likewise, He created Jesus, the Messiah, with His power and without a father." This explanation from Ibn Jarir, may Allah have mercy upon him, is very good and correct.

Allah said,
(When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: "Be! and it is,) thus, demonstrating His perfectly complete ability and tremendous authority; if He decides a matter, He merely orders it to, 'Be' and it comes into existence. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كَنَّ فَيْكُونُ)

(Verily, His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be! and it is.) (36:82),

(إِنَّمَا قُولُنَا لِشَيْئٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ تَقُولَ لَهُ كَنَّ فَيْكُونُ)

(Verily, Our Word unto a thing when We intend it, is only that We say unto it: "Be! and it is.) (16:40) and,

(وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَحِيدًةٌ كَلِمَةٌ بَيْنَيْنِ)

(And Our commandment is but one as the twinkling of an eye) (54:50)

So Allah informed us that He created Jesus by merely saying, "Be!" and he was, as Allah willed:

(إِنْ مَثَلَ عِيسَى عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلٍ عَادُمَ حَلَقَةٍ مِنْ نُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كَنَّ فَيْكُونُ)

(Verily, the likeness of `Isa (Jesus) before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: "Be! and he was) (3:59).

(وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لُوَلَّا يَكُلُّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا عَارِيَةً كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مَثَلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَبَّهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ قَدْ بَيْنَانَا الآيَتَ لَقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ)
(118. And those who have no knowledge say: "Why does not Allah speak to us (face to face) or why does not a sign come to us" So said the people before them words of similar import. Their hearts are alike, We have indeed made plain the signs for people who believe with certainty.)

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said that Rafi` bin Huraymilah said to the Messenger of Allah, "O Muhammad! If you were truly a Messenger from Allah, as you claim, then ask Allah to speak to us directly, so that we hear His Speech." So Allah revealed,

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يَكُلَّمُنَا اللَّهُ أُوْلَٰئِكَ نَأْتِيْنَاهُمْ

(And those who have no knowledge say: "Why does not Allah speak to us (face to face) or why does not a sign come to us")

Abu Al-` Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and As-Suddi said that it was actually the statement of the Arab disbelievers:

(كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ مَثَلَ قُوْلِهِمْ)

(So said the people before them words of similar import. ) He said, "These are the Jews and the Christians."

What further proves that the Arab idolators said the statement mentioned in the Ayah is that Allah said,

وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ عَآيَةٌ قَالُوا لَن نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّى نَوَتْنِى مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ أَخْرَجَهُمْ صَعْرَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

(And when there comes to them a sign (from Allah) they say: "We shall not believe until we receive the like of that which the Messengers of Allah had received." Allah knows best with whom to place His Message. Humiliation and disgrace from Allah and a severe torment will overtake the criminals (polytheists and sinners) for that which they used to plot.) (6:124) and
(And they say: "We shall not believe in you (O Muhammad ), until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us) until,

(قل سبحن ربي هل كنت إلا بشرا رسولًا)
(Say (O Muhammad): "Glorified (and Exalted) be my Lord (Allah) above all that evil they (polytheists) associate with Him! Am I anything but a man, sent as a Messenger") (17:90-93)

(و قال الذين لا يرجون لقاءنا لو لا أنزل عليبا الملائكة أو نرى ربنا)
(And those who expect not a meeting with Us (i.e. those who deny the Day of Resurrection and the life of the Hereafter) said: "Why are not the angels sent down to us, or why do we not see our Lord") (25:21) and,

(بل يريد كل إمرئ منهم أن يوتي صحفا من نشرة)
(Nay, everyone of them desires that he should be given pages spread out) (74:52).

There are many other Ayat that testify to the disbelief of the Arab idolators, their transgression, stubbornness, and that they asked unnecessary questions out of disbelief and arrogance. The statements of the Arab idolators followed the statements of the nations of the People of the Two Scriptures and other religions before them. Allah said,

(يسألوا أهل الكتاب أن تنزل عليهم كتبًا من السماء فقد سألوا موسى أكثر من ذلك قالوا أرنا الله جهرة)
(The People of the Scripture (Jews) ask you to cause a book to descend upon them from heaven. Indeed, they asked Musa (Moses) for even greater than that, when they said: "Show us Allah in public," (4:153) and,

وَإِذْ قَلَّلَمُ يَمُوسِى لِنَّ نُؤْمِنَ لِلْهَ حَتَّى نَرَى اللَّهَ

(And (remember) when you said: "O Musa! We shall never believe in you until we see Allah plainly.") (2:55).

Allah's statement,

(تَشَبَّهَتْ قَلُوبَهُمْ)

(Their hearts are alike.) means, the hearts of the Arab idolators are just like the hearts of those before them, containing disbelief, stubbornness and injustice. Similarly, Allah said,

كَذَلِكَ مَا أَتَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ مَن رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالَوا سَحْرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ أَتَوَاصَوْا بِهِ

(Likewise, no Messenger came to those before them but they said: "A sorcerer or a madman!" Have they (the people of the past) transmitted this saying to these (Quraysh pagans)) (51:52-53).

Allah said next,

(قَدْ بَيْنَّا الآيَاتِ لَقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(We have indeed made plain the signs for people who believe with certainty.) meaning, We made the arguments clear, proving the truth of the Messengers, with no need of more questions or proofs for those who believe, follow the Messengers and comprehend what Allah sent them with. As for those whose hearts and hearing Allah has stamped and whose eyes have been sealed, Allah described them:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

(ولو جاءهم كلمة عذاب الْأَلِيِّمَ)

 وإنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةً رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
(Truly, those, against whom the Word (wrath) of your Lord has been justified, will not believe. Even if every sign should come to them, until they see the painful torment) (10:96-97).

(إنآ أرسلناك بالحق بشيرا وتنذيرا ولا تسل عن أنْ أصْحَابِ الجَحِيمِ)

(119. Verily, We have sent you (O Muhammad) with the truth (Islam), a bringer of glad tidings (for those who believe in what you brought, that they will enter Paradise) and a warner (for those who disbelieve in what you brought, that they will enter the Hellfire). And you will not be asked about the dwellers of the blazing Fire.)

Allah's statement;

(وَلَا تَسْلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الجَحِيمِ)

(And you will not be asked about the dwellers of the blazing Fire.) means, "We shall not ask you about the disbelief of those who rejected you." Similarly, Allah said,

(فَإِنَّمَا عَلِيَّكَ النِّبْلُ وَعَلِيَّتَا الحِسَابُ)

(Your duty is only to convey (the Message) and on Us is the reckoning.) (13:40)

(فَذِكْرُ إِنَّمَا أنت مُذَكَّرَ - لَسْتَ عَلِيَّهِم بِمُسْئِطِرِ)

(So remind them (O Muhammad) you are only one who reminds. You are not a dictator over them.) (88:21-22) and,

(نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ يَمَا يَقْوَلُونَ وَمَا أَنتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِجَبَارِ)

(We know best what they say. And you (O Muhammad) are not the one to force them (to belief). But warn by the Qur'an; him who fears My threat) (50:45).

There are many other similar Ayat.

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The Description of the Prophet in the Tawrah
Imam Ahmad recorded `Ata' bin Yasar saying that he met `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Al-`As and said to him, "Tell me about the description of the Messenger of Allah in the Torah." He said, "Yes, by Allah, he is described by the Torah with the same characteristics that he is described with in the Qur'an with: `O Prophet! We have sent you as a witness, a bringer of good news, a warner, and as safe refuge for the unlettered people. You are My servant and Messenger. I have called you the Mutawakkil (who depends and relies on Allah for each and everything). You are not harsh, nor hard, nor obnoxious in the bazaars. He does not reward the evil deed with an evil deed. Rather, he forgives and pardons. Allah will not bring his life to an end, until he straightens the wicked's religion by his hands so that the people proclaim: There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. By his hands, Allah will open blind eyes, deaf ears and sealed hearts." This was recorded by Al-Bukhari only.

(120. Never will the Jews nor the Christians be pleased with you (O Muhammad) till you follow their religion. Say: "Verily, the guidance of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) guidance. And if you (O Muhammad) were to follow their (Jews and Christians) desires after what you have received of Knowledge (i.e. the Qur'an), then you would have against Allah neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper.) (121. Those to whom we gave the Book recite it as it should be recited (Yatunahu Haqqa Tilawatihi) they are the ones who believe therein. And whoso disbelieve in it, those are they who are the losers.) Ibn Jarir said, "Allah said,

(120. Never will the Jews nor the Christians be pleased with you (O Muhammad) till you follow their religion. Say: "Verily, the guidance of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) guidance. And if you (O Muhammad) were to follow their (Jews and Christians) desires after what you have received of Knowledge (i.e. the Qur'an), then you would have against Allah neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper.) (121. Those to whom we gave the Book recite it as it should be recited (Yatunahu Haqqa Tilawatihi) they are the ones who believe therein. And whoso disbelieve in it, those are they who are the losers.) Ibn Jarir said, "Allah said,
(Say: "Verily, the guidance of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) guidance)" means, "Say, O Muhammad, the guidance of Allah that He sent me with is the true guidance, meaning the straight, perfect and comprehensive religion." Qatadah said that Allah's statement,

(قل إن هدى الله هو الهدى)

(Say: "Verily, the guidance of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) guidance) is, "A true argument that Allah taught Muhammad and his Companions and which they used against the people of misguidance." Qatadah said, "We were told that the Messenger of Allah used to say,

«لا تزال طائفة من أمتي يقاتلون على الحق ظاهرين، لا يضر هم من خلفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله»

(There will always be a group of my Ummah fighting upon the truth, having the upper hand, not harmed by their opponents, until the decree of Allah (the Last Hour) comes.)

This Hadith was collected in the Sahih and narrated from `Abdullah bin `Amr.

(ولئن أتبعت أهواءهم بعد الذي جاءهك من العلم ما لك من الله ولي ولا نصير)

(And if you (O Muhammad) were to follow their (Jews and Christians) desires after what you have received of Knowledge (i.e. the Qur'an), then you would have against Allah neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper.)

This Ayah carries a stern warning for the Muslim Ummah against imitating the ways and methods of the Jews and Christians, after they have acquired knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah, may Allah grant us refuge from this behavior. Although the speech in this Ayah was directed at the Messenger, the ruling of which applies to his entire Ummah.

The Meaning of Correct Tilawah

Allah said,

(الذين آتيتهم الكتب يثلونه حق تلاوتيه)
Abdur-Razzaq said from Ma`mar, from Qatadah, "They are the Jews and Christians." This is the opinion of `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam, and it was also chosen by Ibn Jarir. Sa`id reported from Qatadah, "They are the Companions of the Messenger of Allah." Abu Al-`Aliyah said that Ibn Mas`ud said, "By He in Whose Hand is my soul! The right Tilawah is allowing what it makes lawful, prohibiting what it makes unlawful, reciting it as it was revealed by Allah, not changing the words from their places, and not interpreting it with other than its actual interpretation." As-Suddi reported from Abu Malik from Ibn `Abbas who said about this Ayah (2:121): "They make lawful what it allows and they prohibit what it makes unlawful, and they do not alter its wordings." `Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "They are those who when they recite an Ayah that mentions mercy, they ask Allah for it, and when they recite an Ayah that mentions torment, they seek refuge with Allah from it." This meaning was attributed to the Prophet, for when he used to recite an Ayah of mercy, he invoked Allah for mercy, and when he recited an Ayah of torment, he sought refuge from it with Allah.

Allah's statement,

(أوْلِئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ)

(they are the ones who believe therein)

explains the Ayah,

(الذِّينَ آتَيْنَاهُمْ الكِتَابَ يَتَّلُونَهُ حَقًّا تَلاوْتَيْهِ)

(Those to whom We gave the Book. Yatlunahu Haqqan Tilawatih).

These Ayat mean, "Those among the People of the Book who perfectly adhered to the Books that were revealed to the previous Prophets, will believe in what I have sent you with, O Muhammad!" Allah said in another Ayah,

(وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا الْتَوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ وَمَا أَنزَلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مَنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا كَلَّوْا مِنْ فُوْقِهِمْ وَمَنْ نَحْتَ أَرْجُلِهِمْ)

(And if only they had acted according to the Tawrah, the Injil, and what has (now) been sent down to them from their Lord (the Qur'an), they would surely, have gotten provision from above them and from underneath their feet.) (5:66). The Ayah,
(Say (O Muhammad) ) "O People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! You have nothing (as regards guidance) till you act according to the Tawrah, the Injil, and what has (now) been sent down to you from your Lord (the Qur'an)."") means, "If you adhere to the Torah and the Gospel in the correct manner, believe in them as you should, and believe in the news they carry about Muhammad's prophethood, his description and the command to follow, aid and support him, then this will direct you to adhere to truth and righteousness in this life and the Hereafter." In another Ayah, Allah said,

(Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muhammad) whom they find written with them in the Tawrah and the Injil.) (7:157) and,

(Say (O Muhammad to them): "Believe in it (the Qur'an) or do not believe (in it). Verily, those who were given knowledge before it, when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in humble prostration. And they say: "Glory be to our Lord! Truly, the promise of our Lord must be fulfilled.") (17:107-108).

These Ayat indicate that what Allah promised for Muhammad will certainly occur. Allah also said,
(Those to whom We gave the Scripture (i.e. the Tawrah and the Injil) before it, they believe in it (the Qur'an). And when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe in it. Verily, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed even before it we have been from those who submit themselves to Allah in Islam as Muslims. These will be given their reward twice over, because they are patient, and repel evil with good, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them.) (28:52-54) and,

(And say to those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and to those who are illiterates (Arab pagans): "Do you (also) submit yourselves (to Allah in Islam)?" If they do, they are rightly guided; but if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the Message; and Allah is the Seer of (His) servants) (3:20).

Allah said,

(And whoever disbelieves in it (the Qur'an), those are they who are the losers), just as He said in another Ayah,

(But those of the sects (Jews, Christians and all the other non-Muslim nations) that reject it (the Qur'an), the Fire will be their promised meeting place) (11:17).

As recorded in the Sahih, the Prophet said,
We mentioned a similar Ayah at the beginning of this Surah, and it is mentioned here to emphasize the importance of following the Ummi Prophet and Messenger, who is described for the People of the Scriptures in their Books by his characteristics, name, the good news about him and the description of his Ummah. Allah warned them against concealing this information, which is among the favors that Allah granted them. Allah also commanded them to remember their daily life and their religious affairs and how He blessed them. They should not envy their cousins, the Arabs, for what Allah has given them, the Final Messenger of Allah being an Arab. Envy should not incite them to oppose or deny the Prophet or refrain from following him, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him until the Day of Judgment.
for mankind (to follow you)." (Ibrahim) said, "And of my offspring (to make leaders)." (Allah) said, "My covenant (prophethood) includes not Zalimin (polytheists and wrongdoers)."

Ibrahim Al-Khalil was an Imam for the People

Allah is informing us of the honor of Ibrahim Al-Khalil, who He made an Imam for the people, and a model to be imitated, because of the way he conducted himself and adhered to Tawhid. This honor was given to Prophet Ibrahim when he adhered to Allah's decisions and prohibitions. This is why Allah said,

وَإِذْ أَبْنَالِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بَكَلِمَتِهِ

(And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrahim (i.e., Allah) tried him with (certain) commands).

This Ayah means, O Muhammad! Remind the idolators and the People of the Scriptures, who pretend to be followers of the religion of Ibrahim, while in reality they do not follow it, while you, O Muhammad, and your followers are the true followers of his religion; remind them of the commands and prohibitions that Allah tested Ibrahim with.

فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ

(which he fulfilled.) indicating that Ibrahim implemented all of Allah's orders. Allah said in another Ayah,

وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ الدِّينَى وَقَى

(And of Ibrahim (Abraham) who fulfilled (or conveyed) all that (Allah ordered him to do or convey)) (53:37)

meaning, he was truthful and he was obedient to Allah's legislation. Also, Allah said,

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أَمَّةً قَنِينَةٌ لِّلَّهِ حَنيَّةٌ وَلَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ المُشَرَّكِينَ - شَاكِراً لَّانَعْمَهُ اجْتَبَاهُ وَهَذَا إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ - وَعَاتِينَهُ فِي الْذَّلِيلِ حَسَنَةٌ وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْأَخْرَةِ لِمَنَ الصَّلِحِينَ - ثُمَّ أَوْحِيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اثْبَعْ مِلَّةً إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنيَّةً وَمَا كَانَ مِنْ المُشَرَّكِينَ

(And of Ibrahim (Abraham) who fulfilled (or conveyed) all that (Allah ordered him to do or convey)) (53:37)
Verily, Ibrahim was an Ummah (or a nation), obedient to Allah, Hanif (i.e. to worship none but Allah), and he was not one of those who were Al-Mushrikin (polytheists). (He was) thankful for His (Allah's) favors. He (Allah) chose him and guided him to a straight path. And We gave him good in this world, and in the Hereafter he shall be of the righteous. Then, We have sent the revelation to you (O Muhammad saying): "Follow the religion of Ibrahim Hanif (Islamic Monotheism to worship none but Allah) and he was not of the Mushrikin.) (16:120-123)

(Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifan (Islamic Monotheism to worship none but Allah alone) and he was not of Al-Mushrikin. Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad ) and those who have believed (Muslims). And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers) (3:67-68).

Allah said,

(with Kalimat (words)) which means, "Laws, commandments and prohibitions." `Words' as mentioned here, sometimes refers to what Allah has willed, such as Allah's statement about Maryam,
(And she testified to the truth of the Words of her Lord, and (also believed in) His Scriptures, and she was of the Qanitin (i.e. obedient to Allah)) (66:12).

"Words" also refers to Allah's Law, such as Allah's statement,

(وَتَمَّتْ كُلِّمَةٌ رَبِّكَ صِدِّيقًا وَعَدِّلًا)

(And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice) (6:115) meaning. His legislation. "Words" also means truthful news, or a just commandment or prohibition. For instance, Allah said,

(وَإِذَا أَنْبَأَلَيْنَاهُمْ رَبُّهُ بَكْلِمَةٍ فَأَتَمْهَنّ)

(And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrahim tried him with (certain) Words (commands), which he fulfilled) meaning, he adhered to them, Allah said,

(إِنَّى جَعَلَكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا)

("Verily, I am going to make you an Imam (a leader) for mankind (to follow you).") as a reward for Ibrahim's good deeds, adhering to the commandments and avoiding the prohibitions. This is why Allah made Ibrahim a role model for the people, and an Imam whose conduct and path are imitated and followed.

What were the Words that Ibrahim was tested with

There is a difference of opinion over the words that Allah tested Ibrahim with. There are several opinions attributed to Ibn `Abbas. For instance, `Abdur-Razzaq said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah tested him with the rituals (of Hajj))." Abu Ishaq reported the same. `Abdur-Razzaq also narrated that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَإِذَا أَنْبَأَلَيْنَاهُمْ رَبُّهُ بَكْلِمَةٍ)

(And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrahim (Abraham) (i.e., Allah) tried him with (certain) commands) means, "Allah tested him with Taharah (purity, ablution): five on the head and five on the body. As for the head, they are cutting the mustache, rinsing the mouth, inhaling and discarding water, using Swak and parting the hair. As for the body, they are trimming the nails, shaving the pubic hair, circumcision and plucking under the arm and washing with water after answering the call of nature." Ibn Abi Hatim said, "A similar statement was also reported from Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, An-Nakha`i, Abu Salih, Abu Al-Jald, and so forth."
There is a similar statement that Imam Muslim narrated from `A'ishah who said that Allah's Messenger said,

"عشیر من الفطرة: قص الشارب وإعفاء اللحية والسبأك واستئناف الماء وقص الأظفار وغسل البراجم ونثف الابط وحلق العانة وانتقاص الماء ونسيب العاشيرة إلّا أن تكون المضمضة."

(Ten are among the Fitrah (instinct, natural constitution): trimming the mustache, growing the beard, using Swak, inhaling and then exhaling water (in ablution), cutting the nails, washing between the fingers (in ablution), plucking the underarm hair, shaving the pubic hair, washing with water after answering the call of nature, (and I forgot the tenth, I think it was) rinsing the mouth (in ablution).)

The Two Sahihs recorded Abu Hurayrah saying that the Prophet said,

"الفطرة خمس: الختان والتجديد وقص الشارب وتقليل الأظفار ونثف الإبط."

(Five are among the acts of Fitrah: circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, trimming the mustache, cutting the nails and plucking the underarm hair.) This is the wording with Muslim.

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The words that Allah tested Ibrahim with, and that he implemented were: abandoning his (disbelieving) people when Allah commanded him to do so, disputing with Nimrod (king of Babylon) about Allah, being patient when he was thrown in the fire (although this was extremely traumatic) migrating from his homeland when Allah commanded him to do so, patience with the monetary and material demands of hosting guests by Allah's command, and Allah's order for him to slaughter his son. When Allah tested Ibrahim with these words, and he was ready for the major test, Allah said to him,

"أسلم قال أسلمت لرب العالمين"

("Submit (be a Muslim)" He said, "I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of all that exists. ") (2:131) although this meant defying and being apart from the people."

**The Unjust do not qualify for Allah's Promise**

Allah said that Ibrahim said,
(And of my offspring (to make leaders)) and Allah replied,


(My covenant (prophethood) includes not Zalimin (polytheists and wrongdoers)).

When Allah made Ibrahim an Imam (Leader for the faithful), he asked Allah that Imams thereafter be chosen from his offspring. Allah accepted his supplication, but told him that there will be unjust people among his offspring and they will not benefit from Allah's promise. Thus, they will neither become Imams nor be imitated (for they will not be righteous). The proof that Ibrahim's supplication to Allah was accepted is that Allah said in Surat Al-' Ankabut (29:27),


(And We ordained among his offspring prophethood and the Book).

Hence, every Prophet whom Allah sent after Ibrahim were from among his offspring, and every Book that Allah revealed was to them. As for Allah's statement,


((Allah) said, "My covenant (prophethood) includes not Zalimin (polytheists and wrongdoers). ")

Allah mentioned that there are unjust people among the offspring of Ibrahim, and they will not benefit from Allah's promise, nor would they be entrusted with anything, even though they are among the children of Allah's Khalil (intimate friend, Prophet Abraham). There will also be those who do good among the children of Ibrahim, and these it is who will benefit from Ibrahim's supplication. Ibn Jarir said that this Ayah indicated that the unjust shall not be Imams for the people. Moreover, the Ayah informed Ibrahim that there will be unjust people among his offspring. Also, Ibn Khawayz Mindad Al-Maliki said, "The unjust person does not qualify to be a Khalifah, a ruler, one who gives religious verdicts, a witness, or even a narrator (of Hadiths)."


(And (remember) when We made the House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) a place of resort for mankind and a place of safety. And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim (or the stone on which Ibrahim as a place)
The Virtue of Allah's House

Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِلَّنَاسِ)

(And (remember) when We made the House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) a place of resort for mankind) "They do not remain in the House, they only visit it and return to their homes, and then visit it again." Also, Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi narrated from Ar-Rabi` bin Anas from Abu Al-`Aliyah who said that,

(وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِلَّنَاسِ وَأَمنَّا)

(And (remember) when We made the House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) a place of resort for mankind and a place of safety) means, "Safe from enemies and armed conflict. During the time of Jahiliyyah, the people were often victims of raids and kidnapping, while the people in the area surrounding it (Al-Masjid Al-Haram) were safe and not subject to kidnapping." Also, Mujahid, `Ata', As-Suddi, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas were reported to have said that the Ayah (2:125) means, "Whoever enters it shall be safe."

This Ayah indicates that Allah honored the Sacred House, which Allah made as a safe refuge and safe haven. Therefore, the souls are eager, but never bored, to conduct short visits to the House, even every year. This is because Allah accepted the supplication of His Khalil, Ibrahim, when he asked Allah to make the hearts of people eager to visit the House. Ibrahim said (14:40),

(رَبَّنَا وَتَقْبَلْ دُعَاءَ)

(Our Lord! And accept my invocation).

Allah described the House as a safe resort and refuge, for those who visit it are safe, even if they had committed acts of evil. This honor comes from the honor of the person who built it first, Khalil Ar-Rahman, just as Allah said,

(وَإِذْ بَوَأَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانًا لِلْبَيْتِ أَنَّ لاَ تَشْرَكَ بِي)

(And when We proceeded to give to Ibrahim a firm house)
(And remember) when We showed Ibrahim the site of the (Sacred) House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) (saying): "Associate not anything (in worship) with Me..." (22:26) and,  

إنَّ أوَّلٌ بَيْتٍ وَضِعٌ لِلنَّاسِ لِلذّي بِكَةَ مُبَارَكَةٌ  
وَهَذَى لِلْعَلَمِينَ فِيهِ عَائِتُ بَيْتَنَّ بَيْتَ مَقَامٌ إِبْرَاهِيمَ  
وَمَن دَخَلَهُ كَانَ عَامِنًا  

(Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Makkah), full of blessing, and a guidance for Al-`Alamin (mankind and Jinn). In it are manifest signs (for example), the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim; whosoever enters it, he attains security) (3:96-97).

The last honorable Ayah emphasized the honor of Ibrahim's Maqam, and the instruction to pray next to it,

وَأَتَخِذُوْا مِنْ مَقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصْلِىٍّ  

(And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim as a place of prayer). The Maqam of Ibrahim

Su`fyan Ath-Thawri reported that Sa`id bin Jubayr commented on the Ayah,

وَأَتَخِذُوْا مِنْ مَقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصْلِىٍّ  

(And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim as a place of prayer) "The stone (Maqam) is the standing place of Ibrahim, Allah's Prophet, and a mercy from Allah. Ibrahim stood on the stone, while Isma`il was handing him the stones (constructing the Ka`bah)." As-Suddi said, "The Maqam of Ibrahim is a stone which Isma`il's wife put under Ibrahim's feet when washing his head." Al-Qurtubi mentioned this, but he considered it unauthentic, although others gave it preference, Ar-Razi reported it in his Tafsir from Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah, and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

Ibn Abi Hatim reported that Jabir, describing the Hajj (pilgrimage) of the Prophet said, "When the Prophet performed Tawaf, `Umar asked him, `Is this the Maqam of our father' He said, `Yes.' `Umar said, `Should we take it a place of prayer' So Allah revealed,

وَأَتَخِذُوْا مِنْ مَقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصْلِىٍّ  

(And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim (Abraham) as a place of prayer.)"

Al-Bukhari said, "Chapter: Allah's statement,
(And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim (Abraham)) was revealed. I also said, 'O Messenger of Allah! The righteous and the wicked enter your house. I wish you would command the Mothers of the believers (the Prophet's wives) to wear Hijab. Allah sent down the Ayah that required the Hijab. And when I knew that the Prophet was angry with some of his wives, I came to them and said, 'Either you stop what you are doing, or Allah will endow His Messenger with better women than you are.' I advised one of his wives and she said to me, 'O `Umar! Does the Messenger of Allah not know how to advise his wives, so that you have to do the job instead of him' Allah then revealed,

(It may be if he divorced you (all) that his Lord will give him instead of you, wives better than you, Muslims (who submit to Allah)).' (66:5)

Also, Ibn Jarir narrated that Jabir said, "After the Messenger of Allah kissed the Black Stone, he went around the house three times in a fast pace and four times in a slow pace. He then went to Maqam of Ibrahim, with it between him and the House, and prayed two Rak`ahs." This is part of the long Hadith that Muslim recorded in Sahih. Al-Bukhari recorded that `Amr bin Dinar said that he heard Ibn `Umar say, "The Messenger of Allah performed Tawaf around the House seven times and then prayed two Rak`ahs behind the Maqam."

All these texts indicate that the Maqam is the stone that Ibrahim was standing on while building the House. As the House's walls became higher, Isma`il brought his father a stone, so that he could stand on it, while Isma`il handed him the stones. Ibrahim would place the stones on the wall, and whenever he finished one side, he would move to the next side, to complete the building all around. Ibrahim kept repeating this until he finished building the House, as we will describe when we explain the story of Ibrahim and Isma`il and how they built the House, as narrated from Ibn `Abbas and collected by Al-Bukhari. Ibrahim's footprints were still visible in the stone, and the Arabs knew this fact during the time of Jahiliyyah. This is why Abu Talib said in his poem known as `Al-Lamiyyah', "And Ibrahim's footprint with his bare feet on the stone is still visible."

The Muslims also saw Ibrahim's footprints on the stone, as Anas bin Malik said, "I saw the Maqam with the print of Ibrahim's toes and feet still visible in it, but the footprints dissipated because of the people rubbing the stone with their hands."
Earlier, the Maqam was placed close to the Ka`bah's wall. In the present time, the Maqam is placed next to Al-Hijr on the right side of those entering through the door.

When Ibrahim finished building the House, he placed the stone next to the wall of Al-Ka`bah. Or, when the House was finished being built, Ibrahim just left the stone where it was last standing, and he was commanded to pray next to the stone when he finished the Tawaf (circumambulating). It is understandable that the Maqam of Ibrahim would stand where the building of the House ended. The Leader of the faithful `Umar bin Al-Khattab, one of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs whom we were commanded to emulate, moved the stone away from the Ka`bah's wall during his reign. `Umar is one of the two men, whom the Messenger of Allah described when he said, "عَلَّمَنَا بِاللَّدِينِ مِنْ بَعْدِي أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَّرَ"

(Imitate the two men who will come after me: Abu Bakr and `Umar.)

`Umar was also the person whom the Qur'an agreed with regarding praying next to Maqam of Ibrahim. This is why none among the Companions rejected it when he moved it.

`Abdur-Razzaq reported from Ibn Jurayj from `Ata', "`Umar bin Al-Khattab moved the Maqam back." Also, `Abdur-Razzaq narrated that Mujahid said that `Umar was the first person who moved the Maqam back to where it is now standing." Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr, Ahmad bin `Ali bin Al-Husayn Al-Bayhaqi recorded `A'ishah saying, "During the time of the Messenger of Allah and Abu Bakr, the Maqam was right next to the House. `Umar moved the Maqam during his reign." This Hadith has an authentic chain of narration.
(125. And We commanded Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma`il (Ishmael) that they should purify My House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (I` tikaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer).) (126. And (remember) when Ibrahim said, "My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allah and the Last Day," He (Allah) answered: "As for him who disbelieves, I shall leave him in contentment for a while, then I shall compel him to the torment of the Fire, and worst indeed is that destination!") (127. And (remember) when Ibrahim and (his son) Isma`il were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka`bah at Makkah), (saying), "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the Hearer, the Knower.") (128. "O ur Lord! And make us submissive unto You and of our offsprin g a nation submissive unto You, and show us our Manasik, and accept our repentance. Truly, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.)

The Command to purify the House

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that,

وَعَهْدُنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَعِيلَ

(And We gave Our 'Ahd (command) to Ibrahim and Isma`il) means, "Allah ordered them to purify it from all filth and impurities, of which none should ever touch it." Also, Ibn Jurayj said, "I said to `Ata', `What is Allah's `Ahd' He said, `His command.'" Also, Sa`id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,

أن طهَّرا بَتَى لِلطَّالِبِينَ وِالعَكْفِينَ

(that they should purify My House (the Ka`bah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (I` tikaf)) "Purify it from the idols." Further, Mujahid and Sa`id bin Jubayr said that,

طهَّرا بَتَى لِلطَّالِبِينَ

(purify My House for those who are circumambulating it) means, "From the idols, sexual activity, false witness and sins of all kinds."
Allah said, (لِلطَّائِفِينَ)

(for those who are performing Tawaf (circumambulating) it).

The Tawaf around the House is a well-established ritual, Sa`id bin Jubayr said that, (لِلطَّائِفِينَ)

(for those who are circumambulating it) means, strangers (he means who do not live in Makkah), while;

(وَالطَّائِفِينَ)

(or staying (I` tikaf)) is about those who live in the area of the Sacred House. Also, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that I` tikaf is in reference to those who live in the area of the House, just as Sa`id bin Jubayr stated. Allah said, (وَالطَّائِفِينَ)

(or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer))

Ibn `Abbas said, when it is a place of prayer it includes those who are described as bowing and prostrating themselves. Also, `Ata` and Qatadah offered the same Tafsir.

Purifying all Masjids is required according to this Ayah and according to Allah's statement,

(فِي بَيْوتِ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَن تُرَقَّعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبَّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوَّ وَالْآصَالِ)

(In houses (mosques) which Allah has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honored), in them His Name is remembered (i.e. Adhan, Iqamah, Salah, invocations, recitation of the Qur'an). Therein glorify Him (Allah) in the mornings and in the (late) afternoons) (24:36).

There are many Hadiths that give a general order for purifying the Masjids and keeping filth and impurities away from them. This is why the Prophet said,
(The Masjids are established for the purpose that they were built for (i.e. worshipping Allah alone.).)

I have collected a book on this subject, and all praise is due to Allah.

**Makkah is a Sacred Area**

Allah said,

(And (remember) when Ibrahim said, "My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allah and the Last Day.")

Imam Abu Ja`far bin Jarir At-Tabari narrated that Jabir bin `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

(Ibrahim made Allah’s House a Sacred Area and a safe refuge. I have made what is between the two sides of Al-Madinah a Sacred Area. Therefore, its game should not be hunted, and its trees should not be cut.) An-Nasa’i and Muslim also recorded this Hadith.

There are several other Hadiths that indicate that Allah made Makkah a sacred area before He created the heavens and earth. The Two Sahihs recorded `Abdullah bin `Abbas saying that the Messenger of Allah said,
(Allah has made this city a sanctuary (sacred place) the Day He created the heavens and earth. Therefore, it is a sanctuary until the Day of Resurrection because Allah made it a sanctuary. It was not legal for anyone to fight in it before me, and it was legal for me for a few hours of one day. Therefore, it is a sanctuary until the Day of Resurrection, because Allah made it a sanctuary. None is allowed to uproot its thorny shrubs, or to chase its game, or to pick up something that has fallen, except by a person who announces it publicly, nor should any of its trees be cut.) Al-`Abbas said, `O Messenger of Allah! Except the lemon-grass, for our goldsmiths and for our graves.' The Prophet added, (Except lemon-grass.)

This is the wording of Muslim. The Two Sahihs also recorded Abu Hurayrah narrating a similar Hadith, while Al-Bukhari recorded a similar Hadith from Safiyyah bint Shaybah who narrated it from the Prophet.

Abu Shurayh Al-`Adawi said that he said to `Amr bin Sa`id while he was sending armies to Makkah, `O Commander! Let me narrate a Hadith that the Messenger of Allah said the day that followed the victory of Makkah. My ears heard the Hadith, my heart comprehended it, and my eyes saw the Prophet when he said it. He thanked Allah and praised him and then said,
(Allah, not the people, made Makkah a sanctuary, so any person who has belief in Allah and the Last Day, should neither shed blood in it nor should he cut down its trees. If anybody argues that fighting in it is permissible on the basis that Allah's Messenger fought in Makkah, say to him, 'Allah allowed His Messenger and did not allow you.' Allah allowed me only for a few hours on that day (of the Conquest), and today its sanctity is valid as it was before. So, those who are present should inform those who are absent (concerning this fact).)

Abu Shurayh was asked, `What did `Amr reply' He said, (`Amr said) `O Abu Shurayh! I know better than you about this, the Sacred House does not give protection to a sinner, a murderer or a thief.' This Hadith was collected by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

After this, there is no contradiction between the Hadiths that stated that Allah made Makkah a sanctuary when He created the heavens and earth and the Hadiths that Ibrahim made it a sanctuary, since Ibrahim conveyed Allah's decree that Makkah is a sanctuary, before he built the House. Similarly, the Messenger of Allah was written as the Final Prophet when Adam was still clay. Yet, Ibrahim said,

(Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own) (2: 129).

Allah accepted Ibrahim's supplication, although He had full knowledge beforehand that it will occur by His decree. To further elaborate on this subject, we should mention the Hadith about what the Messenger of Allah said when he was asked, "O Messenger of Allah! Tell us about how your prophethood started." He said,
(I am the supplication of my father Ibrahim, the good news of Jesus, the son of Mary, and my mother saw a light that radiated from her which illuminated the castles of Ash-Sham (Syria).)

In this Hadith, the Companions asked the Messenger about the beginning of his prophethood. We will explain this matter later, if Allah wills.

**Ibrahim invokes Allah to make Makkah an Area of Safety and Sustenance**

Allah said that Ibrahim said,

(رب اجعل هذا بلدًا أمنًا)

(My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security) (2:126) from terror, so that its people do not suffer from fear. Allah accepted Ibrahim's supplication. Allah said,

(ومن دخله كان امنًا)

(Whosoever enters it, he attains security) (3:97) and,

(أولم يروا أتناجعلنا حرمة امنًا ويتخطفون الناس من حولهم)

(Have they not seen that We have made (Makkah) a secure sanctuary, while men are being snatched away from all around them) (29:67).

We have already mentioned the Hadiths that prohibit fighting in the Sacred Area. Muslim recorded that Jabir said that the Messenger of Allah said,

(لا يحل لاحد أن يحمل بمكة السلاح)

(No one is allowed to carry weapons in Makkah.) Allah mentioned that Ibrahim said,
(My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security) meaning, make this a safe city. This occurred before the Ka'bah was built. Allah said in Surat Ibrahim,

(And (remember) when Ibrahim said, "My Lord! Make this city (Makkah) one of peace and security...") (14:35) as here, Ibrahim supplicated a second time after the House was built and its people lived around it, after Ishaq who was thirteen years Isma'il's junior was born. This is why at the end of his supplication, Ibrahim said here,

(All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has given me in old age Isma'il (Ishmael) and Ishaq (Isaac). Verily, my Lord is indeed the Hearer of invocations) (14:39).

Allah said next,

("...and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allah and the Last Day." He (Allah) answered: "As for him who disbelieves, I shall leave him in contentment for a while, then I shall compel him to the torment of the Fire, and worst indeed is that destination!")

Ibn Jarir said that Ubayy bin Ka'b commented on,

("He answered: "As for him who disbelieves, I shall leave him in contentment for a while, then I shall compel him to the torment of the Fire, and worst indeed is that destination!")" These are
Allah's Words (meaning not Ibrahim's)" This is also the Tafsir of Mujahid and `Ikrimah. Furthermore, Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement,

ربَّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمنًا وَأرْزِقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ النَّمَرَتِ مِنْ عَمَّامِ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَاليوم الآخر

(My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allah and the Last Day.) "Ibrahim asked Allah to grant sustenance for the believers only. However, Allah revealed, `I will also provide for the disbelievers, just as I shall provide for the believers. Would I create something and not sustain and provide for I shall allow the disbelievers little delight, and then force them to the torment of the Fire, and what an evil destination." Ibn `Abbas then recited,

كَلَّا تُمِدْ هَوْلَاءِ وَهَوْلَاءِ مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْطُورًا

(On each these as well as those We bestow from the bounties of your Lord. And the bounties of your Lord can never be forbidden) (17:20).

This was recorded by Ibn Marduwyah, who also recorded similar statements from `Ikrimah and Mujahid. Similarly, Allah said,

قُلْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَقْتُرُونَ عَلَى الْلَّهِ الْكَذِّبَ لَا يُقْلِحُونَ - مَنَعَ فِي الْدُّنْيَا نَمَّ إِلَيْهِ نَمَرِجُهُمْ نَمَّ نَذِيفُهُمْ العَذَابَ الشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ

(Verily, those who invent a lie against Allah will never be successful. (A brief) enjoyment in this world! And then unto Us will be their return, then We shall make them taste the severest torment because they used to disbelieve.) (10:69-70),

وَمَن كَفَرَ فَلا يَحْزَنْكَ كَفْرَةً إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ - فَتَبَيَّنُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَيْمُ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ - نَمَّعُهُمْ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ نَضَطَّرُهُمْ إِلَى عَذَابٍ غَليظٍ

(And as for those who disbelieve, there will come upon them no repentance, as they have rejected the truth with their own hands; They will know, for behold! We have made clear to them the severity of Our torment.)
(And whoever disbelieves, let not his disbelief grieve you (O Muhammad). To Us is their return, and We shall inform them what they have done. Verily, Allah is the Knower of what is in the breasts (of men). We let them enjoy for a little while, then in the end We shall oblige them to (enter) a great torment.) (31:23-24) and,

(وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أَمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجِئْنَا لَمَنْ يَكُفُّ الْرَّحْمَةُ لِبَيُوتِهِمْ سَفَقًا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَمَعَارِجٌ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ - وَلِبَيُوتِهِمْ أُبُوبًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَكَبُّونَ - وَرَحْمَةً وَإِن كُلُّ ذَلِكَ لَمَّا مَنَعَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالَّذِي عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(And were it not that mankind would have become of one community (all disbelievers desiring worldly life only), We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Gracious (Allah), silver roofs for their houses, and elevators whereby they ascend. And for their houses, doors (of silver), and thrones (of silver) on which they could recline. And adornments of gold. Yet all this would have been nothing but an enjoyment of this world. And the Hereafter with your Lord is (only) for the Muttaqin (the pious).) (43:33-35). Allah said next,

(ثُمَّ أَضْطَرَّهُ إِلَى عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَبَسَى المَصِيرُ)

(Then I shall compel him to the torment of the Fire, and worst indeed is that destination!) meaning, "After the delight that the disbeliever enjoyed in this life, I will make his destination torment in the Fire, and what an evil destination!" This Ayah indicates that Allah gives the disbelievers respite and then seizes them in a manner compatible to His greatness and ability. This Ayah is similar to Allah's statement,

(وَكَأَيْنَ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ أَمْثِلَتْ لَهَا وَهِيَ ظَلِيمَةً ثُمَّ أَخَذَتْهَا وَإِلَىَّ المَصِيرُ)

(And many a township did I give respite while it was given to wrongdoing. Then (in the end) I seized it (with punishment). And to Me is the (final) return (of all)) (22:48).

Also, the Two Sahihs recorded,
(No one is more patient than Allah when hearing abuse. They attribute a son to Him, while He grants them sustenance and health.)

The Sahih also recorded,

» إنَّ اللهَ لَيُمِلِي للظَّالِمِ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَهُ لَمْ يَقْلِهِ

(Allah gives respite to the unjust person, until when He seizes him; He never lets go of him.)

He then recited Allah's statement,

(وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَخْدُ رَبِّكَ إِذَا أَخْدَ الْقَرَى وَهَٰذِي ظَلَمَةٌ إِنَّ أَخْدَهُ أَلِيمُ شَدِيدٌ)

(Such is the punishment of your Lord when He punishes the (population of) towns while they are doing wrong. Verily, His punishment is painful (and) severe). (11:102)

Building the Ka` bah and asking Allah to accept This Deed

Allah said,

(وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ القوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَعِيلٌ رَبُّنَا نَفْتَنَّ مَنْ أَنْتُ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ - رَبُّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذَٰلِكَ أَمْثَالُ مُسْلِمَةَ لَكَ وَآرَانَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَنَبْعِلْ عَلِيّنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْتَوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(And (remember) when Ibrahim (Abraham) and (his son) Isma`il (Ishmael) were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka` bah at Makkah), (saying), "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the Hearer, the Knower. Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You
and of our offspring a nation submissive unto You, and show us our Manasik and accept our repentance. Truly, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.

Allah said, "O Muhammad! Remind your people when Ibrahim and Isma` il built the House and raised its foundations while saying,

(Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the Hearer, the Knower.)"

Al-Qurtubi mentioned that Ubayy and Ibn Mas` ud used to recite the Ayah this way,

(And (remember) when Ibrahim and (his son) Isma` il were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka` bah at Makkah), saying, "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the Hearer, the Knower.

What further testifies to this statement (which adds `saying' to the Ayah) by Ubayy and Ibn Mas` ud, is what came afterwards,

(Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You and of our offspring a nation submissive unto You).

The Prophets Ibrahim and Isma` il were performing a good deed, yet they asked Allah to accept this good deed from them. Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Wuhayb bin Al-Ward recited,

(And (remember) when Ibrahim and (his son) Isma` il were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka` bah at Makkah), (saying), "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us") and cried and said, "O Khalil of Ar-Rahman! You raise the foundations of the House of Ar-Rahman (Allah), yet you
are afraid that He will not accept it from you." This is the behavior of the sincere believers, whom Allah described in His statement,

(And those who give that which they give) (23: 60) meaning, they give away voluntary charity, and perform the acts of worship yet,

(with their hearts full of fear) (23: 60) afraid that these good deeds might not be accepted of them. There is an authentic Hadith narrated by 'A'ishah on this subject, which we will mention later, Allah willing.

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn 'Abbas said, "Prophet Ibrahim took Isma'il and his mother and went away with them until he reached the area of the House, where he left them next to a tree above Zamzam in the upper area of the Masjid. During that time, Isma'il's mother was still nursing him. Makkah was then uninhabited, and there was no water source in it. Ibrahim left them there with a bag containing some dates and a water-skin containing water. Ibrahim then started to leave, and Isma'il's mother followed him and said, 'O Ibrahim! To whom are you leaving us in this barren valley that is not inhabited?' She repeated the question several times and Ibrahim did not reply. She asked, 'Has Allah commanded you to do this?' He said, 'Yes.' She said, 'I am satisfied that Allah will never abandon us.' Ibrahim left, and when he was far enough away where they could not see him, close to Thaniyyah, he faced the House, raised his hands and supplicated,

(O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your Sacred House (the Ka'bah at Makkah)) until,

(Give thanks) (14:37). Isma'il's mother then returned to her place, started drinking water from the water-skin and nursing Isma'il. When the water was used up, she and her son became thirsty. She looked at him, and he was suffering from thirst; she left, because she disliked seeing his face in that condition. She found the nearest mountain to where she was, As-Safa, ascended it and looked, in vain, hoping to see somebody. When she came down to the valley, she raised her garment and ran, just as a tired person runs, until she reached the Al-Marwah mountain. In vain, she looked to see if there was someone there. She ran to and fro (between the two mountains) seven times." Ibn 'Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said, "This is why the people make the trip between As-Safa and Al-Marwah (during Hajj and Umrah)."
"When she reached Al-Marwah, she heard a voice and said, `Shush,' to herself. She tried to hear the voice again and when she did, she said, `I have heard you. Do you have relief?' She found the angel digging with his heel (or his wing) where Zamzam now exists, and the water gushed out. Isma`il's mother was astonished and started digging, using her hand to transfer water to the water-skin." Ibn `Abbas said that the Prophet then said, "May Allah grant His mercy to the mother of Isma`il, had she left the water, (flow naturally without her intervention), it would have been flowing on the surface of the earth."

"Isma`il's mother started drinking the water and her milk increased for her child. The angel (Gabriel) said to her, `Do not fear abandonment. There shall be a House for Allah built here by this boy and his father. Allah does not abandon His people.' During that time, the area of the House was raised above ground level and the floods used to reach its right and left sides.

Afterwards some people of the tribe of Jurhum, passing through Kada', made camp at the bottom of the valley. They saw some birds, they were astonished, and said, `Birds can only be found at a place where there is water. We did not notice before that this valley had water.' They sent a scout or two who searched the area, found the water, and returned to inform them about it. Then they all went to Isma`il's mother, next to the water, and said, 'O Mother of Isma`il! Will you allow us to be with you (or dwell with you)' She said, `Yes. But you will have no exclusive right to the water here.' They said, `We agree.'" Ibn `Abbas said that the Prophet said, "At that time, Isma`il's mother liked to have human company."

"And thus they stayed there and sent for their relatives to join them. Later on, her boy reached the age of puberty and married a lady from them, for Isma`il learned Arabic from them, and they liked the way he was raised. Isma`il's mother died after that.

Then an idea occurred to Abraham to visit his dependents. So he left (to Makkah). When he arrived, he did not find Isma`il, so he asked his wife about him. She said, `He has gone out hunting.' When he asked her about their living conditions, she complained to him that they live in misery and poverty. Abraham said (to her), `When your husband comes, convey my greeting and tell him to change the threshold of his gate.' When Isma`il came, he sensed that they had a visitor and asked his wife, `Did we have a visitor?' She said, `Yes. An old man came to visit us and asked me about you and I told him where you were. He also asked about our condition, and I told him that we live in hardship and poverty.' Isma`il said, `Did he ask you to do anything?' She said, `Yes. He asked me to convey his greeting and that you should change the threshold of your gate.' Isma`il said to her, `He was my father and you are the threshold, so go to your family (i.e. you are divorced).' So he divorced her and married another woman. Again Ibrahim thought of visiting his dependents whom he had left (at Makkah). Ibrahim came to Isma`il's house, but did not find Isma`il and asked his wife, `Where is Isma`il? Isma`il's wife replied, `He has gone out hunting.' He asked her about their condition, and she said that they have a good life and praised Allah. Ibrahim asked, `What is your food and what is your drink?' She replied, `Our food is meat and our drink is water.' He said, `O Allah! Bless their meat and their drink.' The Prophet (Muhammad) said, "They did not have crops then, otherwise Ibrahim would have invoked Allah to bless that too. Those who do not live in Makkah cannot bear eating a diet only containing meat and water."

"Ibrahim said, `When Isma`il comes back, convey my greeting to him and ask him to keep the threshold of his gate.' When Isma`il came back, he asked, `Has anyone visited us?' She said, `Yes. A good looking old man,' and she praised Ibrahim, `And he asked me about our livelihood and I told him that we live in good conditions.' He asked, `Did he ask you to convey any message?' She said, `Yes. He conveyed his greeting to you and said that you should keep the threshold of your gate.' Isma`il said, `That was my father, and you are the threshold; he commanded me to keep you.'
Ibrahim then came back visiting and found Isma' il behind the Zamzam well, next to a tree, mending his arrows. When he saw Ibrahim, he stood up and they greeted each other, just as the father and son greet each other. Ibrahim said, 'O Isma' il, Your Lord has ordered me to do something.' He said, 'Obey your Lord.' He asked Isma' il, 'Will you help me?' He said, 'Yes, I will help you.' Ibrahim said, 'Allah has commanded me to build a house for Him there,' and he pointed to an area that was above ground level. So, both of them rose and started to raise the foundations of the House. Abraham started building (the Ka' bah), while Isma' il continued handing him the stones. Both of them were saying, 'O our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the Hearer, the Knowe r.) (2.127).'' Hence, they were building the House, part by part, going around it and saying,

(Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the Hearer, the Knower.)

The Story of rebuilding the House by Quraysh before the Messenger of Allah was sent as Prophet

In his Sirah, Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar said, "When the Messenger of Allah reached thirty-five years of age, the Quraysh gathered to rebuild the Ka’ bah, this included covering it with a roof. However, they were weary of demolishing it. During that time, the Ka’ bah was barely above a man's shoulder, so they wanted to raise its height and build a ceiling on top. Some people had stolen the Ka’ bah’s treasure beforehand, which used to be in a well in the middle of the Ka’ bah. The treasure was later found with a man called, Duwayk, a freed servant of Bani Mulayh bin 'Amr, from the tribe of Khuza’ah. The Quraysh cut off his hand as punishment. Some people claimed that those who actually stole the treasure left it with Duwayk. Afterwards, the sea brought a ship that belonged to a Roman merchant to the shores of Jeddah, where it washed-up. So they collected the ship's wood to use it for the Ka’ bah's ceiling; a Coptic carpenter in Makkah prepared what they needed for the job. When they decided to begin the demolition process to rebuild the House, Abu Wahb bin `Amr bin `Aidh bin `Abd bin `Imran bin Makhzum took a stone from the Ka’ bah; the stone slipped from his hand and went back to where it had been. He said, 'O people of Quraysh! Do not spend on rebuilding the House, except from what was earned from pure sources. No money earned from a prostitute, usury or injustice should be included.'" Ibn Ishaq commented here that the people also attribute these words to Al-Walid bin Al-Mughirah bin `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Makhzum.

Ibn Ishaq continued, “The Quraysh began to organize their efforts to rebuild the Ka’ bah, each subtribe taking the responsibility of rebuilding a designated part of it.

However, they were still weary about bringing down the Ka’ bah. Al-Walid bin Al-Mughirah said, ‘I will start to bring it down.’ He held an ax and stood by the Ka’ bah and said, ‘O Allah! No harm is meant. O Allah! We only seek to do a good service.’ He then started to chop the House’s stones. The people waited that night and said, ‘We will wait and see. If something strikes him, we will not bring it down and instead rebuild it the way it was. If nothing happens to him, then Allah will have agreed to what we are doing.’ The next morning, Al-Walid went to work on the Ka’ bah, and the people started bringing the Ka’ bah down with him. When they reached the foundations that Ibrahim built, they uncovered green stones that were above each other, just like a pile of spears.” Ibn Ishaq then said that some people told him, “A man from Quraysh, who was helping rebuild the Ka’ bah, placed the shovel between two of these stones to pull them
The Dispute regarding Who should place the Black Stone in Its Place

Ibn Ishaq said, “The tribes of Quraysh collected stones to rebuild the House, each tribe collecting on their own. They started rebuilding it, until the rebuilding of the Ka`bah reached the point where the Black Stone was to be placed in its designated site. A dispute erupted between the various tribes of Quraysh, each seeking the honor of placing the Black Stone for their own tribe. The dispute almost led to violence between the leaders of Quraysh in the area of the Sacred House. Banu `Abd Ad-Dar and Banu `Adi bin Ka`b bin Lu`ay, gave their mutual pledge to fight until death. However, five or four days later, Abu Umayyah bin Al-Mughirah bin `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Makhzum, the oldest man from Quraysh then intervened at the right moment. Abu Umayyah suggested that Quraysh should appoint the first man to enter the House from its entrance to be a mediator between them. They agreed.

The Messenger - Muhammad - was the first person to enter the House. When the various leaders of Quraysh realized who the first one was, they all proclaimed, `This is Al-Amin (the Honest one). We all accept him; This is Muhammad.' When the Prophet reached the area where the leaders were gathering and they informed him about their dispute, he asked them to bring a garment and place it on the ground. He placed the Black Stone on it. He then requested that each of the leaders of Quraysh hold the garment from one side and all participate in lifting the Black Stone, moving it to its designated area. Next, the Prophet carried the Black Stone by himself and placed it in its designated position and built around it. The Quraysh used to call the Messenger of Allah `Al-Amin' even before the revelation came to him."

Ibn Az-Zubayr rebuilds Al-Ka`bah the way the Prophet wished

Ibn Ishaq said, "During the time of the Prophet, the Ka`bah was eighteen cubits high and was covered with Egyptian linen, and they with a striped garment. Al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf was the first person to cover it with silk." The Ka`bah remained the same way the Quraysh rebuilt it, until it was burned during the reign of `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr, after the year 60 H, at the end of the reign of Yazid bin Mu`awiyah. During that time, Ibn Az-Zubayr was besieged at Makkah. When it was burned, Ibn Az-Zubayr brought the Ka`bah down and built it upon the foundations of Ibrahim, including the Hijr in it. He also made an eastern door and a western door in the Ka`bah and placed them on ground level. He had heard his aunt `A'ishah, the Mother of the believers, narrate that the Messenger of Allah had wished that. The Ka`bah remained like this throughout his reign, until Al-Hajjaj killed Ibn Az-Zubayr and then rebuilt it the way it was before, by the order of `Abdul-Malik bin Marwan.

Muslim recorded that `Ata' said, "The House was burnt during the reign of Yazid bin Mu`awiyah, when the people of Ash-Sham raided Makkah. Ibn Az-Zubayr did not touch the House until the people came for Hajj, for he wanted to incite them against the people of Ash-Sham. He said to them, 'O people! Advise me regarding the Ka`bah, should we bring it down and rebuild it, or just repair the damage it sustained' Ibn `Abbas said, 'I have an opinion about this. You should rebuild the House the way it was when the people became Muslims. You should leave the stones that existed when the people became Muslims and when the Prophet was sent. ' Ibn Az-Zubayr said, 'If the house of one of them gets burned, he will not be satisfied, until he rebuilds it. How about Allah's House I will invoke my Lord for three days and will then implement what I decide.' When the three days had passed, he decided to bring the Ka`bah down. The people hesitated to bring it down, fearing that the first person to climb on the House would be struck
down. A man went on top of the House and threw some stones down, and when the people saw that no harm touched him, they started doing the same. They brought the House down to ground level. Ibn Az-Zubayr surrounded the site with curtains hanging from pillars, so that the House would be covered, until the building was erect. Ibn Az-Zubayr then said, `I heard 'A'ishah say that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَوْلَا أَنَّ النَّاسَ حَدِيثَ عَهْدُهُمْ بَكْفَر، وَلَيْسَ عِنْدَيْنَ مِنَ النَّفْقَةِ مَا يُقْوِيَّيْنِي عَلَى بِنَائِهِ، لَكَنْتُ أَدْخَلَتْ فِيَهُ مِنَ الْحِجْرِ خَمْسَةَ أَدْرَعَ، وَلَجَعَلَتْ لَهُ بَابًا يَدْخُلُ النَّاسُ مِنْهُ وَبَابًا يَخْرُجُونَ مِنْهُ»

(If it was not for the fact that the people have recently abandoned disbelief, and that I do not have enough money to spend on it, I would have included in the House five cubits from Al-Hijr and would have made a door for it that people could enter from, and another door that they could exit from.)

Ibn Az-Zubayr said, `I can spend on this job, and I do not fear the people.' So he added five cubits from the Hijr, which looked like a rear part for the House that people could clearly see. He then built the House and made it eighteen cubits high. He thought that the House was still short and added ten cubits in the front and built two doors in it, one as an entrance and another as an exit.

When Ibn Az-Zubayr was killed, Al-Hajjaj wrote to `Abdul-Malik bin Marwan asking him about the House and told him that Ibn Az-Zubayr made a rear section for the House. `Abdul-Malik wrote back, `We do not agree with Ibn Az-Zubayr's actions. As, for the Ka`bah's height, leave it as it is. As for what he added from the Hijr, bring it down, and build the House as it was before and close the door.' Therefore, Al-Hajjaj brought down the House and rebuilt it as it was." In his Sunan, An-Nasa'i collected the Hadith of the Prophet narrated from `A'ishah, not the whole story,

The correct Sunnah conformed to Ibn Az-Zubayr's actions, because this was what the Prophet wished he could do, but feared that the hearts of the people who recently became Muslim could not bear rebuilding the House. This Sunnah was not clear to `Abdul-Malik bin Marwan. Hence, when `Abdul-Malik realized that `A'ishah had narrated the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah on this subject, he said, "I wish we had left it as Ibn Az-Zubayr had made it." Muslim recorded that `Ubadyullah bin `Ubayd said that Al-Harith bin `Abdullah came to `Abdul-Malik bin Marwan during his reign. `Abdul-Malik said, `I did not think that Abu Khubayb (Ibn Az-Zubayr) heard from `A'ishah what he said he heard from her.' Al-Harith said, `Yes he did. I heard the Hadith from her.' `Abdul-Malik said, `You heard her say what' He said, `She said that the Messenger of Allah said,
«إنّ قومك استقصروا من بنيان البيت ولونا حدادته عهدهم بالشرك أعدت ما تركوا منه، فإن بدأ لقومك من بعدي أن يبنوه فهلミニ لأريك ما تركوه منه»

(Your people rebuilt the House smaller. Had it not been for the fact that your people are not far from the time of Shirk, I would add what was left outside of it. If your people afterwards think about rebuilding it, let me show you what they left out of it.) He showed her around seven cubits.'

One of the narrators of the Hadith, Al-Walid bin `Ata', added that the Prophet said,

وَلَجَعِلْتُ لَهَا بَابَيْنَ مَوْضُوعِيْنَ فِي الأَرْضِ: شَرْقِيَاً وَغَرْبِيَاً، وَهَلْ تَدْرِينَ لَمْ كَانَ قَوْمُكُ رَفَعُوا بَابَهَا؟

(I would have made two doors for the House on ground level, one eastern and one western. Do you know why your people raised its door above ground level) She said, 'No.' He said, (To allow only those whom they wanted to enter it. When a man whom they did not wish to enter the House climbed to the level of the door, they would push him down)

`Abdul-Malik then said, `You heard `A'ishah say this Hadith' He said, `Yes.' `Abdul-Malik said, `I wish I left it as it was.'

An Ethiopian will destroy the Ka`bah just before the Last Hour
The Two Sahihs recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

"يُحَرِّبُ الْكَعْبَةُ دُو السُّوَيْقَتْينِ مِنَ الحَبَّشَةِ"

(The Ka`bah will be destroyed by Dhus-Sawiqatayn (literally, a person with two lean legs) from Ethiopia.)

Also, Ibn `Abbas said that the Prophet said,

"كَانَيْ بِهِ أَسْوَدَ أَفْحَجَ يَقْلِعُهَا حَجَرًا حَجَرًا"

(As if I see him now: a black person with thin legs plucking the stones of the Ka`bah one after another.) Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith.

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal recorded in his Musnad that `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Al-`As said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say,

"يُحَرِّبُ الْكَعْبَةُ دُو السُّوَيْقَتْينِ مِنَ الحَبَّشَةِ وَيَسْلُبُهَا حَلْبَيْنِهَا وَيُجْرِدُهَا مِنْ كَسْوَتِهَا، وَكَانَيْ أَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ أَصْبَلَعَ وَأَقْبِدَعْ يُضْرِبُ عَلَيْهَا بِمِسْحَاتِهِ وَمَعْوَلَهُ"

(Dhus-Sawiqatayn from Ethiopia will destroy the Ka`bah and will loot its adornments and cover. It is as if I see him now: bald, with thin legs striking the Ka`bah with his ax.)

This will occur after the appearance of Gog and Magog people. Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri said that the Messenger of Allah said,

"لَيْحَجَّنَّ الْبَيْتَ وَلَيُعْتَمِرُنَّ بَعْدَ خُرُوجِ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجَ"

(There will be Hajj and `Umrah to the House after the appearance of Gog and Magog people.)

Al-Khalil's Supplication

Allah said that Ibrahim and Isma`il supplicated to Him,
(Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You and of our offspring a nation submissive unto You, and show us our Manask, and accept our repentance. Truly, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.)

Ibn Jarir said, "They meant by their supplication, 'Make us submit to Your command and obedience and not associate anyone with You in obedience or worship.' Also, 'Ikrimah commented on the Ayah,

(Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You)

"Allah said, 'I shall do that.'"

(And of our offspring a nation submissive unto You)

Allah said, 'I shall do that.'"

This supplication by Ibrahim and Isma`il is similar to what Allah informed us of about His believing servants,

(And those who say: 'Our Lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the Muttaqin) (25:74).

This type of supplication is allowed, because loving to have offspring who worship Allah alone without partners is a sign of complete love of Allah. This is why when Allah said to Ibrahim,
Verily, I am going to make you an Imam (a leader) for mankind (to follow you) Ibrahim said,

وَمَنْ دُرِّيَّتِيْ قَالَ لَا يَتَّالُ عِهْدِي الظَّلَمِينَ

("And of my offspring (to make leaders)." (Allah) said, "My covenant (prophethood) includes not the Zalimin (polytheists and wrongdoers)") which is explained by,

وَاجْتَبَبْنِي وَبَنِيْنَ أَنَّ نَعْبُدَ الأَصْلَامَ

(And keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols)

Muslim narrated in his Sahih that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

إِذَا مَاتَ أَبُو آدَمَ أَمْتَعَ عَمَلَهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ: صَدْقَةٌ جَارِيَةٌ أَوْ عِلْمٌ يَنْتَفِعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلْدٌ صَالِحٌ يَدْعُو لَهُ

(When the son of Adam dies, his deeds end except for three deeds: an ongoing charity, a knowledge that is being benefited from and a righteous son who supplicates (to Allah) for him.)

The Meaning of Manasik

Sa`id bin Mansur said that `Attab bin Bashir informed us from Khasif, from Mujahid who said, "The Prophet Ibrahim supplicated,

وَأَرَّنَا مَنَاسِكَنا

(and show us our Manasik) Jibril then came down, took him to the House and said, `Raise its foundations.' Ibrahim raised the House's foundations and completed the building. Jibril held Ibrahim's hand, led him to As-Safa and said, 'This is among the rituals of Allah.' He then took him to Al-Marwah and said, 'And this is among the rituals of Allah.' He then took him to Mina until when they reached the `Aqabah, they found Iblis standing next to a tree. Jibril said, "Say Takbir (Allah is the Great) and throw (pebbles) at him.' Ibrahim said the Takbir and threw (pebbles at) Iblis. Iblis moved to the middle Jamrah, and when Jibril and Ibrahim passed by him, Jibril said to Ibrahim, `Say Takbir and throw at him.' Ibrahim threw at him and said Takbir. The devious Iblis sought to add some evil acts to the rituals of Hajj, but he was unable to succeed. Jibril took Ibrahim's hand and led him to Al-Mas`ar Al-Haram and `Arafat and said to him, `Have you `Arafat (known, learned) what I showed you' thrice. Ibrahim said, `Yes I did.' Similar statements were reported from Abu Mijlaz and Qatadah. a
Ibrahim's Supplication that Allah sends the Prophet

Allah mentioned Ibrahim's supplication for the benefit of the people of the Sacred Area (to grant them security and provision), and it was perfected by invoking Allah to send a Messenger from his offspring. This accepted supplication, from Ibrahim, conformed with Allah's appointed destiny that Muhammad be sent as a Messenger among the Ummiyyin and to all non-Arabs, among the Jinns and mankind.

Hence, Ibrahim was the first person to mention the Prophet to the people. Ever since, Muhammad was known to the people, until the last Prophet was sent among the Children of Israel, Jesus the son of Mary, who mentioned Muhammad by name. Jesus addressed the Children of Israel saying,

(I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, confirming what is before me in the Tawrah, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad) (61:6)

This is why the Prophet said,

(The supplication of my father Ibrahim and the glad tidings brought forth by Jesus the son of Mary.)

The Prophet said,
(My mother saw a light that went out of her and radiated the palaces of Ash-Sham.)

It was said that the Prophet's mother saw this vision when she was pregnant with, narrated this vision to her people, and the story became popular among them. The light mentioned in the Hadith appeared in Ash-Sham (Greater Syria), testifying to what will later occur when the Prophet's religion will be firmly established in Ash-Sham area. This is why by the end of time, Ash-Sham will be a refuge for Islam and its people. Also, Jesus the son of Mary will descend in Ash-Sham, next to the eastern white minaret in Damascus. The Two Sahihs stated,

(There will always be a group of my Ummah who will be on the truth, undeterred by those who fail or oppose them, until the command of Allah comes while they are on this.)

Al-Bukhari added in his Sahih, (And they will reside in Ash-Sham.)

The Meaning of Al-Kitab wal-Hikmah

Allah said,

(وَيَعْلَمُهُمُ الْكِتَابُ) (and instruct them in the Book) meaning, Al-Qur'an,
(and Al-Hikmah) meaning, the Sunnah, as Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Abu Malik asserted. It was also said that `Al-Hikmah', means `comprehension in the religion', and both meanings are correct. `Ali bin Abi Talhah said, that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَيَزْكِيْهِمُّ)

(and purify them) means, "With the obedience of Allah."

(إنَّكَ أنتَ العَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)

(Verily, You are the Mighty, the Wise).

This Ayah stated that Allah is able to do anything, and nothing escapes His ability. He is Wise in His decisions, His actions, and He puts everything in its rightful place due to His perfect knowledge, wisdom and justice.

(وَمَنْ يَرَغُبُ عَنْ مَلَّةٍ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّاَّ مَنْ سَفَهٌ نَفْسَهُ
وَلَقَدْ اصْطَقَفْيَهُ فِي الدُّنِيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمَنَ
الصَّلِّحِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلَمْ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ
لِرَبِّ الْعَالِمِينَ - وَوَصَّى بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ
وَيَعْقُوبُ بِيْنَيْنِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَقَفَ لَكُمْ الدُّينَ فَلاَ
تَمْوَثُنَّ إِلَّاَّ وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(130. And who turns away from the religion of Ibrahim (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) except him who fools himself Truly, We chose him in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous). (131. When his Lord said to him, "Submit (i.e. be a Muslim)!") He said, "I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists)."
(132. And this (submission to Allah, Islam) was enjoined by Ibrahim (Abraham) upon his sons and by Ya`qub (Jacob) (saying), "O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except as Muslims."

**Only the Fools deviate from Ibrahim's Religion**

Allah refuted the disbelievers' innovations of associating others with Allah in defiance of the religion of Ibrahim, the leader of the upright. Ibrahim always singled out Allah in worship, with sincerity, and he did not call upon others besides Allah. He did not commit Shirk, even for an
instant. He disowned every other deity that was being worshipped instead of Allah and defied all his people in this regard. Prophet Ibrahim said,

(O my people! I am indeed free from all that you join as partners (in worship with Allah). Verily, I have turned my face towards Him Who has created the heavens and the earth Hanifa (Islamic Monotheism), and I am not of Al-Mushrikin.) (6:78-79). Also, Allah said,

(And remember) when Ibrahim said to his father and his people: “Verily, I am innocent of what you worship. Except Him (i.e. I worship none but Allah alone) Who did create me; and verily, He will guide me”) (43:26-27).

(And Ibrahim’s invoking (of Allah) for his father’s forgiveness was only because of a promise he (Ibrahim) had made to him (his father). But when it became clear to him (Ibrahim) that he (his father) was an enemy of Allah, he dissociated himself from him. Verily, Ibrahim was Awwah (one who invokes Allah with humility, glorifies Him and remembers Him much) and was forbearing) (9:114), and,
(Verily, Ibrahim was an Ummah (a leader having all the good qualities, or a nation), obedient to Allah, Hanif (i.e. to worship none but Allah), and he was not one of those who were Al-Mushrikin. (He was) thankful for His (Allah's) favors. He (Allah) chose him (as an intimate friend) and guided him to a straight path. And We gave him good in this world, and in the Hereafter he shall be of the righteous.) (16:120-122).

This is why Allah said here,

(وَمَن يَرْغَبُ عَن مَلَّةٍ إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(And who turns away from the religion of Ibrahim), meaning, abandons his path, way and method

(إِلَّا مِن سَفَةِ نَفْسَهُ)

(except him who fools himself) meaning, who commits injustice against himself by deviating from the truth, to wickedness. Such a person will be defying the path of he who was chosen in this life to be a true Imam, from the time he was young, until Allah chose him to be His Khalil, and who shall be among the successful in the Last Life. Is there anything more insane than deviating from this path and following the path of misguidance and deviation instead Is there more injustice than this Allah said,

(إِنَّ الشَّرْكَ لَظَلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed) (31:13).

Abu Al-`Aliyah and Qatadah said, "This Ayah (2:130) was revealed about the Jews who invented a practice that did not come from Allah and that defied the religion of Ibrahim." Allah's statement,
(Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifa (to worship none but Allah alone) and he was not of Al-Mushrikin. Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad) and those who have believed (Muslims). And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.) (3:67-68), testifies to this fact.

Allah said next,

(When his Lord said to him, "Submit (i.e. be a Muslim)" He said, "I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of the ` Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists)."

This Ayah indicates that Allah commanded Ibrahim to be sincere with Him and to abide and submit to Him; Ibrahim perfectly adhered to Allah's command. Allah's statement,

(And this (submission to Allah, Islam) was enjoined by Ibrahim upon his sons and by Ya`qub) means, Ibrahim commanded his offspring to follow this religion, that is, Islam, for Allah. Or, the Ayah might be referring to Ibrahim's words,

(I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of the ` Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists)).

This means that these Prophets loved these words so much that they preserved them until the time of death and advised their children to adhere to them after them. Similarly, Allah said,
(And he (Ibrahim) made it i.e. La ilaha illallah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone) a Word lasting among his offspring, (true Monotheism)) (43:28).

It might be that Ibrahim advised his children, including Jacob, Isaac's son, who were present. It appears, and Allah knows best, that Isaac was endowed with Jacob, during the lifetime of Ibrahim and Sarah, for the good news includes both of them in Allah's statement,

قَبِسَّرُتْهُمَا يَاسَحَقَ وَمِن وَرَأِهِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوْبَ

(But We gave her (Sarah) glad tidings of Ishaq (Isaac), and after Ishaq, of Ya`qub (Jacob)) (11:71).

Also, if Jacob was not alive then, there would be no use here in mentioning him specifically among Isaac's children. Also, Allah said in Surat Al-` Ankabut,

وَوَهِبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِ النُّبُوَّةِ وَالْكِتَابَ

(And We bestowed on him (Ibrahim), Ishaq and Ya`qub, and We ordained among his offspring prophethood and the Book.) (29:27), and,

وَوَهِبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ نَافِلَةً

(And We bestowed upon him Ishaq, and (a grandson) Ya`qub) (21:72), thus, indicating that this occurred during Ibrahim's lifetime. Also, Jacob built Bayt Al-Maqdis, as earlier books testified. The Two Sahihs recorded that Abu Dharr said, "I said, `O Messenger of Allah! Which Masjid was built first'? He said, (Al-Masjid Al-Haram (Al-Ka` bah).) I said, `Then'? He said, (Bayt Al- Maqdis.) I said, `How many years later'? He said, (Forty years.)" Further, the advice that Jacob gave to his children, which we will soon mention, testifies that Jacob was among those who received the advice mentioned in Ayat above (2:130-132).

Adhering to Tawhid until Death

Allah said,

يَبِينِيْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَقْفَى لَكُمْ الدِّينَ فَلا تَمْوَثُنَّ إِلَّاْ

(And anothem mu`limon)

(Saying), "O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except as Muslims.") meaning, perform righteous deeds during your lifetime and remain on this path, so that Allah will endow you with the favor of dying upon it. Usually, one dies upon the path that
he lived on and is resurrected according to what he died on. Allah, the Most Generous, helps those who seek to do good deeds to remain on the righteous path.

This by no means contradicts the authentic Hadith that says,

(Man might perform the works of the people of Paradise until only a span of outstretched arms or a cubit separates him from it, then the Book (destiny) takes precedence, and he performs the works of the people of the Fire and thus enters it. Also, man might perform the works of the people of the Fire until only a span of outstretched arms or a cubit separates him from the Fire, but the Book takes precedence and he performs the works of the people of Paradise and thus enters it.) Allah said, (92:5-10),

(As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him. And believes in Al-Husna. We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness). But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient. And belies Al-Husna (none has the right to be worshipped except Allah). We will make smooth for him the path for evil),
We were witnesses when death approached Ya`qub (Jacob). When he said unto his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We shall worship your Allah (God Allah) the Ilah of your fathers, Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma`il (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac), One Ilah, and to Him we submit (in Islam)."

That was a nation who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do.

Ya`qub's Will and Testament to His Children upon His Death

This Ayah contains Allah's criticism of the Arab pagans among the offspring of Isma`il as well as the disbelievers among the Children of Israel Jacob the son of Isaac, the son of Ibrahim. When death came to Jacob, he advised his children to worship Allah alone without partners. He said to them,

"What will you worship after me?" They said, "We shall worship your Ilah (God Allah) the Ilah of your fathers, Ibrahim, Isma`il, Ishaq,"

Mentioning Isma`il here is a figure of speech, because Isma`il is Jacob's uncle. An-Nahas said that the Arabs call the uncle a father, as Al-Qurtubi mentioned.

This Ayah is used as evidence that the grandfather is called a father and inherits, rather than the brothers (i.e. when his son dies), as Abu Bakr asserted, according to Al-Bukhari who narrated Abu Bakr's statement from Ibn `Abbas and Ibn Az-Zubayr. Al-Bukhari then commented that there are no opposing opinions regarding this subject. This is also the opinion of `A`ishah the Mother of the believers, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Tawus and `Ata`, Malik, Ash-Shaf`i and Ahmad said that the inheritance is divided between the grandfather and the brothers. It was reported that this was also the opinion of `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, bin Mas'ud, Zayd bin Thabit and several scholars among the Salaf and later generations.

The statement,
(One Ilah (God)) means, "We single Him out in divinity and do not associate anything or anyone with Him."

(And to Him we submit), in obedience meaning, obedient and submissiveness. Similarly, Allah said,

(While to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly. And to Him shall they all be returned) (3:83).

Indeed, Islam is the religion of all the Prophets, even if their respective laws differed. Allah said,

(And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We revealed to him (saying): La ilaha illa Ana none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah), so worship Me (alone and none else)) (21:25).

There are many other Ayat - and Hadiths - on this subject. For instance, the Prophet said,

(We, the Prophets, are brothers with different mothers, but the same religion.)

Allah said,

(That was a nation who has passed away) meaning, existed before your time,
(They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn).

This Ayah proclaims, Your relationship to the Prophets or righteous people among your ancestors will not benefit you, unless you perform good deeds that bring about you religious benefit. They have their deeds and you have yours,

(And you will not be asked of what they used to do)."

This is why a Hadith proclaims,

(Whoever was slowed on account of his deeds will not get any faster on account of his family lineage.)

(And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, then you will be guided.'') Allah's statement,

(Say (to them O Muhammad ), "Nay, (we follow) only the religion of Ibrahim, Hanif (Islamic Monotheism), and he was not of Al-Mushrikin (those who worshipped others along with Allah. )

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said that `Abdullah bin Suriya Al-A`war said to the Messenger of Allah, "The guidance is only what we (Jews) follow. Therefore, follow us, O Muhammad, and you will be rightly guided." Also, the Christians said similarly, so Allah revealed,

(And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, then you will be guided.") Allah's statement, 

(Say (to them O Muhammad ), "Nay, (we follow) only the religion of Ibrahim, Hanif (Islamic Monotheism) means, "We do not need the Judaism or Christianity that you call us to, rather,
(we follow) only the religion of Ibrahim, Hanif) meaning, on the straight path, as Muhammad bin Ka’b Al-Qurazi and `Isa bin Jariyah stated. Also, Abu Qilabah said, "The Hanif is what the Messengers, from beginning to end, believed in."

The Muslim believes in all that Allah revealed and all the Prophets

Allah directed His believing servants to believe in what He sent down to them through His Messenger Muhammad and in what was revealed to the previous Prophets in general. Some Prophets Allah mentioned by name, while He did not mention the names of many others. Allah directed the believers to refrain from differentiating between the Prophets and to believe in them all. They should avoid imitating whomever Allah described as,

(And wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers (by believing in Allah and disbelieving in His Messengers) saying, "We believe in some but reject others," and wish to adopt a way in between. They are in truth disbelievers) (4:150-151).
Al-Bukhari narrated that Abu Hurayrah said, "The People of the Book used to read the Torah in Hebrew and translate it into Arabic for the Muslims. The Messenger of Allah said,

أَمِنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا

(Do not believe the People of the Book, nor reject what they say. Rather, say, 'We believe in Allah and in what was sent down to us.')"

Also, Muslim, Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Mostly, the Messenger of Allah used to recite,

ءَعَمِنُّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا
(We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us) (2: 136), and,

ءَعَمِنُّا بِاللَّهِ وَآشْهَدْ بِأَنَا مُسَلِّمُونَ
(We believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims (i.e. we submit to Allah)) (3:52) during the two (voluntary) `Rak`at before Fajr."

Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` and Qatadah said, "Al-Asbat are the twelve sons of Jacob, and each one of them had an Ummah of people from his descendants. This is why they were called Al-Asbat." Al-Khalil bin Ahmad and others said, "Al-Asbat among the Children of Israel are just like the tribes among the Children of Isma`il." This means that the Asbat are the various tribes of the Children of Israel, among whom Allah sent several Prophets. Moses said to the Children of Israel,

إِذْ جَعَلْتُكُمْ أُمِّيِّمِينَ وُجِئْلُكُمْ مُلَكَوْكَ إِذْ جَعَلْتُكُمْ نَعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجَعَلْتُكُمْ رُسُلَ الْمُلُوكِ

(Remember the favor of Allah to you: when He made Prophets among you, made you kings) (5:20). Also, Allah said,

وَقَطَعَنَّهُمْ اثْنَيْنَى عَشْرَةً أَسْبَاطًا
(And We divided them into twelve tribes) (7:160).

Al-Qurtubi said, "Sbt is the group of people or a tribe all belonging to the same ancestors."
Qatadah said, "Allah commanded the believers to believe in Him and in all His Books and Messengers." Also, Sulayman bin Habib said, "We were commanded to believe in the (original) Torah and Injil, but not to implement them."

Allah said, if they, the disbelievers among the People of the Book and other disbelievers, believe in all of Allah's Books and Messengers and do not differentiate between any of them,

(فَإِنْ عَمِّنَوْاْ يَمِّلَ مَا عَمِّنَمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَّوْاْ وَإِنْ تَوَلُّوْاْ فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِيْقَاقٍ فَسِيْكَفَّيْكُهُمْ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ العَلِيمُ - صِبْغَةُ اللهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَبْدُونَ)

(137. So if they believe in the like of that which you believe then they are rightly guided; but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition. So Allah will suffice you against them. And He is the Hearer, the Knower.) (138. Our Sībghah (religion) is the Sībghah of Allah (Islam) and which Sībghah can be better than Allah's And we are His worshippers.)

Allah said, if they, the disbelievers among the People of the Book and other disbelievers, believe in all of Allah's Books and Messengers and do not differentiate between any of them,

(فَقَدْ اهْتَدَّوْاْ)

(then they are rightly guided) meaning, they would acquire the truth and be directed to it.

(وَإِنْ تَوَلُّوْاْ)

(but if they turn away) from truth to falsehood after proof had been presented to them,

(فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِيْقَاقٍ فَسِيْكَفَّيْكُهُمْ اللَّهُ)

(then they are only in opposition. So Allah will suffice you against them) meaning, Allah will aid the believers against them,

(وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ العَلِيمُ)

(And He is the Hearer, the Knower). Allah said,
(The Sibghah of Allah). Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas commented, "The religion of Allah."
This Tafsir was also reported of Mujahid, Abu Al-`Aliyah, `Ikrimah, Ibrahim, Al-Hasan, Qatadah,
Ad-Dahhak, `Abdullah bin Kathir, `Atiyah Al-Awfi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi and other
scholars. The Ayah,

(Allah's Fitrah (i.e. Allah's Islamic Monotheism)) (30:30) directs Muslims to, "Hold to it."

(139. Say (O Muhammad to the Jews and Christians), 'Dispute you with us about Allah while He
is our Lord and your Lord And we are to be rewarded for our deeds and you for your deeds. And
we are sincere to Him (i.e. we worship Him alone and none else, and we obey His orders).")
(140. Or say you that Ibrahim, Isma`il, Ishaq, Ya`qub and Al-A sbat, were Jews or Christians
Say, 'Do you know better or does Allah And who is more unjust than he who conceals the
testimony he has from Allah And Allah is not unaware of what you do.') (141. That was a nation
who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned, and you of what you
earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do.)

Allah directed His Prophet to pre-empt the arguments with the idolators:

(139. Say (O Muhammad to the Jews and Christians), 'Dispute you with us about Allah) meaning, 'Do
you dispute with us regarding the Oneness of Allah, obedience and submission to Him and in
avoiding His prohibitions,

(قل أتُحَاجِّنَا فِي اللَّهِ)
(while He is our Lord and your Lord) meaning, He has full control over us and you, and deserves the worship alone without partners.

(And we are to be rewarded for our deeds and you for your deeds) meaning, we disown you and what you worship, just as you disown us. Allah said in another Ayah,

(And if they belie you, say: “For me are my deeds and for you are your deeds! You are innocent of what I do, and I am innocent of what you do!”) (10:41), and,

(And they disputed with you (Muhammad) say: “I have submitted myself to Allah (in Islam), and so have) those who follow me”) (3:20). Allah said about Ibrahim,

(His people disputed with him. He said: “Do you dispute with me concerning Allah”) (6:80), and,

(Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord (Allah)) (2:258). He said in this honorable Ayah,

(And we are to be rewarded for our deeds and you for your deeds. And we are sincere to Him.) meaning, “We disown you just as you disown us.”
(And we are sincere to Him), in worship and submission.

Allah then criticized them in the claim that Ibrahim, the Prophets who came after him and the Asbat were following their religion, whether Judaism or Christianity. Allah said,

(قُلْ ءاَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمَّ الْلَّهِ)

(Say, "Do you know better or does Allah") meaning, Allah has the best knowledge and He stated that they were neither Jews, nor Christians. Similarly, Allah said in the Ayah,

(مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهْوَديًا وَلَا نَصْرَأَئِيًا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَقِيقًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ)

(Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifa (to worship none but Allah alone) and he was not of Al-Mushrikin) (3:67) and the following Ayat. Allah also said,

(وَمَنْ أُظْلِمْ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَدَةَ عِنْدَهُ مِنَ الْلَّهِ)

(And who is more unjust than he who conceals the testimony he has from Allah) 2:140. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, They used to recite the Book of Allah He sent to them that stated that the true religion is Islam and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Their Book also stated that Ibrahim, Isma'il, Ishaaq, Ya'qub and the tribes were neither Jews, nor Christians. They testified to these facts, yet hid them from the people. Allah's statement,

(وَمَا اللَّهُ يَغْفِلُ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(And Allah is not unaware of what you do), is a threat and a warning that His knowledge encompasses every one's deeds, and He shall award each accordingly. Allah then said,

(ذَلِكَ أَمَّةٌ قُدْ خَلَتْ)

(That was a nation who has passed away.) meaning, existed before you,
(They shall receive the reward of what they earned, and you of what you earn.) meaning, they bear their deeds while you bear yours,

(وَلَا تُسْلُكُوا عِمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(And you will not be asked of what they used to do) meaning, the fact that you are their relatives will not suffice, unless you imitate their good deeds. Further, do not be deceived by the fact that you are their descendants, unless you imitate them in obeying Allah's orders and following His Messengers who were sent as warners and bearers of good news. Indeed, whoever disbelieves in even one Prophet, will have disbelieved in all the Messengers, especially if one disbelieves in the master and Final Messenger from Allah, the Lord of the worlds, to all mankind and the Jinns. May Allah's peace and blessings be on Muhammad and the rest of Allah's Prophets.

(سِيَّقَوْلُ السَّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَهُمْ عَنْ قَبْلِهِمْ الْتَّيْنِ كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا فَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرُقُ وَالْمَغْرُبُ يَهْدِى مِنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرْطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ - وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلَنَّكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لَّتَتَكُونُوا شُهَداً عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيُكَونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الْتَّيْنِ كَنتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِتَعْلَمَ مِنْ يَتَبَعُ الرَّسُولِ ممَّن يَتَّقِلْبُ عَلَى عَقِبِهِ - وَإِنَّكَ لَكُبْرَةَ إِلَّا عَلَى الْذِّينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لَيْضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بالِتَّنَاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(142. The fools (idolators, hypocrites, and Jews) among the people will say: "What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah prayer direction (towards Jerusalem) to which they used to face in prayer." Say (O Muhammad): "To Allah belong both, east and the west. He guides whom He wills to the straight way.") (143. Thus We have made you true Muslims real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad and his Sunnah (legal ways), a Wasat (just and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy, difficult) except for those whom Allah guided. And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e., your prayers
offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is full of kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.)

**Changing the Qiblah Direction of the Prayer**

Imam Al-Bukhari reported that Al-Bara' bin `Azib narrated: "Allah's Messenger offered his prayers facing Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) for sixteen or seventeen months, but he wished that he could pray facing the Ka`bah (at Makkah). The first prayer which he offered (facing the Ka`bah) was the `Asr (Afternoon) prayer in the company of some people. Then one of those who had offered that prayer with him, went out and passed by some people in a mosque who were in the bowing position (in Ruku`) during their prayers (facing Jerusalem). He addressed them saying, 'By Allah, I bear witness that I have offered prayer with the Prophet facing Makkah (Ka`bah).' Hearing that, those people immediately changed their direction towards the House (Ka`bah) while still as they were (i.e., in the same bowing position). Some Muslims who offered prayer towards the previous Qiblah (Jerusalem) before it was changed towards the House (the Ka`bah in Makkah) had died or had been martyred, and we did not know what to say about them (regarding their prayers towards Jerusalem). Allah then revealed:

\[ \text{وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لَيْضِيعُ إِيَمَّانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالْنَّاسِ رَحِيمٌ} \]

(And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e., the prayers of those Muslims were valid)) (2:143)."

Al-Bukhari collected this narration, while Muslim collected it using another chain of narrators. Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Al-Bara' narrated: Allah's Messenger used to offer prayers towards Bayt Al-Maqdis (in Jerusalem), but would keep looking at the sky awaiting Allah's command (to change the Qiblah). Then Allah revealed:

\[ \text{قَدْ نَرَى تَعْلَبَ وَجَهْكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنْ تُولَّيْنَكَ قَبْلَةً تَرْضِيْهَا فَوْلَ وَجَهْكَ شَطْرُ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ} \]

(Verily, We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah).) (2:144)

A man from among the Muslims then said, "We wish we could know about those among us who died before the Qiblah was changed (i.e., towards Makkah) and also about our own prayers, that we had performed towards Bayt Al-Maqdis." Allah then revealed:

\[ \text{وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لَيْضِيعُ إِيَمَّانَكُمْ} \]
(And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost.) (2:143)

The fools among the people, meaning the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), said, "What made them change the former Qiblah that they used to face" Allah then revealed:

(سَيْقَوْلُ السُّفِهَاةُ مِنَ النَّاسِ)

(The fools (idolators, hypocrites, and Jews) among the people will say...) until the end of the Ayah.

`Ali bin Abu Talhah related that Ibn `Abbas said: When Allah's Messenger migrated to Al-Madinah, Allah commanded him to face Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). The Jews were delighted then. Allah's Messenger faced Jerusalem for over ten months. However, he liked (to offer prayer in the direction of) Prophet Ibrahim's Qibla (the Ka`bah in Makkah) and used to supplicate to Allah and kept looking up to the sky (awaiting Allah's command in this regard). Allah then revealed:

(قُولُوا وَجُهُوهَ كُمْ شَطْرَهَا)

(turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction.) meaning, its direction. The Jews did not like this change and said, "What made them change the Qiblah that they used to face (meaning Jerusalem)" Allah revealed:

(قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَسْتَقِيمِ وَالْمَغْرَبُ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ)

(Say (O Muhammad ): "To Allah belong both, east and the west. He guides whom He wills to the straight way.")

There are several other Ahadith on this subject. In summary, Allah's Messenger was commanded to face Bayt Al-Maqdis (during the prayer) and he used to offer prayer towards it in Makkah between the two corners (of Ka`bah), so that the Ka`bah would be between him and Bayt Al-Maqdis. When the Prophet migrated to Al-Madinah, this practice was no longer possible; then Allah commanded him to offer prayer towards Bayt Al-Maqdis, as Ibn Abbas and the majority of the scholars have stated.

Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih that the news (of the change of Qiblah) was conveyed to some of the Ansar while they were performing the `Asr (Afternoon) prayer towards Bayt Al-Maqdis, upon hearing that, they immediately changed their direction and faced the Ka`bah.

It is reported in the Sahihayn (Al-Bukhari Muslim) that Ibn `Umar narrated: While the people were in Quba` (Mosque) performing the Fajr (Dawn) prayer, a man came and said, "A (part of the) Qur'an was revealed tonight to Allah's Messenger and he was commanded to face the
Ka`bah. Therefore, face the Ka`bah. They were facing Ash-Sham, so they turned towards the Ka`bah.

These Hadiths prove that the Nasikh (a Text that abrogates a previous Text) only applies after one acquires knowledge of it, even if the Nasikh had already been revealed and announced. This is why the Companions mentioned above were not commanded to repeat the previous `Asr, Maghrib and `Isha prayers (although they had prayed them towards Jerusalem after Allah had changed the Qiblah). Allah knows best.

When the change of Qiblah (to Ka`bah in Makkah) occurred, those inflicted with hypocrisy and mistrust, and the disbelieving Jews, both were led astray from the right guidance and fell into confusion. They said:

ما وَلَّهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا

(What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah to which they used to face in prayer.)

They asked, "What is the matter with these people (Muslims) who one time face this direction (Jerusalem), and then face that direction (Makkah)?" Allah answered their questions when He stated:

قل لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرَقُ وَالْمَغْرُبُ

(Say (O Muhammad): "To Allah belong both, east and the west.) meaning, the command, the decision and the authority are for Allah Alone. Hence:

قَلْ يَمِينًا نُؤْلُوْا قَنُوْمَ وَجَهُ الَّلِّهِ

(...so wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces) there is the Face of Allah (and He is High above, over His Throne).) (2:115),

and:

لَيْسَ الْبَرُّ أَنْ نُؤْلُوا وَجُوْهِكُمْ قِبْلَ الْمَشْرَقِ

( It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is the one who believes in Allah.) (2:177) This statement means, the best act is to adhere to Allah's commands. Hence, wherever He commands us to face, we should face. Also, since obedience requires implementing Allah's commands, if He commands us every day to face different places, we are His servants and under His disposal, and we face whatever He orders us to face. Certainly, Allah's care and kindness towards His servant and Messenger, Muhammad, and certainly, his Ummah (Muslim nation) is profoundly great. Allah has guided
them to the Qiblah of (Prophet) Ibrahim -- Allah's Khalil (intimate friend). He has commanded them to face the Ka`bah, the most honorable house (of worship) on the face of the earth, which was built by Ibrahim Al-Khalil in the Name of Allah, the One without a partner. This is why Allah said afterwards:

(قل للهِ المَشْرِقُ وَالمَغْرِبُ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرْطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ)

(Say (O Muhammad): "To Allah belong both, east and the west. He guides whom He wills to the straight way.")

Imam Ahmad reported that `A'ishah (the Prophet's wife) said that Allah's Messenger said about the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians):

«إنّهُمْ لا يَحْسِدُونّا عَلَى شَيْءٍ كَمَا يَحْسِدُونّا عَلَى يَوْمِ الجُمُعةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا وَعَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا وَعَلَى قُوْلِنَا خَلْفَ الإِمَامِ: آمِينَ»

(They do not envy us for a matter more than they envy us for Jumu`ah (Friday) to which Allah has guided us and from which they were led astray; for the (true) Qiblah to which Allah has directed us and from which they were led astray; and for our saying `Amin' behind the Imam (leader of the prayer).)

The Virtues of Muhammad's Nation

Allah said:

(وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لَّتَكُونُوا شُهَداً عَلِى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلٰيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا)

(Thus We have made you true Muslims, a Wasat (just) (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness over you.)

Allah stated that He has changed our Qiblah to the Qiblah of Ibrahim and chose it for us so that He makes us the best nation ever. Hence, we will be the witnesses over the nations on the Day of Resurrection, for all of them will then agree concerning our virtue. The word Wasat in the
Ayah means the best and the most honored. Therefore, saying that (the Prophet's tribe) Quraysh is in the Wasat regarding Arab tribes and their areas, means the best. Similarly, saying that Allah's Messenger was in the Wasat of his people, means he was from the best subtribe. Also, 'Asr, the prayer that is described as 'Wusta' (a variation of the word Wasat), means the best prayer, as the authentic collections of Ahadith reported. Since Allah made this Ummah (Muslim nation) the Wasat, He has endowed her with the most complete legislation, the best Manhaj (way, method, etc.) and the clearest Madhhab (methodology, mannerism, etc). Allah said:

(He has chosen you (to convey His Message of Islamic Monotheism to mankind), and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship: it is the religion of your father Ibrahim. It is He (Allah) Who has named you Muslims both before and in this (the Qur'an), that the Messenger (Muhammad ) may be a witness over you and you be witnesses over mankind!) (22:78)

Moreover, Imam Ahmad reported that Abu Sa`id narrated: Allah's Messenger said:

(وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا)
قال: والوسط العدل، فتدعون قتشبهدون له بالبلاغ نم أشهد عليكم

(Nuh will be called on the Day of Resurrection and will be asked, `Have you conveyed (the Message)?` He will say, `Yes.` His people will be summoned and asked, `Has Nuh conveyed (the Message) to you?` They will say, `No warner came to us and no one (Prophet) was sent to us.' Nuh will be asked, `Who testifies for you?` He will say, `Muhammad and his Ummah.')

This is why Allah said:

(وكل ذلك جعلنكم أمم وسطا)

(Thus We have made you a Wasat nation.)

The Prophet said; (The Wasat means the `Adl (just). You will be summoned to testify that Nuh has conveyed (his Message), and I will attest to your testimony.)

It was also recorded by Al-Bukhari, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa’i and Ibn Majah.

Imam Ahmad also reported that Abu Sa`id Khudri narrated: Allah’s Messenger said:

بيحى النبي يوم القيامة ومعه الرجال وأكثر
(The Prophet would come on the Day of Resurrection with two or more people (his only following!), and his people would also be summoned and asked, `Has he (their Prophet) conveyed (the Message) to you' They would say, `No.' He would be asked, `Have you conveyed (the Message) to your people' He would say, `Yes.' He would be asked, `Who testifies for you' He would say, `Muhammad and his Ummah.' Muhammad and his Ummah would then be summoned and asked, `Has he conveyed (the Message) to his people' They would say, `Yes.' They would be asked, `Who told you that' They would say, `Our Prophet (Muhammad) came to us and told us that the Messengers have conveyed (their Messages).'

Hence Allah's statement:

(Thus We have made you a Wasat nation.)

He said, "(meaning) the `Adl,' (he then continued reciting the Ayah):

(Thus We have made you, a just (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness over you.)"

Furthermore, Imam Ahmad reported that Abul-Aswad narrated: I came to Al-Madinah and found that an epidemic had broken out that caused many fatalities. I sat next to `Umar bin Al-Khattab once when a funeral procession started and the people praised the dead person. `Umar said, "Wajabat (it will be recorded as such), Wajabat!" Then another funeral was brought forth and the people criticized the dead person. Again, `Umar said, "Wajabat." Abul-Aswad asked, "What is Wajabat, O Leader of the faithful" He said, "I said just like Allah's Messenger had said:
(Any Muslim for whom four testify that he was righteous, then Allah will enter him into Paradise.' We said, 'What about three' He said, 'And three.' We said, 'And two' He said, 'And two.' We did not ask him about (the testimony) of one (believing) person.)"

This was also recorded by Al-Bukhari, At-Tirmidhi, and An-Nasa'î.

**The Wisdom behind changing the Qiblah**

Allah then said:

(And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy, difficult) except for those whom Allah guided.)
Allah states thus: We have legislated for you, O Muhammad, facing Bayt Al-Maqdis at first and then changed it to the Ka‘bah so as to find who will follow and obey you and thus face whatever you face.

(...from those who would turn on their heels.) meaning, reverts from his religion. Allah then said:

(Indeed it was great (heavy, difficult))

The Ayah indicates that changing the Qiblah from Bayt Al-Maqdis to the Ka‘bah is heavy on the heart, except for whomever Allah has rightly guided their hearts, who believe in the truth of the Messenger with certainty and that whatever he was sent with is the truth without doubt. It is they who believe that Allah does what He wills, decides what He wills, commands His servants with what He wills, abrogates any of His commands that He wills, and that He has the perfect wisdom and the unequivocal proof in all this. (The attitude of the believers in this respect is) unlike those who have a disease in their hearts, to whom whenever a matter occurs, it causes doubts, just as this same matter adds faith and certainty to the believers. Similarly, Allah said:

(And whenever there comes down a Surah (chapter from the Qur’an), some of them (hypocrites) say: “Which of you has had his faith increased by it” As for those who believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice. But as for those in whose hearts is a disease (of doubt, disbelief and hypocrisy), it will add doubt and disbelief to their doubt and disbelief; and they die while they are disbelievers.) (9:124, 125)

and:

(وَتَنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شَقَاءً وَرَحْمَةً للَّمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظُّلُمَيْنَ إِلَّا حَسَارًا)
(And We send down of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe, and it increases the wrongdoers in nothing but loss.) (17:82)

Certainly, those who remained faithful to the Messenger, obeyed him and faced whatever Allah commanded them, without doubt or hesitation, were the leaders of the Companions. Some scholars stated that the Early Migrants (who migrated with the Prophet from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and Ansar (the residents of Al-Madinah who gave aid and refuge to both the Prophet and the Migrants) were those who offered prayers towards the two Qiblah (Bayt Al-Maqdis and then the Ka`bah). Al-Bukhari reported in the explanation of the Ayah (2:143) that Ibn `Umar narrated: While the people were performing the Fajr (Dawn) prayer in the Quba` Mosque, a man came and said, “Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet and he was ordered to face the Ka`bah. Therefore, face the Ka`bah.” They then faced the Ka`bah. Muslim also recorded it.

At-Tirmidhi added that they were performing Ruku` (bowing down in prayer), and then changed the direction (of the Qiblah) to the Ka`bah while still bowing down. Muslim reported this last narration from Anas. These Hadiths all indicate the perfect obedience the Companions had for Allah and His Messenger and their compliance with Allah's commandments, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Allah said:

(وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لَيْيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ)

(And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost.) meaning, the reward of your prayers towards Bayt Al-Maqdis before would not be lost with Allah. It is reported in Sahih that Abu Ishaq As-Sabi`y related that Bara` narrated: “The people asked about the matter of those who offered prayers towards Bayt Al-Maqdis and died (before the Qiblah was changed to Ka`bah). Allah revealed:

(وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لَيْيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ)

(And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost.)"

It was also recorded by At-Tirmidhi from Ibn `Abbas, and At-Tirmidhi graded it Sahih.

Ibn Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas narrated:

(وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لَيْيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ)

(And Allah would never make your faith to be lost.) entails: Your (prayer towards) the first Qiblah and your believing your Prophet and obeying him by facing the second Qiblah; He will grant you the rewards for all these acts. Indeed,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَعُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ)
(Truly, Allah is full of kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.)”

Furthermore, it is reported in the Sahih that Allah's Messenger saw a woman among the captives who was separated from her child. Whenever she found a boy (infant) among the captives, she would hold him close to her chest, as she was looking for her boy. When she found her child, she embraced him and gave him her breast to nurse. Allah's Messenger said:

"أثرون هذه طارةه ولدها في النار وهي تقدير
على أن لا تطرحه"

(Do you think that this woman would willingly throw her son in the fire) They said, "No, O Messenger of Allah!" He said, (By Allah! Allah is more merciful with His servants than this woman with her son.)

(قد نرى تقلب وجهك في السماء فضولينك قبيلة
ترضاها قول وجهك شطر المسجد الحرام
وحيت ما كنتم قولوا وجوهركم شطره وإن الذين
أولوا الكتب ليعلمون أن الحك من ربهم وما
الله بغفل عما يعملون)

(144. Verily, We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction. Certainly, the people who were given the Scripture (i.e., Jews and Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of the Ka'bah at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do).

The First Abrogation in the Qur'an was about the Qiblah

Ali bin Abu Talhah related that Ibn `Abbas narrated: The first abrogated part in the Qur'an was about the Qiblah. When Allah's Messenger migrated to Al-Madinah, the majority of its people were Jews, and Allah commanded him to face Bayt Al-Maqdis. The Jews were delighted then. Allah's Messenger faced it for ten and some months, but he liked to face the Qiblah of Ibrahim
(Ka`bah in Makkah). He used to supplicate to Allah and look up to the sky (awaiting Allah's command). Allah then revealed:

(Verily, We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's) face towards the heaven), until,

(turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction.)

The Jews did not like this ruling and said:

("What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah (prayer direction) to which they used to face in prayer." Say (O Muhammad), "To Allah belong both, east and the west." ) (2:142)

Allah said:

(. . .so wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces) there is the Face of Allah) (2:115),

and:

(And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger).) (2:143)

Is the Qiblah the Ka`bah itself or its General Direction
Al-Hakim related that `Ali bin Abu Talib said:

(قول وَجهَكْ شَطْرَ المَسْجِدِ الحَرَامِ)

(…so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah).) means its direction."

Al-Hakim then commented that the chain of this narration is authentic and that they (i.e., Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not include it in their collections.

This ruling concerning the Qiblah is also the opinion of Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and others. Allah's Statement:

(وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ قُوَّلُوا وَجُوْهَكُمْ شَطَّرَةُ)

(And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction) is a command from Allah to face the Ka`bah from wherever one is on the earth: the east, west, north or south. The exception is of the voluntary prayer (Nafi') while one is traveling, for one is allowed to offer it in any direction his body is facing, while his heart is intending the Ka`bah. Also, when the battle is raging, one is allowed to offer prayer, however he is able. Also, included are those who are not sure of the direction and offer prayer in the wrong direction, thinking that it is the direction of the Qiblah, because Allah does not burden a soul beyond what it can bear.

The Jews had Knowledge that the (Muslim) Qiblah would later be changed

Allah stated that:

(وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوْلِي الْكِتَابِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الحَقُّ مِن رَبِّهِمْ)

(Certainly, the people who were given the Scripture (i.e., Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of the Ka`bah at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord.)

This Ayah means: The Jews, who did not like that you change your Qiblah from Bayt Al-Maqdis, already knew that Allah will command you (O Muhammad) to face the Ka`bah. The Jews read in their Books their Prophets' description of Allah's Messenger and his Ummah, and that Allah has endowed and honored him with the complete and honorable legislation. Yet, the People of the Book deny these facts because of their envy, disbelief and rebellion. This is why Allah threatened them when He said:
(And Allah is not unaware of what they do.)

(And even if you were to bring to the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) all the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction), nor are you going to follow their Qiblah. And they will not follow each other's Qiblah. Verily, if you follow their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the wrongdoers.)

The Stubbornness and Disbelief of the Jews

Allah describes the Jews' disbelief, stubbornness and defiance of what they know of the truth of Allah's Messenger, that if the Prophet brought forward every proof to the truth of what he was sent with, they will never obey him or abandon following their desires. In another instance, Allah said:

(145. And even if you were to bring to the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) all the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction), nor are you going to follow their Qiblah. And they will not follow each other's Qiblah. Verily, if you follow their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the wrongdoers.)

(And Allah is not unaware of what they do.)

(145. And even if you were to bring to the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) all the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction), nor are you going to follow their Qiblah. And they will not follow each other's Qiblah. Verily, if you follow their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the wrongdoers.)
(And even if you were to bring to the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) all the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction)).

Allah's statement:

(وَمَا أَنتَ بِتَابِعٍ قَبْلَتِهِمْ)

(...nor are you going to follow their Qiblah), indicates the vigor with which Allah's Messenger implements what Allah commanded him. Allah's statement also indicates that as much as the Jews adhere to their opinions and desires, the Prophet adheres by Allah's commands, obeying Him and following what pleases Him, and that he would never adhere to their desires in any case. Hence, praying towards Bayt Al-Maqdis was not because it was the Qiblah of the Jews, but because Allah had commanded it. Allah then warns those who knowingly defy the truth, because the proof against those who know is stronger than against other people. This is why Allah said to His Messenger and his Ummah:

(وَلَئَنْ اتَّبَعْتُ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذَا لَمْ نَظْلَمِينَ)

(Verily, if you follow their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the wrongdoers.)

(الذِّينَ أَتَبَعُونَهُمْ اتَّبَعْتُمُ الْكِتَابَ ِبِعُرْفُونَهُ كَمَا يُعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ فَرْقَةً مِنْهُمْ لَا يَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ - ِالْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونُنَّ مِنَ المُمْتَرِينَ)

(146. Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognise him (Muhammad or the Ka`bah at Makkah) as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it i.e., the qualities of Muhammad which are written in the Tawrah and the Injil). (147. This is) the truth from your Lord. So be you not one of those who doubt).

The Jews know that the Prophet is True, but they hide the Truth

Allah states that the scholars of the People of the Scripture know the truth of what Allah's Messenger was sent with, just as one of them knows his own child, which is a parable that the Arabs use to describe what is very apparent. Similarly, in a Hadith, Allah's Messenger said to a man who had a youngster with him:
(Is this your son) He said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah! I testify to this fact." Allah's Messenger said:

«(Well, you would not transgress against him nor would he transgress against you.)

According to Al-Qurtubi, it was narrated that `Umar said to `Abdullah bin Salam (an Israelite scholar who became a Muslim), "Do you recognize Muhammad as you recognize your own son?" He replied, "Yes, and even more. The Honest One descended from heaven on the Honest One on the earth with his (i.e., Muhammad's) description and I recognized him, although I do not know anything about his mother's story."

Allah states next that although they had knowledge and certainty in the Prophet, they still:

(لِيَكُنُّمُونَ الْحَقَّ)

(conceal the truth.)

The Ayah indicates that they hide the truth from the people, about the Prophet, that they find in their Books,

(وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(while they know it.) Allah then strengthens the resolve of His Prophet and the believers and affirms that what the Prophet came with is the truth without doubt, saying:

(الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلاَ تَكُونُنَّ مِنَ المُمْتَرِينَ)

((This is) the truth from your Lord. So be you not one of those who doubt.)
(148. For every nation there is a direction to which they face (in their prayers). So hasten towards all that is good. Wheresoever you may be, Allah will bring you together (on the Day of Resurrection). Truly, Allah is able to do all things.)

Every Nation has a Qiblah

Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said:

(ولكل وجه هو مولياه فاستبقوا الخيرات أين ما تكونوا يأت بكم الله جمعا إن الله على كل شيء قدير)

(For every nation there is a direction to which they face (in their prayers))

"This talks about followers of the various religions. Hence, every nation and tribe has its own Qiblah that they choose, while Allah's appointed Qiblah is what the believers face."

Abul-`Aliyah said, "The Jew has a direction to which he faces (in the prayer). The Christian has a direction to which he faces. Allah has guided you, O (Muslim) Ummah, to a Qiblah which is the true Qiblah." This statement was also related to Mujahid, `Ata' Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Pabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi, and others.

This last Ayah is similar to what Allah said:

(لكل جعلنا منكم شريعة ومنهجا ولو شاء الله لجعلكم أممه وحدها ولكن ليلبلكم فى ما عانتم فاستقبقوا الخيرات إلى الله مرحعبكم جميعا)

(To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one nation, but that (He) may test you in what He has given you; so compete in good deeds. The return of you (all) is to Allah.) (5:48)

In the Ayah (2:148), Allah said:
(Wheresoever you may be, Allah will bring you together (on the Day of Resurrection). Truly, Allah is able to do all things.) meaning: He is able to gather you from the earth even if your bodies and flesh disintegrated and scattered.

(And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), that is indeed the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.) (150. And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards it (when you pray) so that men may have no argument against you except those of them that are wrongdoers, so fear them not, but fear Me! And so that I may complete My blessings on you and that you may be guided.)

Why was changing the Qiblah mentioned thrice

This is a third command from Allah to face Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque) from every part of the world (during prayer). It was said that Allah mentioned this ruling again here because it is connected to whatever is before and whatever is after it. Hence, Allah first said:
(Verily, We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qibla (prayer direction) that shall please you) (2:144), until:

وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الحَقُّ مِن رَبِّهِمْ وَمَآ لَلهُ بَعْفٌ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ

(Certainly, the people who were given the Scripture (i.e., Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of the Ka`bah at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do.) (2:144)

Allah mentioned in these Ayat His fulfillment of the Prophet's wish and ordered him to face the Qiblah that he liked and is pleased with. In the second command, Allah said:

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتُ فَوْلِ وَجِهْكُ شَطْرُ الْمَسْجِدِ الحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ للَّهِ لَحَقُّ مِن رَبِّكَ وَمَآ لَلَّهُ بَعْفٌ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ

(And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram that is indeed the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.)

Therefore, Allah states here that changing the Qiblah is also the truth from Him, thus upgrading the subject more than in the first Ayah, in which Allah agreed to what His Prophet had wished for. Thus Allah states that this is also the truth from Him that He likes and is pleased with. In the third command, Allah refutes the Jewish assertion that the Prophet faced their Qiblah, as they knew in their Books that the Prophet will later on be commanded to face the Qiblah of Ibrahim, the Ka`bah. The Arab disbelievers had no more argument concerning the Prophet's Qiblah after Allah commanded the Prophet to face the Qiblah of Ibrahim, which is more respected and honored, rather than the Qiblah of the Jews. The Arabs used to honor the Ka`bah and liked the fact that the Messenger was commanded to face it.

**The Wisdom behind abrogating the Previous Qiblah**

Allah said:

(لِيَنَالَّا يَكُونَ لِلْمَنْسَأَةِ عَلىٰ كُتْبٍ حُجَّةٍ)

(...so that men may have no argument against you)

Therefore, the People of the Book knew from the description of the Muslim Ummah that they would be ordered to face the Ka`bah. If the Muslims did not fit this description, the Jews would have used this fact against the Muslims. If the Muslims had remained on the Qiblah of
Bayt Al-Maqdis, which was also the Qiblah of the Jews, this fact could have been used as the basis of argument by the Jews against other people.

Allah's Statement:

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَّمُوا مِنْهُمْ)

(…except those of them that are wrongdoers,) indicates the Mushrikin (polytheists) of Quraysh. The reasoning of these unjust persons was the unsound statement: "This man (Muhammad) claims that he follows the religion of Ibrahim! Hence, if his facing Bayt Al-Maqdis was a part of the religion of Ibrahim, why did he change it" The answer to this question is that Allah has chosen His Prophet to face Bayt Al-Maqdis first for certain wisdom, and he obeyed Allah regarding this command. Then, Allah changed the Qiblah to the Qiblah of Ibrahim, which is the Ka'bah, and he also obeyed Allah in this command. He, obeys Allah in all cases and never engages in the defiance of Allah even for an instant, and his Ummah imitates him in this.

Allah said:

(فَلا تَحْشَوْهُمْ وَأَحْشَوْنِي)

(…so fear them not, but fear Me!) meaning: 'Do not fear the doubts that the unjust, stubborn persons raise and fear Me Alone.' Indeed, Allah Alone deserves to be feared.

Allah said:

(وَلَا تَمَّ الْعَمَّاتِ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(…so that I may complete My blessings on you.)

This Ayah relates to Allah's statement:

(إِنَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلِيَّمَ الصَّحَةِ)

(…so that men may have no argument against you), meaning: I will perfect My bounty on you by legislating for you to face the Ka'bah, so that the (Islamic) Shari'ah (law) is complete in every respect. Allah said:

(وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ)

(…that you may be guided.), meaning: 'To be directed and guided to what the nations have been led astray from, We have guided you to it and preferred you with it.' This is why this Ummah is the best and most honored nation ever.
(151. Similarly (to complete My blessings on you), We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad) of your own, reciting to you Our verses (the Qur'an) and purifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Qur'an) and the Hikmah (i.e., Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh jurisprudence), and teaching you that which you did not know.) (152. Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless favors on you) and never be ungrateful to Me.)

Muhammad's Prophecy is a Great Bounty from Allah

Allah reminds His believing servants with what He has endowed them with by sending Muhammad as a Messenger to them, reciting to them Allah's clear Ayat and purifying and cleansing them from the worst types of behavior, the ills of the souls and the acts of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic era). The Messenger also takes them away from the darkness (of disbelief) to the light (of faith) and teaches them the Book, the Qur'an, and the Hikmah (i.e., the wisdom), which is his Sunnah. He also teaches them what they knew not. During the time of Jahiliyyah, they used to utter foolish statements. Later on, and with the blessing of the Prophet's Message and the goodness of his prophecy, they were elevated to the status of the Awliya' (loyal friends of Allah) and the rank of the scholars. Hence, they acquired the deepest knowledge among the people, the most pious hearts, and the most truthful tongues. Allah said:

(151. Indeed, Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses (the Qur'an), and purifying them (from sins.).) (3:164)

Allah also criticized those who did not give this bounty its due consideration, when He said:

(152. Allah's blessings on you, and be grateful to Me {for My countless favors on you} and never be ungrateful to Me.)
(Have you not seen those who have changed the favors of Allah into disbelief (by denying Prophet Muhammad) and his Message of Islam), and caused their people to dwell in the house of destruction?) (14:28)

Ibn `Abbas commented, "Allah's favor means Muhammad." Therefore, Allah has commanded the believers to affirm this favor and to appreciate it by thanking and remembering Him:

(Qad Zuroni A'dkarum waAshkarou li wa lah Takfurun)

(Therefore, remember Me. I will remember you, and be grateful to Me, and never be ungrateful to Me.)

Mujahid said that Allah's statement:

(Kama Arsalnata Fikum Rasulola Manakum)

(Similarly (to complete My favor on you), We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad) of your own.)

means: Therefore, remember Me in gratitude to My favor.

Al-Hasan Al-Basri commented about Allah's statement:

(Qad Zuroni A'dkarum)

(Therefore remember Me. I will remember you), "Remember Me regarding what I have commanded you and I will remember you regarding what I have compelled Myself to do for your benefit (i.e., His rewards and forgiveness)."

An authentic Hadith states:

(Allah the Exalted said, `Whoever mentions Me to himself, then I will mention him to Myself; and whoever mentions Me in a gathering, I will mention him in a better gathering."

Imam Ahmad reported that Anas narrated that Allah's Messenger said:
(Allah the Exalted said, `O son of Adam! If you mention Me to yourself, I will mention you to Myself. If you mention Me in a gathering, I will mention you in a gathering of the angels (or said in a better gathering). If you draw closer to Me by a hand span, I will draw closer to you by forearm’s length. If you draw closer to Me by a forearm's length, I will draw closer to you by an arm’s length. And if you come to Me walking, I will come to you running).

Its chain is Sahih, it was recorded by Al-Bukhari. Allah said:

(وَاشْكُّرُوا لِيَ وَلَا تَكُفُّرُونَ)

(...and be grateful to Me (for My countless favors on you) and never be ungrateful to Me.)

In this Ayah, Allah commands that He be thanked and appreciated, and promises even more rewards for thanking Him. Allah said in another Ayah:

(وَإِذْ تَأْدَنَّ رَبُّكُمْ لَنِئَنْ شَكَرَتُمْ لأَزِيدْنَكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ)

(And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed: "If you give thanks (by accepting faith and worshipping none but Allah), I will give you more (of My blessings); but if you are thankless (i.e., disbelievers), verily, My punishment is indeed severe.)

Abu Raja' Al-Utaridi said: `Imran bin Husayn came by us once wearing a nice silken garment that we never saw him wear before or afterwards. He said, "Allah's Messenger said:
(Those whom Allah has favored with a bounty, then Allah likes to see the effect of His bounty on His creation), or he said, "on His servant" - according to Ruh (one of the narrators of the Hadith).

(153. O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salah (the prayer). Truly, Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient.) (154. And say not of those who are killed in the way of Allah, "They are dead." Nay, they are living, but you perceive (it) not.)

The Virtue of Patience and Prayer

After Allah commanded that He be appreciated, He ordained patience and prayer. It is a fact that the servant is either enjoying a bounty that he should be thankful for, or suffering a calamity that he should meet with patience. A Hadith states:

(Amazing is the believer, for whatever Allah decrees for him, it is better for him! If he is tested with a bounty, he is grateful for it and this is better for him; and if he is afflicted with a hardship, he is patient with it and this is better for him.)
Allah has stated that the best tools to help ease the effects of the afflictions are patience and prayer. Earlier we mentioned Allah’s statement:

(وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا أَخْشَعُونَ)

(And seek help in patience and As-Salah (the prayer) and truly, it is extremely heavy and hard except for Al-Khashi` in i.e., the true believers in Allah ) (2:45)

There are several types of Sabr patience: one for avoiding the prohibitions and sins, one for acts of worship and obedience. The second type carries more rewards than the first type. There is a third type of patience required in the face of the afflictions and hardships, which is mandatory, like repentance.

`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said, “Sabr has two parts: patience for the sake of Allah concerning what He is pleased with (i.e., acts of worship and obedience), even if it is hard on the heart and the body, and patience when avoiding what He dislikes, even if it is desired. Those who acquire these qualities will be among the patient persons whom Allah shall greet (when they meet Him in the Hereafter; refer to Surat Al-Ahzab 33:44), Allah willing.”

**The Life enjoyed by Martyrs**

Allah’s statement:

(وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا لَمَن يَقْتُلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٍ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٍ)

(And say not of those who are killed in the way of Allah, “They are dead.” Nay, they are living,) indicates that the martyrs are alive and receiving their sustenance.

Muslim reported in his Sahih:
(The souls of the martyrs are inside green birds and move about in Paradise wherever they wish. Then, they take refuge in lamps that are hanging under the Throne (of Allah). Your Lord looked at them and asked them, `What do you wish for?' They said, `What more could we wish for while You have favored us with what You have not favored any other of Your creation?' He repeated the question again. When they realize that they will be asked (until they answer), they said, `We wish that You send us back to the earthly life, so that we fight in Your cause until we are killed in Your cause again,' (because of what they enjoy of the rewards of martyrdom). The Lord then said, `I have written that they will not be returned to it (earthly life) again.)

Imam Ahmad reported that `Abdur-Rahman bin Ka`b bin Malik narrated from his father that Allah's Messenger said:

(The believer's soul is a bird that feeds on the trees of Paradise until Allah sends it back to its body when the person is resurrected.)

This Hadith includes all the believers in its general meaning. Thus, the fact that the Qur'an mentions the martyrs in particular in the above Ayah serves to honor, glorify and favor them (although the other believers share the rewards they enjoy).
(155. And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to As-Sabirin (the patient).) (156. Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return.") (157. They are those on whom are the Salawat (i.e., who are blessed and will be forgiven) from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His mercy, and it is they who are the guided ones.)

The Believer is Patient with the Affliction and thus gains a Reward

Allah informs us that He tests and tries His servants, just as He said in another Ayah:

(وَلَنُبْلُوْنَكُمْ حَتَّى نَعْلَمَ المُجَاهِدِينَ مِنكُمْ وَالصَّبِيرِينِ وَنَبْلُوْ أَخْبَرُكُمْ)  
(And surely, We shall try you till We test those who strive hard (for the cause of Allah) and As-Sabirin (the patient), and We shall test your facts (i.e., the one who is a liar, and the one who is truthful).) (47:31)

Hence, He tests them with the bounty sometimes and sometimes with the afflictions of fear and hunger. Allah said in another Ayah:

(فَأَدْأَقَّهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوُوْعِ وَالْخَوْفِ)  
(So Allah made it taste extreme of hunger (famine) and fear.) (16:112)

The frightened and the hungry persons show the effects of the affliction outwardly and this is why Allah has used here the word `Libas' (cover or clothes) of fear and hunger. In the Ayat above, Allah used the words:

(بِشَيْءِ مِنَ الخَوْفِ وَالْجُوُوْعِ)  
(with something of fear, hunger,) meaning, a little of each. Then (Allah said),
(loss of wealth,) meaning, some of the wealth will be destroyed,

(النفْس) (lives) meaning, losing friends, relatives and loved ones to death,

(الثمرات) (and fruits,) meaning, the gardens and the farms will not produce the usual or expected amounts. This is why Allah said next:

(وَبَشِّرُ الصَّابِرِينَ) (but give glad tidings to As-Sabirin (the patient).)

He then explained whom He meant by `the patient' whom He praised:

(الذَّينَ إِذَا أَصَبْتُهُمْ مَصِيبَةً قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَجَعُونَ) (Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return.") meaning, those who recite this statement to comfort themselves in the face of their loss, know that they belong to Allah and that He does what He wills with His servants. They also know that nothing and no deed, even if it was the weight of an atom, will be lost with Allah on the Day of Resurrection. These facts thus compel them to admit that they are Allah's servants and that their return will be to Him in the Hereafter.

This is why Allah said: t

(أُوْلَيْكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَتٌ مِنَ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ) (They are those on whom are the Salawat (i. e., who are blessed and will be forgiven) from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His mercy,) meaning, Allah's praise and mercy will be with them. Sa`id bin Jubayr added, "Meaning, safety from the torment."
(وَأَوَلَّيْكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ)
(and it is they who are the guided ones.) `Umar bin Al-Khattab commented: "What righteous things, and what a great heights.

(أَوَلَّيْكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَتُ مَنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ)
(They are those on whom are the Salawat from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His mercy) are the two righteous things.

(وَأَوَلَّيْكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ)
(and it is they who are the guided ones) are the heights."

The heights means more rewards, and these people will be awarded their rewards and more.

The Virtue of asserting that We all belong to Allah, during Afflictions

There are several Ahadith that mention the rewards of admitting that the return is to Allah by saying:

(إِنَّا لَلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَجِعُونَ)
("Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return.") when afflictions strike. For instance, Imam Ahmad reported that Umm Salamah narrated: Once, Abu Salamah came back after he was with Allah's Messenger and said: I heard Allah's Messenger recite a statement that made me delighted. He said:

"لا يُصِيبُ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مُصِيبَةً فَيِسْتَرْجَعُ عِبَّدَ مُصِيبَتِهِ ثُمَّ يُفْوِلُ: الْلَّهُمَّ أَجْرِنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي وأَخْلَفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا، إِنَّا فَعَلْنَا ذَلِكَ بِهِ"

(No Muslim is struck with an affliction and then says Istirja` when the affliction strikes, and then says: `O Allah! Reward me for my loss and give me what is better than it,' but Allah will do just that.) Umm Salamah said: So I memorized these words. When Abu Salamah died I said Istirja` and said: "O Allah! Compensate me for my loss and give me what is better than it." I then thought about it and said, "Who is better than Abu Salamah" When my `Iddah (the period
of time before the widow or divorced woman can remarry) finished, Allah's Messenger asked for permission to see me while I was dyeing a skin that I had. I washed my hands, gave him permission to enter and handed him a pillow, and he sat on it. He then asked me for marriage and when he finished his speech, I said, "O Messenger of Allah! It is not because I do not want you, but I am very jealous and I fear that you might experience some wrong mannerism from me for which Allah would punish me. I am old and have children." He said:

لا يَبْرِكْ الْأَمْرَيْنِ الْمَعَالَاتِ وَالْكُلُّيْنِ. حَيَّ الْرَّاسِيِّ الْبُيَّةِ أَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتْ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ، وَأَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتْ مِنَ الْمَلَامِسِ، فَخَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَصَافِي، وَأَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتِ مِنَ الْعَيَاشِ فَخَيْرٌ مِّنْ عِيَالِكَ عِيَالِيّ.

(As for the jealousy that you mentioned, Allah the Exalted will remove it from you. As for your being old as you mentioned, I have suffered what you have suffered. And for your having children, they are my children too.) She said, "I have surrendered to Allah's Messenger." Allah's Messenger married her and Umm Salamah said later, "Allah compensated me with who is better than Abu Salamah: Allah's Messenger." Muslim reported a shorter version of this Hadith.

(158. Verily, As-Safa and Al-Marwah are of the symbols of Allah. So it is not a sin on him who performs Hajj or `Umrah (pilgrimage) of the House to perform Tawaf between them. And whoever does good voluntarily, then verily, Allah is All-Recognizer, All-Knower).

The Meaning of "it is not a sin" in the Ayah

Imam Ahmad reported that `Urwah said that he asked `Aishah about what Allah stated:

لا يَبْرِكْ الْأَمْرَيْنِ الْمَعَالَاتِ وَالْكُلُّيْنِ. حَيَّ الْرَّاسِيِّ الْبُيَّةِ أَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتِ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ، وَأَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتِ مِنَ الْمَلَامِسِ، فَخَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَصَافِي، وَأَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتِ مِنَ الْعَيَاشِ فَخَيْرٌ مِّنْ عِيَالِكَ عِيَالِيّ.

(158. Verily, As-Safa and Al-Marwah are of the symbols of Allah. So it is not a sin on him who performs Hajj or `Umrah (pilgrimage) of the House to perform Tawaf between them. And whoever does good voluntarily, then verily, Allah is All-Recognizer, All-Knower).
Verily, As-Safa and Al-Marwah (two mountains in Makkah) are of the symbols of Allah. So it is not a sin on him who performs Hajj or Umrah (pilgrimage) of the House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) to perform the going (Tawaf) between them (As-Safa and Al-Marwah).) "By Allah! It is not a sin if someone did not perform Tawaf around them." `A'ishah said, "Worst is that which you said, O my nephew! If this is the meaning of it, it should have read, 'It is not a sin if one did not perform Tawaf around them.'" Rather, the Ayah was revealed regarding the Ansar, who before Islam, used to assume Ihlal (or Ihram for Hajj) in the area of Mushallal for their idol Manat that they used to worship. Those who assumed Ihlal for Manat, used to hesitate to perform Tawaf (going) between Mounts As-Safa and Al-Marwah. So they (during the Islamic era) asked Allah's Messenger about it, saying, 'O Messenger of Allah! During the time of Jahiliyyah, we used to hesitate to perform Tawaf between As-Safa and Al-Marwah.' Allah then revealed:

(Verily, As-Safa and Al-Marwah are of the symbols of Allah. So it is not a sin on him who performs Hajj or Umrah of the House to perform the going (Tawaf) between them.)" `A'ishah then said, "Allah's Messenger has made it the Sunnah to perform Tawaf between them (As-Safa and Al-Marwah), and thus, no one should abandon performing Tawaf between them." This Hadith is reported in the Sahihayn.

In another narration, Imam Az-Zuhri reported that `Urwah said: Later on I (`Urwah) told Abu Bakr bin `Abdur-Rahman bin Al-Harith bin Hisham (of `A'ishah's statement) and he said, "I have not heard of such information. However, I heard learned men saying that all the people, except those whom `A'ishah mentioned, said, 'Our Tawaf between these two hills is a practice of Jahiliyyah.' Some others among the Ansar said, 'We were commanded to perform Tawaf of the Ka'bah, but not between As-Safa and Al-Marwah.' So Allah revealed:

(Verily, As-Safa and Al-Marwah are of the symbols of Allah.)" Abu Bakr bin `Abdur-Rahman then said, "It seems that this verse was revealed concerning the two groups." Al-Bukhari collected a similar narration by Anas.

Ash-Sha`bi said, "Isaf (an idol) was on As-Safa while Na'ilah (an idol) was on Al-Marwah, and they used to touch (or kiss) them. After Islam came, they were hestitant about performing Tawaf between them. Thereafter, the Ayah (2:158 above) was revealed."

The Wisdom behind legislating Sa`i between As-Safa and Al-Marwah

Muslim recorded a long Hadith in his Sahih from Jabir, in which Allah's Messenger finished the Tawaf around the House, and then went back to the Rukn (pillar, i.e., the Black Stone) and kissed it. He then went out from the door near As-Safa while reciting:
(Verily, As-Safa and Al-Marwah are of the symbols of Allah.) The Prophet then said, (I start with what Allah has commanded me to start with meaning start the Sā`i (i.e., fast walking) from the As-Safa.) In another narration of An-Nasa‘i, the Prophet said, (Start with what Allah has started with (i.e., As-Safa).)

Imam Ahmad reported that Habibah bint Abu Tajrah said, "I saw Allah’s Messenger performing Tawaf between As-Safa and Al-Marwah, while the people were in front of him and he was behind them walking in Sā`i. I saw his garment twisted around his knees because of the fast walking in Sā`i (he was performing) and he was reciting:

»اسْعَوْاْ ۖفَإِنَّ اللَّهُ كَتَبَ عَلِيكُمْ السَّعَيِّ.«

(Perform Sā`i, for Allah has prescribed Sā`i on you.)"

This Hadith was used as a proof for the fact that Sā`i is a Rukn of Hajj. It was also said that Sā`i is Wajib, and not a Rukn of Hajj and that if one does not perform it by mistake or by intention, he could expiate the shortcoming with Damm. Allah has stated that Tawaf between As-Safa and Al-Marwah is among the symbols of Allah, meaning, among the acts that Allah legislated during the Hajj for Prophet Ibrahim.

Earlier we mentioned the Hadith by Ibn `Abbas that the origin of Tawaf comes from the Tawaf of Hajar (Prophet Ibrahim's wife), between As-Safa and Al-Marwah seeking water for her son (Isma`il) Ibrahim had left them in Makkah, where there was no habitation for her. When Hajar feared that her son would die, she stood up and begged Allah for His help and kept going back and forth in that blessed area between As-Safa and Al-Marwah. She was humble, fearful, frightened and meek before Allah. Allah answered her prayers, relieved her of her loneliness, ended her dilemma and made the well of Zamzam bring forth its water for her, which is:

»طَعَامُ طَعْمٍ، وَشَيْقَاءٌ سَقُمٍ.«

(A tasty (or nutritional) food and a remedy for the illness.)

Therefore, whoever performs Sā`i between As-Safa and Al-Marwah should remember his meekness, humbleness and need for Allah to guide his heart, lead his affairs to success and forgive his sins. He should also want Allah to eliminate his shortcomings and errors and to guide him to the straight path. He should ask Allah to keep him firm on this path until he meets death, and to change his situation from that of sin and errors to that of perfection and being forgiven, --- the same providence which was provided to Hajar.

Allah then states:

(وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا)
(And whoever does good voluntarily.)

It was said that the Ayah describes performing Tawaf more than seven times, it was also said that it refers to voluntary `Umrah or Hajj. It was also said that it means volunteering to do good works in general, as Ar-Razi has stated. The third opinion was attributed to Al-Hasan Al-Basri. Allah knows best.

Allah states:

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(...then verily, Allah is All-Recognizer, All-Knower.) meaning, Allah's reward is immense for the little deed, and He knows about the sufficiency of the reward. Hence, He will not award insufficient rewards to anyone. Indeed:

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَظْلِمُ مِنْ نَفْسٍ مِّنْهُ مَعْمًٍ دَرَءَةً وَإِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ حَسَنَةً يُضِعْفِهَا وَيُؤُوْئُثُ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا)

(Surely, Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom, but if there is any good (done), He doubles it, and gives from Him a great reward.) (4:40)

(159. Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance, which We have sent down, after We have made it clear for the People in the Book, they are the ones cursed by
Allah and cursed by the cursers.) (160. Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed). These, I will accept their repentance. And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.) (161. Verily, those who disbelieve, and die while they are disbelievers, it is they on whom is the curse of Allah and of the angels and of mankind, combined.) (162. They will abide therein (under the curse in Hell), their punishment will neither be lightened nor will they be reprieved).

The Eternal Curse for Those Who hide Religious Commandments

These Ayat sternly warn against those who hide the clear signs that the Messengers were sent with which guide to the correct path and beneficial guidance for the hearts, after Allah has made such aspects clear for His servants through the Books that He revealed to His Messengers. Abu Al-` Aliyah said that these Ayat, "were revealed about the People of the Scriptur who hid the description of Muhammad ." Allah then states that everything curses such people for this evil act. Certainly, just as everything asks for forgiveness for the scholar, even the fish in the sea and the bird in the air, then those who hide knowledge are cursed by Allah and by the cursers. A Hadith in the Musnad, narrated through several chains of narrators, that strengthens the overall judgment of the Hadith, states that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

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من سئل عن علم فكتمه، لجاع يوم القيامة
بلجأ من النار
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(Whoever was asked about knowledge that one has, but he hid it, then a bridle made of fire will be tied around his mouth on the Day of Resurrection.)

It is also recorded by Al-Bukhari that Abu Hurayrah said, "If it was not for an Ayah in Allah's Book, I would not have narrated a Hadith for anyone:

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إن الذين يكتمون ما أنزلنا من البيوت والهدى
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(Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance, which We have sent down.)"

Mujahid said, "When the earth is struck by drought, the animals say, 'This is because of the sinners among the Children of Adam. May Allah curse the sinners among the Children of Adam.'"

Abu Al-` Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah said that

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ويلعنهم اللعنة
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(and cursed by the cursers) means that the angels and the believers will curse them. Moreover, a Hadith states that everything, including the fish in the sea, asks for forgiveness for the
scholars. The Ayah (2:159 above) states that those who hide the knowledge will be cursed, (in this life and) on the Day of Resurrection, by Allah, the angels, all humanity, and those who curse (including the animals) each in its own distinct way. Allah knows best.

From this punishment, Allah excluded all who repent to Him:

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصَلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُوا)

(Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed).)

This Ayah refers to those who regret what they have been doing and correct their behavior and, thus, explain to the people what they have been hiding.

(فَأُوْلَئِكَ أَنْتَوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنَا النَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(These, I will accept their repentance. And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.)

This Ayah also indicates that those who used to call to innovation, or even disbelief, and repent to Allah, then Allah will forgive them. Allah afterwards states that those who disbelieve in Him and remain in this state until they die, then:

(أُوْلَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لعَنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالملِّيْكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ)

(it is they on whom is the curse of Allah and of the angels and of mankind, combined. They will abide therein (under the curse in Hell).)

Therefore, they will suffer the eternal curse until the Day of Resurrection and after that in the fire of Jahannam, where,

(لا يَخْفَفَ عَنْهُمْ العَذَابُ)

(Their punishment will neither be lightened)

Hence, the torment will not be decreased for them,
(nor will they be reprieved.)

The torment will not be changed or tempered for even an hour. Rather, it is continuous and eternal. We seek refuge with Allah from this evil end.

**Cursing the Disbelievers is allowed**

There is no disagreement that it is lawful to curse the disbelievers. `Umar bin Al-Khattab and the Imams after him used to curse the disbelievers in their Qunut (a type of supplication) during the prayer and otherwise. As for cursing a specific disbeliever, some scholars stated that it is not allowed to curse him, because we do not know how Allah will make his end. Others said that it is allowed to curse individual disbelievers. For proof, they mention the story about the man who was brought to be punished repeatedly for drinking (alcohol), a man said, "May Allah curse him! He is being brought repeatedly (to be flogged for drinking)." Allah's Messenger said:

» لا تَلْعَنْهَا قَلِيلًا يُحِبُّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولُهُ(Do not curse him, for he loves Allah and His Messenger).

This Hadith indicates that it is allowed to curse those who do not love Allah and His Messenger. Allah knows best.

وَإِلَهُ وَحِيدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْرَّحْمَنُ (وَإِلَهُمْ إِلَهٌ وَحِيدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْرَّحْمَنُ) (163. And your Ilah (God) is One Ilah (God Allah), La ilaha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.)

In this Ayah, Allah mentions that He is the only deity, and that He has no partners or equals. He is Allah, the One and Only, the Sustainer, and there is no deity worthy of worship except Him. He is the Most Gracious Ar-Rahman, the Most Merciful Ar-Rahim. We explained the meanings of these two Names in the beginning of Surat Al-Fatiha. Shahr bin Hawshab reported that Asma' bint Yazid bin As-Sakan narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

اسمُ اللَّهِ الأَعْظَمُ فِي هَاتِنَ السَّلْطَاتِينَ (Allah's Greatest Name is contained in these two Ayat):
(And your Ilah (God) is One Ilah (God Allah), La ilaha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.) and:

(الم - ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى للمتقين)

(Alif-Lam-Mim. Allah! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), Al-Haiyul-Qaiyum (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.) (3:1, 2)"

Then Allah mentions some of the proof that He is alone as the deity, that He is the One who created the heavens and the earth and all of the various creatures between them, all of which testify to His Oneness. Allah said:

(إن في خلق السموات والأرض واحتبلف الليل والنهار والملك اللتي تجري في البحر بما ينفع الناس وما أنزل الله من السماء من ماء فاحيا بيه الأرض بعد موتها وبت فيها من كل دابة وتصريف الريح والسحاب المسحرين بين السماء والأرض لأيات لقوم يعقلون)

(164. Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, and the ships which sail through the sea with that which is of use to mankind, and the water (rain) which Allah sends down from the sky and makes the earth alive therewith after its death, and the moving (living) creatures of all kinds that He has scattered therein, and in the veering of winds and clouds which are held between the sky and the earth, are indeed Ayat (proofs, evidences, signs, etc.) for people of understanding.)

The Proofs for Tawhid

Allah said:
(Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth...)

Therefore, the sky, with its height, intricate design, vastness, the heavenly objects in orbit, and this earth, with its density, its lowlands, mountains, seas, deserts, valleys, and other structures, and beneficial things that it has. Allah continues:

(وَاَختَلَفَ الَّيْلُ وَالَّيْلُ)

(...and in the alternation of night and day.)

This (the night) comes and then goes followed by the other (the day) which does not delay for even an instant, just as Allah said:

(لاَ الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغَيْ لِهَا أَنْ تَذْرَكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلاَ الَّيْلُ سَابِقُ الْقَمَرَ وَكُلُّ فِي فَلَكٍ يُسْبَحُونَ)

(It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. They all float, each in an orbit.) (36:40)

Sometimes, the day grows shorter and the night longer, and sometimes vice versa, one takes from the length of the other. Similarly Allah said:

(يُولِجُ الَّيْلِ فِي الْيَوْمِ وَيُولِجُ الْيَوْمِ فِي الَّيْلِ)

(Allah merges the night into the day, and He merges the day into the night) (57:6) meaning, He extends the length of one from the other and vice versa. Allah then continues:

(وَالْفُلُوكَ الَّتِيْنَ تَجْرُرَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ)

(....and the ships which sail through the sea with that which is of use to mankind.)

Shaping the sea in this manner, so that it is able to carry ships from one shore to another, so people benefit from what the other region has, and export what they have to them and vice versa.

Allah then continues:
(وَمَا أنزل الله مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَاهَا بِالأَرْضِ بَعْدَ مُوْتِهَا)

(...and the water (rain) which Allah sends down from the sky and makes the earth alive therewith after its death), which is similar to Allah's statement:

(وَعَادِيَةٌ لَّهُمُ الأَرْضُ المِّيْتَةِ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَحْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبَّا فَمِينهُ يَأْكُلُونَ)

(And a sign for them is the dead land. We give it life, and We bring forth from it grains, so that they eat thereof.) (36:33), until:

(وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(which they know not.) (36:36)

Allah continues:

(وَبَتَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلْ دَابَّةٍ)

(and the moving (living) creatures of all kinds that He has scattered therein,) meaning, in various shapes, colors, uses and sizes, whether small or large. Allah knows all that, sustains it, and nothing is concealed from Him. Similarly, Allah said:

(وَمَا مِن دَابَّةٍ فِي الأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رَزِقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقْرَرَهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا كُلُّ فِي كُتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ)

(And no moving (living) creature is there on earth but its provision is due from Allah. And He knows its dwelling place and its deposit (in the uterus or grave). All is in a Clear Book (Al-Lawh Al-Mahfuz the Book of Decrees with Allah).) (11:6)
Sometimes, the wind brings mercy and sometimes torment. Sometimes it brings the good news of the clouds that follow it, sometimes it leads the clouds, herding them, scattering them or directing them. Sometimes, the wind comes from the north (the northern wind), and sometimes from the south, sometimes from the east, and striking the front of the Ka`bah, sometimes from the west, striking its back. There are many books about the wind rain, stars and the regulations related to them, but here is not the place to elaborate on that, and Allah knows best.

Allah continues:

(...and clouds which are held between the sky and the earth,)

The clouds run between the sky and the earth to wherever Allah wills of lands and areas.

Allah said next:

(...are indeed Ayat for people of understanding,) meaning, all these things are clear signs that testify to Allah's Oneness. Similarly, Allah said:

(Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted are You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.") (3:190, 191)
(165. And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe, love Allah more (than anything else). If only, those who do wrong could see, when they will see the torment, that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment.) (166. When those who were followed disown (declare themselves innocent of) those who followed (them), and they see the torment, then all their relations will be cut off from them). (167. And those who followed will say: "If only we had one more chance to return (to the worldly life), we would disown (declare ourselves as innocent from) them as they have disowned (declared themselves as innocent from) us. " Thus Allah will show them their deeds as regrets for them. And they will never get out of the Fire.)

The Condition of the Polytheists in this Life and the Hereafter

In these Ayat, Allah mentions the condition of the polytheists in this life and their destination in the Hereafter. They appointed equals and rivals with Allah, worshipping them along with Allah and loving them, just as they love Allah. However, Allah is the only deity worthy of worship. Who has neither rival nor opponent nor partner. It is reported in the Sahihayn that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said: I said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is the greatest sin" He said:

«أَنْ تَجْعَلَ لَهُ نِدًا وَهُوَ خَلْقُكَ»

(To appoint a rival to Allah while He Alone has created you.)

Allah said:
(But those who believe, love Allah more (than anything else))

Because these believers love Allah, know His greatness, revere Him, believe in His Oneness, then they do not associate anything or anyone with Him in the worship. Rather, they worship Him Alone, depend on Him and they seek help from Him for each and every need.

Then, Allah warns those who commit Shirk,

(If only, those who do wrong could see, when they will see the torment, that all power belongs to Allah.) if these people knew what they will face and the terrible punishment they are to suffer because of their disbelief and Shirk (polytheism), then they would shun the deviation that they live by.

Allah mentions their false beliefs in their idols, and that those they followed will declare their innocence of them. Allah said:

(When those who were followed disown (declare themselves innocent of) those who followed (them).) the angels, whom they used to claim that they worshipped, declare their innocence of them in the Hereafter, saying:

("Glorified be You! You are our Wali (Lord) instead of them. Nay, but they used to worship the Jinn; most of them were believers in them.") (34:4)
The Jinn will also disown the disbelievers who worshipped them, and they will reject that worship. Allah said:

(وَمَنْ أَضْلَى مِمَّنْ يَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَا يُسْتَجِبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَاءِهِمْ غَفُولُونَ - وَإِذَا حُشِّرَ النَّاسُ كَانَوْا لَهُمْ أُعْدَاءً وَكَانُوا بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَفِيرِينَ)

(And who is more astray than one who calls on (invokes) besides Allah, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection, and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them And when mankind are gathered (on the Day of Resurrection), they (false deities) will become their enemies and will deny their worshipping.) (46:5, 6) Allah said:

(وَاتَّخَدُوْا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عَالِهَةً لَّيُكُونُوا لَهُمْ عَزًا)

(كَلَّا سَيَكِفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًا)

(And they have taken (for worship) alihah (gods) besides Allah, that they might give them honor, power and glory (and also protect them from Allah' punishment). Nay, but they (the so-called gods) will deny their worship of them, and become opponents to them (on the Day of Resurrection).) (19:81, 82) Prophet Ibrahim said to his people:

(إِنَّمَا اتَّخَدَتْنَ مَنْ دُونَ اللَّهِ أَوْتَنَا مَوَدَّةً بَيْنَكُمْ فِي الحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُفُّرُ بَعْضُكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً وَمَأْوَاْكُمْ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ)

(You have taken (for worship) idols instead of Allah. The love between you is only in the life of this world, but on the Day of Resurrection, you shall disown each other, and curse each other, and your abode will be the Fire, and you shall have no helper.) (29:25) Allah said:
(But if you could see when the Zalimun (polytheists and wrongdoers) will be made to stand before their Lord, how they will cast the (blaming) word one to another! Those who were deemed weak will say to those who were arrogant: "Had it not been for you, we should certainly have been believers!" And those who were arrogant will say to those who were deemed weak: "Did we keep you back from guidance after it had come to you Nay, but you were Mujrimin (polytheists, sinners, disbelievers, criminals)." Those who were deemed weak will say to those who were arrogant: "Nay, but it was your plotting by night and day, when you ordered us to disbelieve in Allah and set up rivals to Him!" And each of them (parties) will conceal their own regrets (for disobeying Allah during this worldly life), when they behold the torment. And We shall put iron collars round the necks of those who disbelieved. Are they requited aught except what they used to do) (34:31-33) Allah said:

(وَقَالَ الشَّيَاطِنُ لِمَا فَضَّلَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَّكُمْ وَعَدَّ الْحَقَّ وَوَعَدَّكُمْ فَأُحْلِقْتُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِيٍّ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَنٍ إِلَّاً أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ قَاتِجَبْتُمْ لِيٍّ فَلاَ تَلُومُونِى وَلَوْمًا أَنفِسُكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمَصْرَحْكُمْ)
(And Shaytan (Satan) will say when the matter has been decided: "Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, and you responded to me. So blame me not, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I deny your former act in associating me (Satan) as a partner with Allah (by obeying me in the life of the world). Verily, there is a painful torment for the Zalimin (polytheists and wrongdoers).) (14:22)

Allah then said:

(وَرَأُوا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقْطَعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأُسَبَّابُ)

(...and they see the torment, then all their relations will be cut off from them.) meaning, when they see Allah's torment, their power and means of salvation are all cut off, and they will have no way of making amends, nor will they find a way of escape from the Fire. 'Ata' reported that Ibn `Abbas said about:

(وَتَقْطَعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأُسَبَّابُ)

(then all their relations will be cut off from them.) "meaning the friendship." Mujahid reported a similar statement in another narration by Ibn Abu Najih.

Allah said:

(وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَنا كَرَهَةٌ فَتَبَرَّعْنَا مِنْهُمْ)

(And those who followed will say: "If only we had one more chance to return (to the worldly life), we would disown (declare ourselves as innocent from) them as they have disowned (declared themselves as innocent from) us.")

This Ayah means: 'If we only had a chance to go back to the life so that we could disown them (their idols, leaders, etc.) shun their worship, ignore them and worship Allah Alone instead.' But they utter a lie in this regard, because if they were given the chance to go back, they would only return to what they were prohibited from doing, just as Allah said. This is why Allah said:
(Thus Allah will show them their deeds as regrets for them.) meaning, their works will vanish and disappear. Similarly, Allah said:

(And We shall turn to whatever deeds they (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) did, and We shall make such deeds as scattered floating particles of dust.) (25:23)

Allah also said:

(The parable of those who disbelieved in their Lord is that their works are as ashes, on which the wind blows furiously on a stormy day.) (14:18), and:

(As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water.) (24:39)

This is why Allah said at the end of the Ayah 2:167 above

(And they will never get out of the Fire.)
(168. O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth, and follow not the footsteps of Shaytan (Satan). Verily, he is to you an open enemy.) (169. He (Satan) commands you only what is evil and Fahsha' (sinful), and that you should say about Allah what you know not.)

The Order to eat the Lawful Things, and the Prohibition of following the Footsteps of Shaytan

After Allah stated that there is no deity worthy of worship except Him and that He Alone created the creation, He stated that He is the Sustainer for all His creation, and He mentioned a favor that He granted them; He has allowed them to eat any of the pure lawful things on the earth that do not cause harm to the body or the mind. He also forbade them from following the footsteps of Shaytan, meaning his ways and methods with which he misguides his followers, like prohibiting the Bahirah (a she-camel whose milk was spared for the idols and nobody was allowed to milk it), or Sa’ibah (a she-camel let loose for free pasture for the idols and nothing was allowed to be carried on it), or a Wasilah (a she-camel set free for idols because it has given birth to a she-camel at its first delivery and then again gives birth to a she-camel at its second delivery), and all of the other things that Shaytan made attractive to them during the time of Jahiliyyah. Muslim recorded: Iyad bin Himar saying that Allah's Messenger said that Allah the Exalted says,

"قلو: أن كل مال منحته عبادي فهو لهم حالاً، وفيه وإنني خلقته عبادي حنفاءً، فجاءتهم الشياطين فاجتالتهم عن دينهم، وحرمتم عليهم ما أحلت لهـم"  

('Every type of wealth I have endowed My servants is allowed for them...' (until), 'I have created My servants Hunafa' (pure or upright), but the devils came to them and led them astray from their (true) religion and prohibited them from what I allowed for them. ')

Allah said:

(إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدْوَٰ مُُبِينَ)  

(...he is to you an open enemy.)
warning against Satan. Allah said in another instance:

(Surely, Shaytan is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire.) (35:6), and:

(Will you then take him (Iblis) and his offspring as protectors and helpers rather than Me while they are enemies to you What an evil is the exchange for the Zalimīn (polytheists, and wrongdoers, etc).) (18:50)

Qatadah and As-Suddi commented on what Allah said:

(...and follow not the footsteps of Shaytan (Satan)):

Every act of disobedience to Allah is among the footsteps of Satan.

` Abd bin Humayd reported that Ibn ` Abbas said: "Any vow or oath that one makes while angry, is among the footsteps of Shaytan and its expiation is that of the vow. " Allah's statement:

(He (Satan) commands you only what is evil and Fahsha (sinful), and that you should say about Allah what you know not.)

The verse means: 'Your enemy, Satan, commands you to commit evil acts and what is worse than that, such as adultery and so forth. He commands you to commit what is even worse, that is, saying about Allah without knowledge.' So this includes every innovator and disbeliever.
(170) When it is said to them: "Follow what Allah has sent down." They say: "Nay! We shall follow what we found our fathers following." (Would they do that!) even though their fathers did not understand anything nor were they guided) (171) And the example of those who disbelieve is as that of him who shouts to those (flock of sheep) that hear nothing but calls and cries. (They are) deaf, dumb and blind. So they do not understand.

The Polytheist imitates Other Polytheists

Allah states that if the disbelievers and polytheists are called to follow what Allah has revealed to His Messenger and abandon the practices of misguidance and ignorance that they indulge in, they will say, "Rather. We shall follow what we found our fathers following," meaning, worshipping the idols and the false deities. Allah criticized their reasoning:

("Would they do that!) even though their fathers), meaning, those whom they follow and whose practices they imitate, and:

(...did not understand anything nor were they guided) meaning, they had no sound understanding or guidance. Ibn Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said that this was revealed about a group of Jews whom Allah's Messenger called to Islam, but they refused, saying, "Rather, we shall follow what we found our forefathers following." So Allah revealed this Ayah (2:170) above.

The Disbeliever is just like an Animal

Allah then made a parable of the disbelievers, just as He said in another Ayah:
(For those who believe not in the Hereafter is an evil description.) (16:60)

Similarly, Allah said here (2:171 above)

(And the example of those who disbelieve...) meaning, in their injustice, misguidance and ignorance, they are just like wandering animals, not understanding what they are told; if the shepherd heralds them or calls them to what benefits them, they would not understand what is actually being said to them, for they only hear unintelligible sounds. This is what is reported from Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, `Ata', Al-Hasan, Qatadah, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

(They are deaf, dumb, and blind.) means, they are deaf, as they do not hear the truth; mute, as they do not utter it; and blind, as they do not see or recognize its path and way.

(So they do not understand.) means, they do not comprehend or understand anything.

(172. O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allah, if it is indeed He Whom you worship). (173. He has forbidden you only the Maitah (dead animals), and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for other than Allah. But if one is forced by necessity without willful disobedience nor transgressing due limits, then there is no sin on him. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)
The Command to eat Pure Things and the Explanation of the Prohibited Things

Allah commands His believing servants to eat from the pure things that He has created for them and to thank Him for it, if they are truly His servants. Eating from pure sources is a cause for the acceptance of supplications and acts of worship, just as eating from impure sources prevents the acceptance of supplications and acts of worship, as mentioned in a Hadith recorded by Imam Ahmad, that Abu Hurayrah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَيَّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ، لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا، وَإِنَّ اللهُ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أُمِرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، فَقَالَ:»

(يَايُها الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا)

إِنَّهُمْ ذُكِرَ الْرِّجْلُ يُطِلِّبُ السَّقرَ أَشْعَثُ أَغْبَرُ يمُدُّ يَدِيهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ: يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ، وَمَطَعْمُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَشْرِبُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَلْبِسُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَغَدِّيَ بالحَرَامِ فَأَنَّى يُسِتَجِبُ لَذَلِكَ؟

(O people! Allah is Tayyib (Pure and Good) and only accepts that which is Tayyib. Allah has indeed commanded the believers with what He has commanded the Messengers, for He said: (O you Messengers! Eat of the Tayyibat and do righteous deeds. Verily, I am well-acquainted with what you do) (23:51), and: (O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with) He then mentioned a man, (who is engaged in a long journey, whose hair is untidy and who is covered in dust, he raises his hands to the sky, and says, `O Lord! O Lord!'
Yet, his food is from the unlawful, his drink is from the unlawful, his clothes are from the unlawful, and he was nourished by the unlawful, so how can it (his supplication) be accepted"

It was also recorded by Muslim and At-Tirmidhi

After Allah mentioned how He has blessed His creatures by providing them with provisions, and after commanding them to eat from the pure things that He has provided them, He then stated that He has not prohibited anything for them, except dead animals. Dead animals are those that die before being slaughtered; whether they die by strangling, a violent blow, a headlong fall, the goring of horns or by being partly eaten by a wild animal. Dead animals of the sea are excluded from this ruling, as is explained later, Allah willing, as Allah said:

(Lawful to you is (the pursuit of) watergame and its use for food) (5:96), and because of the Hadith about the whale recorded in the Sahih. The Musnad, Al-Muwatta' and the Sunan recorded the Prophet saying about the sea:

(Its water is pure and its dead are permissible.)

Ash-Shafi`i, Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and Ad-Daraqutni reported that Ibn `Umar said that the Prophet said:

(We have been allowed two dead things and two bloody things: fish and locusts; and liver and spleen).

We will mention this subject again in Surat Al-Ma'idah (chapter 5 in the Qur'an), In sha' Allah (if Allah wills).

Issue: According to Ash-Shafi`i and other scholars, milk and eggs that are inside dead unslaughtered animals are not pure, because they are part of the dead animal. In one narration from him, Malik said that they are pure themselves, but become impure because of their location. Similarly, there is a difference of opinion over the cheeses (made with the milk) of dead animals. The popular view of the scholars is that it is impure, although they mentioned the fact that the Companions ate from the cheeses made by the Magians (fire worshippers). Hence, Al-Qurtubi commented: "Since only a small part of the dead animal is mixed with it, then it is permissible, because a minute amount of impurity does not matter if it is mixed with a large amount of liquid." Ibn Majah reported that Salman said that Allah's Messenger was asked about butter, cheese and fur. He said:
The allowed is what Allah has allowed in His Book and the prohibited is what Allah has prohibited in His Book. What He has not mentioned is a part of what He has pardoned.

Allah has prohibited eating the meat of swine, whether slaughtered or not, and this includes its fat, either because it is implied, or because the term La'm includes that, or by analogy. Similarly prohibited are offerings to other than Allah, that is what was slaughtered in a name other than His, be it for monuments, idols, divination, or the other practices of the time of Jahiliyyah. Al-Qurtubi mentioned that `Aishah was asked about what non-Muslims slaughter for their feasts and then offer some of it as gifts for Muslims. She said, "Do not eat from what has been slaughtered for that day, (or feast) but eat from their vegetables."

The Prohibited is Allowed in Cases of Emergency

Then Allah permitted eating these things when needed for survival or when there are no permissible types of food available. Allah said:

(فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ)

(But if one is forced by necessity without willful disobedience nor transgressing due limits), meaning, without transgression or overstepping the limits,

(فَلَا إِنَّمَ اهْتَمَ عَلَيْهِ)

(...then there is no sin on him.) meaning, if one eats such items, for,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

Mujahid said, "If one is forced by necessity without willful disobedience nor transgressing the set limits. For example, if he didn't, then he would have to resort to highway robbery, rising against the rulers, or some other kinds of disobedience to Allah, then the permission applies to him. If one does so transgressing the limits, or continually, or out of disobedience to Allah, then the permission does not apply to him even if he is in dire need." The same was reported from Sa'id bin Jubayr. Sa'id and Muqatil bin Hayyan are reported to have said that without willful disobedience means, "Without believing that it is permissible." It was reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah:
(without willful disobedience nor transgressing) saying, "Without willful disobedience means eating the dead animal and not continuing to do so. Qatadah said:

(when the lawful is available.)

Issue: When one in dire straits finds both dead animals, and foods belong to other people which he could get without risking the loss of his hands or causing harm, then it is not allowed for him to eat the dead animals. Ibn Majah reported that `Abbad bin Shurahbil Al-Ghubari said, "One year we suffered from famine. I came to Al-Madinah and entered a garden. I took some grain that I cleaned, and ate, then I left some of it in my garment. The owner of the garden came, roughed me up and took possession of my garment. I then went to Allah's Messenger and told him what had happened. He said to the man:

«ما أطعمته إذ كان جائعًا أو ساغبًا ولا علمته إذ كان جاهلًا»

(You have not fed him when he was hungry - or he said starving - nor have you taught him if he was ignorant.)

The Prophet commanded him to return `Abbad's garment to him, and to offer him a Wasq (around 180 kilograms) - or a half Wasq - of food

This has a sufficiently strong chain of narrators and there are many other witnessing narrations to support it, such as the Hadith that `Amr bin Shu'ayb narrated from his father that his grandfather said: Allah's Messenger was asked about the hanging clusters of dates. He said:

«من أصاب منه من ذي حاجة به فيه غير متخذه حلبته فلما شيء علية»

(There is no harm for whoever takes some of it in his mouth for a necessity without putting it in his garment.)

Muqatil bin Hayyan commented on:
(...then there is no sin on him. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) "For what is eaten out of necessity," Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "Allah is pardoning for what has been eaten of the unlawful, and Merciful in that He allowed the prohibited during times of necessity." Masruq said, "Whoever is in dire need, but does not eat or drink until he dies, he will enter the Fire." This indicates that eating dead animals for those who are in need of it for survival is not only permissible but required.

(174. Verily, those who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book, and purchase a small gain therewith (of worldly things), they eat into their bellies nothing but fire. Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor purify them, and theirs will be a painful torment). (175. Those are they who have purchased error at the price of guidance, and torment at the price of forgiveness. So how bold they are (for evil deeds which will push them) to the Fire). (176. That is because Allah has sent down the Book (the Qur'an) in truth. And verily, those who disputed as regards the Book are far away in opposition).

Criticizing the Jews for concealing what Allah revealed

Allah said:

(إنَّ الَّذين يَكْنُمُون مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ)

(Verily, those who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book.) Meaning the Jews who concealed their Book's descriptions of Muhammad, all of which testify to his truth as a Messenger and a Prophet. They concealed this information so that they would not lose
authority and the position that they had with the Arabs, where they would bring them gifts, 
and honor them. The cursed Jews feared that if they announced what they know about 
Muhammad, then the people would abandon them and follow him. So they hid the truth so 
that they may retain the little that they were getting, and they sold their souls for this little 
profit. They preferred the little that they gained over guidance and following the truth, 
believing in the Messenger and having faith in what Allah was sent him with. Therefore, they 
have profited failure and loss in this life and the Hereafter.

As for this world, Allah made the truth about His Messenger known anyway, by the clear signs 
and the unequivocal proofs. Thereafter, those whom the Jews feared would follow the Prophet 
, believed in him and followed him anyway, and so they became his supporters against them. 
Thus, the Jews earned anger on top of the wrath that they already had earned before, and 
Allah criticized them again many times in His Book. For instance, Allah said in this Ayah (2:174 
above):

(إنَّ الَّذينَ يَكْثِمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الكِتَابِ 
وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(Verily, those who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book, and purchase a small gain 
therewith (of worldly things).) meaning, the joys and delights of this earthly life. Allah said:

(أوَلَكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بَطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ)

(...they eat into their bellies nothing but fire,) meaning, whatever they eat in return for hiding 
the truth, will turn into a raging fire in their stomachs on the Day of Resurrection.

Similarly, Allah said:

(إنَّ الَّذينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَلَ الْيَتِيمَيْنَ ظُلْماً إِنَّمَا 
يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بَطُونِهِمْ نَاراً وَسَيَصُلُّونَ سَعِيراً)

(Verily, those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only fire into their 
bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire!) (4:10)

Also, reported in an authentic Hadith is that Allah's Messenger said:

«الَّذِي يَأْكُلُ أَوْ يَشْرَبُ فِي آنيةِ الدَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ 
إِنَّمَا يُجَرَّرُ فِي بَطْنِهِ نَارٌ جَهَّمٌ»
(Those who eat or drink in golden or silver plates are filling their stomachs with the fire of Jahannam (Hell).)

Allah said:

(وَلَا يَكْنِمُوا اللَّهُ يُومَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَلَا يُزْكِيْهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor purify them, and theirs will be a painful torment.)

This is because Allah is furious with them for concealing the truth. They thus deserve Allah's anger, so Allah will not look at them or purify them, meaning that He will not praise them but will cause them to taste a severe torment. Then, Allah said about them:

(أُولِئِكَ الَّذِينَ أشْتَرَوْا الضَّلَّلَةَ بِالْهَدَى)

(Those are they who have purchased error for guidance.)

Hence, they opposed the guidance, that is, not announcing the Prophet's description they find in their Books, the news about his prophecy and the good news of his coming which the previous Prophets proclaimed, as well as following and believing in him. Instead, they preferred misguidance by denying him, rejecting him and concealing his descriptions that were mentioned in their Books. Allah said:

(وَالعَذَابَ بِالمَغْفِرَةٍ)

(...and torment at the price of forgiveness,) meaning, they preferred torment over forgiveness due to the sins they have committed. Allah then said:

(فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ)

(So how bold they are (for evil deeds which will push them) to the Fire.)

Allah states that they will suffer such severe, painful torment that those who see them will be amazed at how they could bear the tremendous punishment, torture and pain that they will suffer. We seek refuge with Allah from this evil end. RAllah's Statement:

(ذَلِكَ بَأْنَ الَّلَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالحَقِّ)
(That is because Allah has sent down the Book (the Qur'an) in truth. ) means, they deserve this painful torment because Allah has revealed Books to His Messenger Muhammad, and the Prophets before him, and these revelations bring about truth and expose falsehood. Yet, they took Allah's signs for mockery. Their Books ordered them to announce the truth and to spread the knowledge, but instead, they defied the knowledge and rejected it. This Final Messenger Muhammad called them to Allah, commanded them to work righteousness and forbade them from committing evil. Yet, they rejected, denied and defied him and hid the truth that they knew about him. They, thus, mocked the Ayat that Allah revealed to His Messengers, and this is why they deserved the torment and the punishment. This is why Allah said here (2:176):

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِى الْكِتَابِ لَفِى شَفَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ)

(That is because Allah has sent down the Book (the Qur'an) in truth. And verily, those who disputed about the Book are far away in opposition.)

(لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُولُوا وَجْهَهُمْ قَبْلَ المَشْرُقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ عَامَنَ بَاللَّهِ وَيَوْمَ الْيَومِ الآخِرِ وَالْمَلِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيَّةِ وَعَاتِيَ الْمَالِ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذِو الْقَرْبَى وَالْيَتِيمَى وَالْمُسَكِّينِ وَأَبْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الْرَّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلْوَةَ وَعَاتِي الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْفِونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَهَدُوا وَالسَّافِرِينَ فِي الْبَابَاءَسَاءَ وَالضَّرَّاءَ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسَ أولِيْكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وأُولِيْكَ هُمُ المُتَّقُونَ)

(177. It is not Birr that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west; but Birr is the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to Al-Masakin (the poor), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set servants free, performs As-Salah (Iqamat-As-Salah), and gives the Zakah, and who fulfill their covenant when they make it, and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting (during the battles). Such are the people of the truth and they are Al-Muttaqun (the pious).)
Al-Birr (Piety, Righteousness)

This Ayah contains many great wisdoms, encompassing rulings and correct beliefs.

As for the explanation of this Ayah, Allah first commanded the believers to face Bayt Al-Maqdis, and then to face the Ka’bah during the prayer. This change was difficult for some of the People of the Book, and even for some Muslims. Then Allah sent revelation which clarified the wisdom behind this command, that is, obedience to Allah, adhering to His commands, facing wherever He commands facing, and implementing whatever He legislates, that is the objective. This is Birr, Taqwa and complete faith. Facing the east or the west does not necessitate righteousness or obedience, unless it is legislated by Allah. This is why Allah said:

"ليس البر أن نولوا وجههم قبلاً الشرق والمغرب ولكن البر من عامن بالله وأيامه الآخر" 

(It is not Birr that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Birr is the one who believes in Allah and the Last Day.)

Similarly, Allah said about the sacrifices:

"لن ينال الله لحومها ولا دماؤها ولكن يناله التقوى منكم" 

(It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is the piety from you that reaches Him.) (22:37)

Abu Al-` Aliyah said, “The Jews used to face the west for their Qiblah, while the Christians used to face the east for their Qiblah. So Allah said:

"ليس البر أن نولوا وجههم قبلاً الشرق والمغرب" 

(It is not Birr that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers)) (2: 177) meaning, “this is faith, and its essence requires implementation.” Similar was reported from Al-Hasan and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Ath-Thawri recited:
(but Birr is the one who believes in Allah,) and said that what follows are the types of Birr. He has said the truth. Certainly, those who acquire the qualities mentioned in the Ayah will have indeed embraced all aspects of Islam and implemented all types of righteousness; believing in Allah, that He is the only God worthy of worship, and believing in the angels the emissaries between Allah and His Messengers.

The 'Books' are the Divinely revealed Books from Allah to the Prophets, which were finalized by the most honorable Book (the Qur'an). The Qur'an supercedes all previous Books, it mentions all types of righteousness, and the way to happiness in this life and the Hereafter. The Qur'an abrogates all previous Books and testifies to all of Allah's Prophets, from the first Prophet to the Final Prophet, Muhammad, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them all.

Allah's statement:

(...and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it,) refers to those who give money away while desiring it and loving it. It is recorded in the Sahihayn that Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said:

«أفضل صدقة أن تصدّق وأنت صحيح
شحيح، تأمل الغنى وتخشى الفقر.»

(The best charity is when you give it away while still healthy and thrifty, hoping to get rich and fearing poverty.)

Allah said:

(ويطعمون الطعام على حبّه مسكيناً ويتيماء
وأسيراً - إنّما تطعمكم لوجّه الله لا نريد منكم
جزاءً ولا شكرًا.) (76:8, 9)

and:
(By no means shall you attain Birr unless you spend of that which you love.) (3:92) Allah's statement:

(...and give them preference over themselves even though they were in need of that) (59:9) refers to a higher category and status, as the people mentioned here give away what they need, while those mentioned in the previous Ayat give away what they covet (but not necessarily need).

Allah's statement:

(the kinsfolk) refers to man's relatives, who have more rights than anyone else to one's charity, as the Hadith supports:

(Sadaqah (i.e., charity) given to the poor is a charity, while the Sadaqah given to the relatives is both Sadaqah and Siyah (nurturing relations), for they are the most deserving of you and your kindness and charity).

Allah has commanded kindness to the relatives in many places in the Qur'an.

(to the orphans) The orphans are children who have none to look after them, having lost their fathers while they are still young, weak and unable to find their own sustenance since they have not reached the age of work and adolescence. 'Abdur-Razzaq reported that 'Ali said that the Prophet said:
(and to Al-Masakin) The Miskin is the person who does not have enough food, clothing, or he has no dwelling. So the Miskin should be granted the provisions to sustain him enough so that he can acquire his needs. In the Sahihayn it is recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«ليَسَ المَسْكِينُ يُهْدَى الطَّوَافِ الذِّي تَرْدُّهُ النَّمْرَةُ واللَّقَمَةُ واللُّقَمَانِ، وَلَكِنَّ المَسْكِينُ الذِّي لاَ يَجِدُ عَنْيًا يُغْنِيهُ وَلَا يَقْطَنُ لهُ فيَتَصَدَّقُ عَلَيْهِ»

(The Miskin is not the person who roams around, and whose need is met by one or two dates or one or two bites. Rather, the Miskin is he who does not have what is sufficient, and to whom the people do not pay attention and, thus, do not give him from the charity.)

(وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ)

(and to the wayfarer) is the needy traveler who runs out of money and should, thus, be granted whatever amount that helps him to go back to his land. Such is the case with whoever intends to go on a permissible journey, he is given what he needs for his journey and back. The guests are included in this category. `Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that `Abbas said, "Ibn As-Sabil (wayfarer) is the guest who is hosted by Muslims." Furthermore, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Ja`far Al-Baqir, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Muqatil bin Hayyan said similarly.

(وَالسَّائِلِينَ)

(and to those who ask) refers to those who beg people and are thus given a part of the Zakah and general charity.

(وَفِي الرَّقَابِ)

(and to set servants free) These are the servants who seek to free themselves, but cannot find enough money to buy their freedom. We will mention several of these categories and types under the Tafsir of the Ayah on Sadaqah in Surat Bara'ah chapter 9 in the Qur'an , In sha' Allah.

Allah's statement:
(وَأَقَامُ الصلَّوَةَ)

(performs As-Salah (Iqamat-As-Salah)) means those who pray on time and give the prayer its due right; the bowing, prostration, and the necessary attention and humbleness required by Allah. Allah's statement:

(وَعَالَتِ الزَّكْوَةَ)

(and gives the Zakah) means the required charity (Zakah) due on one's money, as Sa`id bin Jubayr and Muqatil bin Hayyan have stated.

Allah's statement:

(وَالمُوفِقُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَهَدُواَ)

(and who fulfill their covenant when they make it,)

is similar to:

(الذِينَ يُوفِقُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللهِ وَلَا يَنفِضُونَ المِيثَقَ)

(Those who fulfill the covenant of Allah and break not the Mithaq (bond, treaty, covenant).) (13:20)

The opposite of this characteristic is hypocrisy. As found in a Hadith:

«أَيَّةُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ ثَلَاثَةٌ: إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَّبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَأَيَّا ائْتَمَّ خَانَ»

(The signs of a hypocrite are three: if he speaks, he lies; if he promises, he breaks his promise; and if he is entrusted, he breaches the trust.)

In another version:

«إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَّبَ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ غَدَرَ، وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَجَرَ»
(If he speaks, he lies; if he vows, he breaks his vow; and if he disputes, he is lewd.)

Allah's statement:

(وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَسَاءِ والضَّرَاءِ وَحِينَ
الْبَسَاءِ)

(. . .and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting
(during the battles).) means, during the time of meekness and ailment.

(وَحِينَ الْبَسَاءِ)

(...and at the time of fighting (during the battles).) means on the battlefield while facing the
enemy, as Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Murrah Al-Hamdani, Mujahid, Sa`id bin
Jubayr, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ar-Fabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Abu Malik, Ad-
Dahhak and others have stated.

And calling them the patient here, is a form of praise, because of the importance of patience
in these circumstances, and the suffering and difficulties that accompany them. And Allah
knows best, it is He Whom help is sought from, and upon Him we rely.

Allah's statement:

(أُولِئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا)

(Such are the people of the truth) means, whoever acquires these qualities, these are truthful
in their faith. This is because they have achieved faith in the heart and realized it in deed and
upon the tongue. So they are the truthful,

(وَأُولِئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ)

(and they are Al-Muttaqun (the pious).) because they avoided the prohibitions and performed
the acts of obedience.

(يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَمَنُّوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي
القُتْلِ الْحَرُّ بِالْحَرِّ وَالْعُبُودُ بَالْعَبِيدِ وَالْأَنْثى
بَالْأَرْجَى فَمَنْ عَفَىٰ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَانْبَاغُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)
(178. O you who believe! Al-Qisas (the Law of equality) is prescribed for you in case of murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. But if the killer is forgiven by the brother (or the relatives) of the killed (against blood money), then it should be sought in a good manner, and paid to him respectfully. This is an alleviation and a mercy from your Lord. So after this, whoever transgresses the limits (i.e. kills the killer after taking the blood money), he shall have a painful torment.) (179. And there is (a saving of) life for you in Al-Qisas (the Law of equality in punishment), O men of understanding, that you may acquire Taqwa.)

**The Command and the Wisdom behind the Law of Equality**

Allah states: O believers! The Law of equality has been ordained on you (for cases of murder), the free for the free, the slave for the slave and the female for the female. Therefore, do not transgress the set limits, as others before you transgressed them, and thus changed what Allah has ordained for them. The reason behind this statement is that (the Jewish tribe of) Banu An-Nadir invaded Qurayzah (another Jewish tribe) during the time of Jahiliyyah (before Islam) and defeated them. Hence, (they made it a law that) when a person from Nadir kills a person from Qurayzah, he is not killed in retaliation, but only pays a hundred Wasq of dates. However, when a person from Qurayzah kills a Nadir man, he would be killed for him. If Nadir wanted (to forfeit the execution of the murderer and instead require him) to pay a ransom, the Qurayzah man pays two hundred Wasq of dates double the amount Nadir pays in Diyah (blood money). So Allah commanded that justice be observed regarding the penal code, and that the path of the misguided and mischievous persons be avoided, who in disbelief and transgression, defy and alter what Allah has commanded them. Allah said:

(Al-Qisas (the Law of equality in punishment) is prescribed for you in case of murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female.)

Allah's statement:
(the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female.) was abrogated by the statement life for life (5:45). However, the majority of scholars agree that the Muslim is not killed for a disbeliever whom he kills. Al-Bukhari reported that ‘Ali narrated that Allah’s Messenger said:

وَلَا يُقْتِلُ مُسْلِمٌ كَافِرٌ

(The Muslim is not killed for the disbeliever whom he kills.)

No opinion that opposes this ruling could stand correct, nor is there an authentic Hadith to contradict it. However, Abu Hanifah thought that the Muslim could be killed for a disbeliever, following the general meaning of the Ayah (5:45) in Surat Al-Ma‘idah (chapter 5 in the Qur’an).

The Four Imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Shafi‘i and Ahmad) and the majority of scholars stated that the group is killed for one person whom they murder. ‘Umar said, about a boy who was killed by seven men, “If all the residents of San’ā’ (capital of Yemen today) collaborated on killing him, I would kill them all.” No opposing opinion was known by the Companions during that time which constitutes a near Ijma’ (consensus). There is an opinion attributed to Imam Ahmad that a group of people is not killed for one person whom they kill, and that only one person is killed for one person. Ibn Al-Mundhir also attributed this opinion to Mu`adh, Ibn Az-Zubayr, ‘Abdul-Malik bin Marwan, Az-Zuhri, Ibn Srin and Habib bin Abu Thabit. Allah’s statement:

فَمَنْ عَفِىَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءًا فَانْبَعِجَ بِالمَعْرُوفِ

(But if the killer is forgiven by the brother (or the relatives) of the killed (against blood money), then it should be sought in a good manner, and paid to him respectfully.) refers to accepting blood money (by the relatives of the victim in return for pardoning the killer) in cases of intentional murder. This opinion is attributed to Abu Al-Aliyah, Abu Sha’tha, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, ‘Ata’ Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Muqatil bin Hayyan. Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said:

فَمَنْ عَفِىَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءًا

(But if the killer is forgiven by the brother (or the relatives) of the killed (against blood money)) means the killer is pardoned by his brother (i.e., the relative of the victim) and accepting the Diyah after capital punishment becomes due (against the killer), this is the `Afw (pardon mentioned in the Ayah).” Allah’s statement:
(فَأَنْبَاعَ بِالمَعْرُوفِ)

(...then it should be sought in a good manner,) means, when the relative agrees to take the blood money, he should collect his rightful dues with kindness:

(وَأَدَاءَ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانِ)

(and paid to him respectfully,) means, the killer should accept the terms of settlement without causing further harm or resisting the payment.

Allah's statement:

(ذَلِكَ تَحْفِيفُ مَنْ رَبَّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ)

(This is an alleviation and a mercy from your Lord.) means the legislation that allows you to accept the blood money for intentional murder is an alleviation and a mercy from your Lord. It lightens what was required from those who were before you, either applying capital punishment or forgiving.

Sa`id bin Mansur reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Children of Israel were required to apply the Law of equality in murder cases and were not allowed to offer pardons (in return for blood money). Allah said to this Ummah (the Muslim nation):

(كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي القَتَلِ الحُرُّ بِالحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأَنْثى بِالْأَنْثى فَمَنْ عُفِىَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ)

(The Law of equality in punishment is prescribed for you in case of murder: the free for the free, the servant for the servant, and the female for the female. But if the killer is forgiven by the brother (or the relatives) of the killed (against blood money).)

Hence, `pardoning' or `forgiving' means accepting blood money in intentional murder cases." Ibn Hibban also recorded this in his Sahih. Qatadah said:

(ذَلِكَ تَحْفِيفُ مَنْ رَبَّكُمْ)

(This is an alleviation from your Lord)
Allah had mercy on this Ummah by giving them the Diyah which was not allowed for any nation before it. The People of the Torah (Jews) were allowed to either apply the penal code (for murder, i.e., execution) or to pardon the killer, but they were not allowed to take blood money. The People of the Injil (the Gospel - the Christians) were required to pardon (the killer, but no Diyah was legislated). This Ummah (Muslims) is allowed to apply the penal code (execution) or to pardon and accept the blood money. Similar was reported from Sa`id bin Jubayr, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

Allah's statement:

(فَمَنَ اعْتَدَّ بِعَدٍٰ ذَلِكَ قَلْبُ عَذَابٍ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمَ)

(So after this whoever transgresses the limits, he shall have a painful torment.) means, those who kill in retaliation after taking the Diyah or accepting it, they will suffer a painful and severe torment from Allah. The same was reported from Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ata` Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan.

The Benefits and Wisdom of the Law of Equality

Allah's statement:

(وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِسَاس حَيَوَةٌ)

(And there is life for you in Al-Qisas) legislating the Law of equality, i.e., killing the murderer, carries great benefits for you. This way, the sanctity of life will be preserved because the killer will refrain from killing, as he will be certain that if he kills, he would be killed. Hence life will be preserved. In previous Books, there is a statement that killing stops further killing! This meaning came in much clearer and eloquent terms in the Qur'an:

(وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِسَاس حَيَوَةٌ)

(And there is (a saving of) life for you in Al-Qisas (the Law of equality in punishment).)

Abu Al-`Aliyah said, "Allah made the Law of equality a `life'. Hence, how many a man who thought about killing, but this Law prevented him from killing for fear that he will be killed in turn." Similar statements were reported from Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Malik, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Muqatil bin Hayyan. Allah's statement:

(ياَ أُولِي الْأَلْبَاب لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ)

(O men of understanding, that you may acquire Taqwa.) means, `O you who have sound minds, comprehension and understanding! Perhaps by this you will be compelled to refrain from
transgressing the prohibitions of Allah and what He considers sinful. 'Taqwa (mentioned in the Ayah) is a word that means doing all acts of obedience and refraining from all prohibitions.

Including Parents and Relatives in the Will was later abrogated

This Ayah contains the command to include parents and relatives in the will, which was obligatory, according to the most correct view, before the Ayah about inheritance was revealed. When the Ayah of inheritance was revealed, this Ayah was abrogated, so fixed shares of the inheritance for deserving recipients were legislated by Allah. Therefore, deserving inheritors take their fixed inheritance without the need to be included in the will or to be reminded of the favor of the inherited person. For this reason we see the Hadith narrated in the Sunan and other books that 'Amr bin Kharijah said: I heard Allah's Messenger saying in a speech:

«إنَّ الله* قد أعطى كلَّ ذي حقٍّ حقهَ، فَلَا وَصْيَةٌ لِوَارثٍ»

(180. It is prescribed for you, when death approaches any of you, if he leaves wealth, that he makes a bequest to parents and next of kin, according to reasonable manners. (This is) a duty upon Al-Muttaqin (the pious).) (181. Then whoever changes it after hearing it, the sin shall be on those who make the change. Truly, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (182. But he who fears from a testator some unjust act or wrongdoing, and thereupon he makes peace between the parties concerned, there shall be no sin on him. Certainly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)
(Allah has given each heir his fixed share. So there is no will for a deserving heir.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Muhammad bin Srin said: Ibn `Abbas recited Surat Al-Baqarah (chapter 2 in the Qur'an) until he reached the Ayah:

(إن تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةَ لِلْوَلِّدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِيَّينَ)

(...if he leaves wealth, that he makes a bequest to parents and next of kin.)

He then said, "This Ayah was abrogated." This was recorded by Sa` id bin Mansur and Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak Al-Hakim Said, "It is Sahih according to their criteria (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)". Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's statement:

(الْوَصِيَّةَ لِلْوَلِّدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِيَّينَ)

(a bequest to parents and next of kin)

was abrogated by the Ayah:

(للرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مَّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَلِّدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبِيُّونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مَّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَلِّدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبِيُّونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أُوْ كَثَّرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا)

(There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest related, whether the property be small or large a legal share.) (4:7)

Ibn Abu Hatim then said, "It was reported from Ibn `Umar, Abu Musa, Sa` id bin Musayyib, Al-Hasan, Mujahid, `Ata` Sa` id bin Jubayr, Muhammad bin Srin, `Ikrimah, Zayd bin Aslam and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Qatadah, As-Suddi, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Tawus, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Shurayh, Ad-Dahhak and Az-Zuhri said that this Ayah (2:180 above) was abrogated by the Ayah about the inheritors (4:7)."

The Will for the Relatives that do not qualify as Inheritors

It is recommended that the remaining relatives who do not have a designated fixed share of the inheritance, be willed up to a third, due to the general meaning of the Ayah about the will. It is recorded in the Sahihayn that Ibn `Umar said that Allah's Messenger said:
It is not permissible for any Muslim who has something to will to stay for two nights without having his last will and testament written and kept ready with him.

Ibn `Umar commented, "Ever since I heard this statement from Allah's Messenger, no night has passed, but my will is kept ready with me." There are many other Ayat and Ahadith ordering kindness and generosity to one's relatives.

The Will should observe Justice

The will should be fair, in that one designates a part of the inheritance to his relatives without committing injustice against his qualified inheritors and without extravagance or stinginess. It is recorded in the Sahihayn that Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas said, "O Allah's Messenger! I have some money and only a daughter inherits from me, should I will all my remaining property (to others)" He said, "No." Sa`d said, "Then may I will half of it" He said, "No." Sa`d said, "One-third" He said, "Yes, one-third, yet even one-third is too much. It is better for you to leave your inheritors wealthy than to leave them poor, begging from others." Al-Bukhari mentioned in his Sahih that Ibn `Abbas said, "I recommend that people reduce the proportion of what they bequeath by will to a fourth (of the whole legacy) rather than a third, for Allah's Messenger said:

(One-third, yet even one-third is too much.)"

Allah's statement:

(Then whoever changes it after hearing it, the sin shall be on those who make the change. Truly, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) means, whoever changed the will and testament or altered it by addition or deletion, including hiding the will as is obvious, then

(the sin shall be on those who make the change.)
Ibn `Abbas and others said, “The dead person's reward will be preserved for him by Allah, while the sin is acquired by those who change the will.”

(إنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعُ عَلَيْمٍ)

(Truly, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) means, Allah knows what the dead person has bequeathed and what the beneficiaries (or others) have changed in the will.

Allah's statement:

(فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُّوسَىٰ جَنَّةٍ أوْ إِنَّمَا)

(But he who fears from a testator some unjust act or wrongdoing.)

Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-` Aliyah, Mujahid, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and As-Suddi said, “Error.” These errors include such cases as when the inheritor indirectly acquires more than his fair share, such as by being allocated that a certain item mentioned in the legacy be sold to him. Or, the testator might include his daughter's son in the legacy to increase his daughter's share in the inheritance, and so forth. Such errors might occur out of the kindness of the heart without thinking about the consequences of these actions, or by sinful intention. In such cases, the executive of the will and testament is allowed to correct the errors and to replace the unjust items in the will with a better solution, so that both the Islamic law and what the dead person had wished for are respected and observed. This act would not constitute an alteration in the will and this is why Allah mentioned it specifically, so that it is excluded from the prohibition (that prohibits altering the will and testament) mentioned in the previous Ayah. And Allah knows best.

The Virtue of Fairness in the Will

`Abdur-Razzaq reported that Abu Hurayrah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«إنَّ الرَّجُلَ لِيَعْمَلُ بَعْلَ أَهْلِ الْخَيْرِ سَبْعِينَ سَنَةَ، فَإِذَا أَوْصَى حَافَّ فِي وَصْيَتِهِ، فَيُجْعَلُ لَهُ بَيْشَرٌ عَمَّلَهُ، فَيَدْخُلُ النَّارَ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لِيَعْمَلُ بَعْلَ أَهْلِ الشَّرِّ سَبْعِينَ سَنَةَ، فَيَعْدَلُ فِي وَصْيَتِهِ، فَيُجْعَلُ لَهُ بَيْخَرٌ عَمَّلَهُ، فَيَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ»
(A man might perform the works of righteous people for seventy years, but when he dictates his will, he commits injustice and thus his works end with the worst of his deeds and he enters the Fire. A man might perform the works of evil people for seventy years, but then dictates a just will and thus ends with the best of his deeds and then enters Paradise.)

Abu Hurayrah then said, "Read if you wish:

(بِلِكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلاَ تُعْتَدَوْهَا)

(These are the limits ordained by Allah, so do not transgress them.)" (2:229)

(يَايُّهَا الْذِينَ أَمَاتُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصَّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ مُعَادُدَتُكُمْ لِعَلَّكُمْ تَنْفَعُونَ)

(إِنَّمَا مُعَادُدَتُ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعُدُّهُ مِنْ أَيَامِ أُخْرَىٰ وَعَلَى الْذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فَذِيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرُ لَهُ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعِلْمُونَ)

(183. O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may acquire Taqwa.) (184. Fast for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g., an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskin (poor person) (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast is better for you if only you know.)

The Order to Fast

In an address to the believers of this Ummah, Allah ordered them to fast, that is, to abstain from food, drink and sexual activity with the intention of doing so sincerely for Allah the Exalted alone. This is because fasting purifies the souls and cleanses them from the evil that might mix with them and their ill behavior. Allah mentioned that He has ordained fasting for Muslims just as He ordained it for those before them, they being an example for them in that, so they should vigorously perform this obligation more obediently than the previous nations. Similarly, Allah said:
(To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one nation, but that (He) may test you in what He has given you; so compete in good deeds.) (5:48)

Allah said in this Ayah:

(O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may have Taqwa.) since the fast cleanses the body and narrows the paths of Shaytan. In the Sahihayn the following Hadith was recorded:

(O young people! Whoever amongst you can afford marriage, let him marry. Whoever cannot afford it, let him fast, for it will be a shield for him.)

Allah then states that the fast occurs during a fixed number of days, so that it does not become hard on the hearts, thereby weakening their resolve and endurance.)

The various Stages of Fasting

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded that `Aishah said, "(The day of) `Ashura' was a day of fasting. When the obligation to fast Ramadan was revealed, those who wished fasted, and those who wished did not." Al-Bukhari recorded the same from Ibn `Umar and Ibn Mas`ud.

Allah said:
(...those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g., an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskin (poor person) (for every day).)

Mu`adhdh commented, "In the beginning, those who wished, fasted and those who wished, did not fast and fed a poor person for each day." Al-Bukhari recorded Salamah bin Al-Akwa` saying that when the Ayah:

(...those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g., an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskin (poor person) (for every day).) was revealed, those who did not wish to fast, used to pay the Fidyah (feeding a poor person for each day they did not fast) until the following Ayah (2:185) was revealed abrogating the previous Ayah. It was also reported from `Ubaydullah from Nafi` that Ibn `Umar said; "It was abrogated." As-Suddi reported that Murrah narrated that `Abdullah said about this Ayah:

(...those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g., an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskin (poor person) (for every day).) "It means `those who find it difficult (to fast).' Formerly, those who wished, fasted and those who wished, did not but fed a poor person instead." Allah then said:

(But whoever does good of his own accord) meaning whoever fed an extra poor person,

(it is better for him. And that you fast is better for you) Later the Ayah:

(So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasting) that month (2:185) was revealed and this abrogated the previous Ayah (2:184).
The Fidyah (Expiation) for breaking the Fast is for the Old and the Ailing

Al-Bukhari reported that `Ata heard Ibn `Abbas recite:

وَعَلَى الَّذينَ يُطْفِقُونَهُ فَدِيَةَ طَعَامٍ مِّسْكِينٍ

(And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g., an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskin (poor person) (for every day).)

Ibn `Abbas then commented, "(This Ayah) was not abrogated, it is for the old man and the old woman who are able to fast with difficulty, but choose instead to feed a poor person for every day (they do not fast)." Others reported that Sa`id bin Jubayr mentioned this from Ibn `Abbas. So the abrogation here applies to the healthy person, who is not traveling and who has to fast, as Allah said:

فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ قَلِيلَ صَمْتِهِ

(So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasting) that month.) (2:185)

As for the old man (and woman) who cannot fast, he is allowed to abstain from fasting and does not have to fast another day instead, because he is not likely to improve and be able to fast other days. So he is required to pay a Fidyah for every day missed. This is the opinion of Ibn `Abbas and several others among the Salaf who read the Ayah:

وَعَلَى الَّذينَ يُطْفِقُونَهُ

(And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g., an old man)) to mean those who find it difficult to fast as Ibn Mas`ud stated. This is also the opinion of Al-Bukhari who said, "As for the old man (person) who cannot fast, (he should do like) Anas who, for one or two years after he became old fed some bread and meat to a poor person for each day he did not fast."

This point, which Al-Bukhari attributed to Anas without a chain of narrators, was collected with a continuous chain of narrators by Abu Ya`la Mawsuli in his Musnad, that Ayyub bin Abu Tamimah said; "Anas could no longer fast. So he made a plate of Tharid (broth, bread and meat) and invited thirty poor persons and fed them." The same ruling applies for the pregnant and breast-feeding women if they fear for themselves or their children or fetuses. In this case, they pay the Fidyah and do not have to fast other days in place of the days that they missed.
(185. The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasting) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasting) must be made up from other days. Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number of days, and that you must magnify Allah i.e., to say Takbir (Allahu Akbar: Allah is the Most Great) for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him.)

The Virtue of Ramadan and the Revelation of the Qur'an in it.

Allah praised the month of Ramadan out of the other months by choosing it to send down the Glorious Qur'an, just as He did for all of the Divine Books He revealed to the Prophets. Imam Ahmad reported Wathilah bin Al-Asqa that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَنزَلْتُ صُحْفٍ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي أُولَى لِيَلٍّ مِنْ رَمَضَانِ، وَأَنزَلْتِ الْتَوْرَاتُ لَسْتَ مَضْيِينَ مِنْ رَمَضَانِ، وَالْإِنْجِيلُ لِلثَّلَاثِ عَشَرَةٍ خَلَتُ مِنْ رَمَضَانِ، وَأَنزَلَ اللَّهُ الْقُرْآنَ أَرْبَعٌ وَعَشْرِينَ خَلَتُ مِنْ رَمَضَانِ»

(The Suhuf (Pages) of Ibrahim were revealed during the first night of Ramadan. The Torah was revealed during the sixth night of Ramadan. The Injil was revealed during the thirteenth night of Ramadan. Allah revealed the Qur'an on the twenty-fourth night of Ramadan.)
The Virtues of the Qur’an

Allah said:

(بَيْنَتٍ مَنْ الْهُدَى وَالْفَرْقَانِ)

(…a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong).)

Here Allah praised the Qur’an, which He revealed as guidance for the hearts of those who believe in it and adhere to its commands. Allah said:

(وَبَيْنَتٍ)

(and clear proofs) meaning, as clear and unambiguous signs and unequivocal proof for those who understand them. These proofs testify to the truth of the Qur’an, its guidance, the opposite of misguidance, and how it guides to the straight path, the opposite of the wrong path, and the distinction between the truth and falsehood, and the permissible and the prohibited.

The Obligation of Fasting Ramadan

Allah said:

(فَمَنْ شَهَدَ مِنكُمْ الشَّهْرَ قَلِيْلَصُمْهُ)

(So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasting) that month.)

This Ayah requires the healthy persons who witness the beginning of the month, while residing in their land, to fast the month. This Ayah abrogated the Ayah that allows a choice of fasting or paying the Fidyah. When Allah ordered fasting, He again mentioned the permission for the ill person and the traveler to break the fast and to fast other days instead as compensation. Allah said:

(وَمَنْ كَانَ مَريضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفرٍ فَعِدَّةُ مَنْ أَيَّامٍ أَخْرَ)

(…and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasting) must be made up from other days.)
This Ayah indicates that ill persons who are unable to fast or fear harm by fasting, and the traveler, are all allowed to break the fast. When one does not fast in this case, he is obliged to fast other days instead. Allah said:

(يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ الْيُسْرَ َوَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمْ الْعُسْرٽ)

(Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you.)

This Ayah indicates that Allah allowed such persons, out of His mercy and to make matters easy for them, to break the fast when they are ill or traveling, while the fast is still obligatory on the healthy persons who are not traveling.

**Several Rulings concerning the Fast**

The authentic Sunnah states that Allah's Messenger traveled during the month of Ramadan for the battle for Makkah. The Prophet marched until he reached the area of Kadid and then broke his fast and ordered those who were with him to do likewise. This was recorded in the Two Sahihs. Breaking the fast mentioned in this Hadith was not required, for the Companions used to go out with Allah's Messenger during the month of Ramadan, then, some of them would fast while some of them would not fast and neither category would criticize the others. If the command mentioned in the Hadith required breaking the fast, the Prophet would have criticized those who fasted. Allah's Messenger himself sometimes fasted while traveling. For instance, it is reported in the Two Sahihs that Abu Ad-Darda' said, "We once went with Allah's Messenger during Ramadan while the heat was intense. One of us would place his hand on his head because of the intense heat. Only Allah's Messenger and `Abdullah bin Rawahah were fasting at that time."

We should state that observing the permission to break the fast while traveling is better, as Allah's Messenger said about fasting while traveling:

«مَنْ أَفْضَرَ فَحَسَنَّ، وَمَنْ صَامَ فِئَلاً جَنَاحًا عَلَيْهِ»

(Those who did not fast have done good, and there is no harm for those who fasted.)

In another Hadith, the Prophet said:

«غَلِّيْكُمْ بِرَحْصَةِ اللَّهِ الَّتِي رَحْصَ لَكُمْ»

(Hold to Allah's permission that He has granted you.)

Some scholars say that the two actions are the same, as `A'ishah narrated that Hamzah bin `Amr Al-Aslami said, "O Messenger of Allah! I fast a lot, should I fast while traveling" The Prophet said:
(Fast if you wish or do not fast if you wish.)

This Hadith is in the Two Sahih. It was reported that if the fast becomes difficult (while traveling), then breaking the fast is better. Jabir said that Allah's Messenger saw a man who was being shaded (by other people while traveling). The Prophet asked about him and he was told that man was fasting. The Prophet said:

(Salir min al-bir al-syiam fi al-safar)

(It is not a part of Birr (piety) to fast while traveling.) This was recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

As for those who ignore the Sunnah and believe in their hearts that breaking the fast while traveling is disliked, they are required to break the fast and are not allowed to fast.

As for making up for missed fasting days, it is not required to be consecutive. One may do so consecutively or not consecutively. There are ample proofs to this fact. We should mention that fasting consecutive days is only required exclusively during Ramadan. After the month of Ramadan, what is required then is to merely make up for missed days. This is why Allah said:

(FAADTEH MIN AYAM ARH)

(. . .the same number (should be made up) from other days.)

Ease and not Hardship

Allah then said:

(YIRID AL-LAH BAKM AL-USR WALA YURID BAKM AL-USR)

(Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you.)

Imam Ahmad recorded Anas bin Malik saying that Allah's Messenger said:

(YISSRUA WALA TUSREUWA WASKENOWA WALA TINCROWA)

(Treat the people with ease and don't be hard on them; give them glad tidings and don't fill them with aversion.)
This Hadith was also collected in the Two Sahih. It is reported in the Sahihayn that Allah's Messenger said to Mu`adh and Abu Musa when he sent them to Yemen:

«بَشِّرْنَا وَلَا تَفْرَأَ، ويِسْرَا وَلَا تَعْسِرَا، وَتَطَوَّعَا وَلَا تَخْتَلِفَا»

(Treat the people with ease and don't be hard on them; give them glad tidings and don't fill them with aversion; and love each other, and don't differ.)

The Sunan and the Musnad compilers recorded that Allah's Messenger said:

»بُعِثْتُ بِالْحَنِيَافِيَةِ السَّمْحَةِ«

(I was sent with the easy Hanifyyah (Islamic Monotheism).)

Allah's statement:

(يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بَكَمُ الْيِسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بَكَمُ العُسْرَ وَلَنْكُمْ مِّلَّةً عَدِيدَةً)

(Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days) means: You were allowed to break the fast while ill, while traveling, and so forth, because Allah wanted to make matters easy for you. He only commanded you to make up for missed days so that you complete the days of one month.

**Remembering Allah upon performing the Acts of Worship**

Allah's statement:

(وَلَتَكْبِرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمْ)

(...and that you must magnify Allah i.e., to say Takbir (Allahu Akbar: Allah is the Most Great) for having guided you) means: So that you remember Allah upon finishing the act of worship. This is similar to Allah's statement:
(So when you have accomplished your Manasik, (rituals) remember Allah as you remember your forefathers or with far more remembrance.) (2:200) and:

(فِإِذَا قَضِيَتِ الْصَّلَوَةُ قَانَتُشُّرُوا فِي الأُرْضِ وَأَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فِضْلِ اللَّهِ وَذَكَّرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُقْلِحُونَ)

(...Then when the (Jumu`ah) Salah (prayer) is ended, you may disperse through the land, and seek the bounty of Allah (by working), and remember Allah much, that you may be successful.) (62:10) and:

(فَاصِبْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمَّدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طَلْعَ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغَرُوبِ وَمِنَ الْيَلِدِ قَسْبَحَةٌ وَأُدْبِرَ السُّجُودِ)

(...and glorify the praises of your Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting. And during a part of the night, glorify His praises, and after the prayers.) (50:39, 40)

This is why the Sunnah encouraged Tasbih (saying Subhan Allah, i.e., all praise is due to Allah), Tahmid (saying Al-Hamdu Lillah, i.e., all the thanks are due to Allah) and Takbir (saying Allahu Akbar, i.e., Allah is the Most Great) after the compulsory prayers. Ibn `Abbas said, "We used to know that Allah's Messenger has finished the prayer by the Takbir." Similarly, several scholars have stated that reciting Takbir during `Id-ul-Fitr was specified by the Ayah that states:

(وَلْتَكُمْ لَا عَدْةً وَلْتُكْبَرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمُ)

((He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that you must magnify Allah i.e., to say Takbir (Allahu Akbar: Allah is the Most Great) for having guided you...) Allah's statement:

(وَلْعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكَرُونَ)
(...so that you may be grateful to Him.) means: If you adhere to what Allah commanded you, obeying Him by performing the obligations, abandoning the prohibitions and abiding by the set limits, then perhaps you will be among the grateful.

وُإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عَبَّادِي عَنِّي فٌرَقِي قَرِيبُ أَحَبُّ
دَعْوَةُ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانُ قَلِينَتْجَبِبُوا لَى وَلَيْهِمْ يَرَشُدُونَ

(186. And when My servants ask you (O Muhammad concerning Me, then answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright.)

**Allah hears the Servant's Supplication**

Imam Ahmad reported that Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari said, “We were in the company of Allah's Messenger during a battle. Whenever we climbed a high place, went up a hill or went down a valley, we used to say, `Allah is the Most Great,' raising our voices. The Prophet came by us and said:

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، ارْبَعُوا عَلَى أَنفُسِكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ لَا تَدْعُونَ أَصْمَمٍ وَلَا غَانِبً، إِنَّمَا تَدْعُونَ سَمِيعًا بِصِيرَا، إِنَّ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَ أَقْرَبُ إِلَى أَحِدَّكُمْ مِنْ عَنْقِ رَأْحِلِيْهِ، يَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بَنِ قَيْسٍ، أَلَا أُعْلَمُكَ كَلِمَةً مِنْ كُنْوَةِ الجَنَّةِ؟ لَا حَوَلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.»

(O people! Be merciful to yourselves (i.e., don't raise your voices), for you are not calling a deaf or an absent one, but One Who is All-Hearer, All-See. The One Whom you call is closer to one of you than the neck of his animal. O 'Abdullah bin Qais (Abu Musa's name) should I teach you a statement that is a treasure of Paradise: `La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah (there is no power or strength except from Allah).')

This Hadith was also recorded in the Two Sahihs, and Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah recorded similar wordings. Furthermore, Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas said that the Prophet said:
"Allah the Exalted said, `I am as My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him whenever he invokes Me.' Allah accepts the Invocation

Imam Ahmad also recorded Abu Sa`id saying that the Prophet said:

"Ma'ana Min Masiim Yada`u Allahu `Azza Wa Jalla Bad`uwa' Lisna fihiya Ima'shala Wa La Qatiba' Rakhim, Ila` A`udhah Allahu `Alah" Ekhadi Tithaex Catul: Ema'a An Y`ajbel Lhu` Dauwathu, Ema'a An Yada`rtha Lhu' Fei Alakhri, Ema'a An Yisruf Unthu Min An Soueemithlaa"

"Allahu Akbar"

(No Muslim supplicates to Allah with a Du`a that does not involve sin or cutting the relations of the womb, but Allah will grant him one of the three things. He will either hasten the response to his supplication, save it for him until the Hereafter, or would turn an equivalent amount of evil away from him." They said, "What if we were to recite more (Du`a)." He said, (There is more with Allah.)

`Abdullah the son of Imam Ahmad recorded `Ubadah bin As-Samit saying that the Prophet said:

"Ma'ana Alayn Zawir Alard Min Ranjil Masiim Yada`u Allahu `Azza Wa Jalla Bad`uwa' Ila` A`anah Allahu `Alaynahu, O Kaf` Unthu Min An Soueemithlaa Maa Lam Y`ada`u Baithm O Qatiba' Rakhim"

(No Muslim supplicates to Allah with a Du`a that does not involve sin or cutting the relations of the womb, but Allah will grant him one of the three things. He will either hasten the response to his supplication, save it for him until the Hereafter, or would turn an equivalent amount of evil away from him."
(There is no Muslim man on the face of the earth who supplicates to Allah but Allah would either grant it to him, or avert a harm from him of equal proportions, as long as his supplication does not involve sin or cutting the relations of the womb.) At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith.

Imam Malik recorded that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

"إِسْتَجَابَ لَأَحَدِكُمْ مَالِمُ يَعِجلُ، يَقُولُ: دَعَوْتُ قَلْمُ يُسْتَجِبَ لِي"

(One's supplication will be accepted as long as he does become get hasty and say,)

Allah accepts the Invocation

Imam Ahmad also recorded Abu Sa`id saying that the Prophet said:

"مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَدْعُو اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَدْعَوْهُ لَيْسَ فِي هَذَا إِثْمٌ وَلَا قَطِيعَةٌ رَحْمٌ، إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ بِهَا إِحْدَى ثَلَاثِ خَصَائِصٍ: إِمَّا أَنْ يُعِجلَ لَهُ دَعَوَاتُهُ، وَإِمَّا أَنْ يَدْخُرَهَا لَهُ فِي الْأَخْرَى، وَإِمَّا أَنْ يُصَرِّفَ عَنْهُ مِنَ السُّوَءِ مِثْلَهَا"

اللهُ أَكْتَبَ"
(There is no Muslim man on the face of the earth who supplicates to Allah but Allah would either grant it to him, or avert a harm from him of equal proportions, as long as his supplication does not involve sin or cutting the relations of the womb.) At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith.

Imam Malik recorded that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

"{تَسْتَجِبُ لَأَحَدِ كَمْ مَالَمْ يُعَجِّلُ، يَقُولُ: دَعَوْتُ قَلْمُ يُسْتَجِبُ لِي}"

(One's supplication will be accepted as long as he does become get hasty and say, `I have supplicated but it has not been accepted from me.`)

This Hadith is recorded in the Two Sahihs from Malik, and this is the wording of Al-Bukhari.

Muslim recorded that the Prophet said:

"{لَا يَزَالُ يُسْتَجِبُ لِلْعَبْدِ مَا لَمْ يَدْعُ بَائِمٌ أَوْ قَطِيعَةٍ رَحْمٍ مَا لَمْ يَسْتَعِجْلَ}"

قَيْلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَمَا الابْتِعَاجَ؟ قَالَ: يَقُولُ: قَدْ دَعَوْتُ وَقَدْ دَعَاوْتُ، قَلْمُ أَرْ يُسْتَجِبُ لِي، فَيُسْتَحْسِرُ عَنْدَ ذلِكَ وَيَدْعُ الدَّعَاءَ"

(The supplication of the servant will be accepted as long as he does not supplicate for what includes sin, or cutting the relations of the womb, and as long as he does not become hasty.)
He was asked, "O Messenger of Allah! How does one become hasty?" He said, (He says, `I supplicated and supplicated, but I do not see that my supplication is being accepted from me.' He thus loses interest and abandons supplicating (to Allah).)

**Three Persons Whose Supplication will not be rejected**

In the Musnad of Imam Ahmad and the Sunans of At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'î and Ibn Majah it is recorded that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

» ثلاثٌ نَّعمٌ لَّهُمَا دَعوَّاهُمْ: ٱلْإِمَامُ ٱلْمَعَادِلُ، وَٱلْمَالِمُ حَتَّى يَفْخُطُ، وَدَعَوَّةُ ٱلْمَؤَلِّمِ يَرْفَعُهَا ٱللَّهُ دُونَ ٱلْعَمَّامِ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَامَةِ، وَيَقْلُلُ لَهَا أَبْوَابُ ٱلسَّمَاءٍ، يَقُولُ: ۦٓآَمِنُّهُمُّ لِلْغَيْبِ ۛ وَلَوْ بَعْدَهُمْ.

(Three persons will not have their supplication rejected: the just ruler, the fasting person until breaking the fast, and the supplication of the oppressed person, for Allah raises it above the clouds on the Day of Resurrection, and the doors of heaven will be opened for it, and Allah says, `By My grace! I will certainly grant it for you, even if after a while.`)
(187. It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of As-Siyam (fasting). They are Libas i.e., body-cover, or screen for you and you are Libas for them. Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you (accepted your repentance) and forgave you. So now have sexual relations with them and seek that which Allah has ordained for you (offspring), and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your fast till the nightfall. And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I'tikaf in the Mosjids. These are the limits (set) by Allah, so approach them not. Thus does Allah make clear His Ayat to mankind that they may acquire Taqwa.)

**Eating, Drinking and Sexual Intercourse are allowed during the Nights of Ramadan**

These Ayat contain a relief from Allah for the Muslims by ending the practice that was observed in the early years of Islam. At that time, Muslims were allowed to eat, drink and have sexual intercourse only until the `Isha' (Night) prayer, unless one sleeps before the `Isha' prayer. Those who slept before `Isha' or offered the `Isha' prayer, were not allowed to drink, eat or sexual intercourse sex until the next night. The Muslims found that to be difficult for them.

The Ayat used the word `Rafath' to indicate sexual intercourse, according to Ibn `Abbas, `Ata' and Mujahid. Similar Tafsir was offered by Sa`id bin Jubayr, Tawus, Salim bin `Abdullah, `Amr bin Dinar, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Az-Zuhri, Ad-Dahhak, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, As-Suddi, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Muqatil bin Hayyan.

Allah said:

(187. They are Libas i.e., body-cover, or screen for you and you are Libas for them.)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that this Ayah means, "Your wives are a resort for you and you for them." Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said, "They are your cover and you are their cover." In short, the wife and the husband are intimate and have sexual intercourse with each other, and this is why they were permitted to have sexual activity during the nights of Ramadan, so that matters are made easier for them.

Abu Ishaq reported that Al-Bara' bin `Azib said, "When the Companions of Allah's Messenger observed fast but would sleep before breaking their fast, they would continue fasting until the following night. Qays bin Sirmah Al-Ansari was fasting one day and was working in his land. When the time to break the fast came, he went to his wife and said, 'Do you have food?' She said, 'No. But I could try to get you some.' His eyes then were overcome by sleep and when his wife came back, she found him asleep. She said, 'Woe unto you! Did you sleep? In the middle of the next day, he lost consciousness and mentioned what had happened to the Prophet . Then, this Ayah was revealed: r
(أحل لكم ليلة الصيام الرقث إلى نسائكم)

(It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of As-Siyam (fasting)) until...

وكلوا وأشربوا حتى ينبيئن لكم الخيط الأبيض من الخيط الأسود من الفجر

(and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your fast till the nightfall. ) Consequently, they were very delighted." Al-Bukhari reported this Hadith by Abu Ishaq who related that he heard Al-Bara' say, "When fasting Ramadan was ordained, Muslims used to refrain from sleeping with their wives the entire month, but some men used to deceive themselves. Allah revealed:

علم الله أنتم كنتم تحتانون أنفسكم قتائب عليكم

(Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you (accepted your repentance) and forgave you.)

`Ali bin Abu Talhah narrated that Ibn `Abbas said, "During the month of Ramadan, after Muslims would pray `Isha', they would not touch their women and food until the next night. Then some Muslims, including `Umar bin Al-Khattab, touched (had sex with) their wives and had some food during Ramadan after `Isha'. They complained to Allah's Messenger . Then Allah sent down:

علم الله أنتم كنتم تحتانون أنفسكم قتائب عليكم

(Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you (accepted your repentance) and forgave you. So now have sexual relations with them)" This is the same narration that Al-`Awfi related from Ibn `Abbas.

Allah said:

وأبتغوا ما كتب الله لكم

(And seek what Allah has made lawful for you.)
(...and seek that which Allah has ordained for you (offspring),)

Abu Hurayrah, Ibn `Abbas, Anas, Shurayh Al-Qadi, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ata`, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi, Zayd bin Aslam, Hakam bin `Utbah, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Al-Hasan Al- Basri, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, and others said that this Ayah refers to having offspring. Qatadah said that the Ayah means, "Seek the permission that Allah has allowed for you." Sa`id narrated that Qatadah said,

وَابْتَغُواٰ مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

(and seek that which Allah has ordained for you,)

Time for Suhur

Allah said:

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَبْتَيِّنَ لَكُمْ الخَيْطَةُ الأَبْيَضَةُ

منَ الخَيْطِ الأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَيْتِمَّوا الصَّيَامَ إِلَى الْيَلِدِ

(...and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your fast till the nightfall.)

Allah has allowed eating and drinking, along with having sexual intercourse, as we have stated, during any part of the night until the light of dawn is distinguished from the darkness of the night. Allah has described that time as `distinguishing the white thread from the black thread.' He then made it clearer when He said:

(مِنَ الْفَجْرِ)

(of dawn.)

As stated in a Hadith that Imam Abu `Abdullah Al-Bukhari recorded, Sahl bin Sa`d said, "When the following verse was revealed:

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَبْتَيِّنَ لَكُمْ الخَيْطَةُ الأَبْيَضَةُ

منَ الخَيْطِ الأَسْوَدِ


(Eat and drink until the white thread appears to you, distinct from the black thread) and (of dawn) was not revealed, some people who intended to fast, tied black and white threads to their legs and went on eating till they differentiated between the two. Allah then revealed the words, (of dawn), and it became clear to them that it meant (the darkness of) night and (the light of) day. "

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ash-Sha`bi said that `Adi said, "I took two strings, one black and the other white and kept them under my pillow and went on looking at them throughout the night, but could not make any distinction between the two. So, the next morning I went to Allah's Messenger and told him the whole story. He said:

«إنَّ وَسَادَكَ إِذًا لَعَريضٌ، أَنَّ كَانَ الْخَيْطُ الأَبْيَضُ وَالْأَسْوَدُ تَحْتَ وَسَادَتِكَ»

(Your pillow is very wide if the white and black threads are under it!) Some wordings for this Hadith read,

«إنَّكَ لَعَريضُ الْفَقَأَ»

(Your Qafa (back side of your neck) is wide!)

Some people said that these words meant that `Adi was not smart. This is a weak opinion. The narration that Al-Bukhari collected explains this part of the Hadith. Al-Bukhari recorded that `Adi bin Hatim narrated: I said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is the white thread from the black thread Are they actual threads" He said:

«إنَّكَ لَعَريضُ الْفَقَأَ أَنَّ أَبْصَرَتَ الْخَيْطَيْنِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: لَا بَلَّ هُوَ سَوَادُ اللَّيْلِ وَبَيْاضُ النَّهَارِ»

(Your Qafa is wide if you see the two threads. Rather, they are the blackness of the night and the whiteness of the daylight.)

Suhur is recommended

Allah allowed eating and drinking until dawn, it represents proof that Suhur is encouraged, since it is a Rukhsah (concession or allowance) and Allah likes that the Rukhsah is accepted and implemented. The authentic Sunnah indicates that eating the Suhur is encouraged. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Anas narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«تَسْحَرُوا فَإِنَّ فِي السَّحْوَرِ بَرَكَةَ»
(Eat the Suhur, for there is a blessing in Suhur.)

Muslim reported that `Amr bin Al-` As narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«إنّ فصنّلّ ما بَيِّنَ صيامّنا وصيامّ أهْل الْكِتَابِ
أكلّة السّحّر»

(The distinction between our fast and the fast of the People of the Book is the meal of Suhur.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Abu Sa`id narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

السَّحُورُ أكلّة بركة قلنا تدعوهُ، ولو أنّ أحدكم تجرّع جرعة ماءٍ، فإنّ الله وملائِكَتَهُ يُصِلُّونه على المُتَسَحِّرِينَ

(Suhur is a blessed meal. Hence, do not abandon it, even if one just takes a sip of water. Indeed, Allah and His angels send Salah (blessings) upon those who eat Suhur.)

There are several other Hadiths that encourage taking the Suhur, even if it only consists of a sip of water.

It is preferred that Suhur be delayed until the time of dawn. It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that Anas bin Malik narrated that Zayd bin Thabit said, "We had Suhur with Allah's Messenger and then went on to pray." Anas asked, "How much time was there between the Adhan (call to prayer) and the Suhur" He said, "The time that fifty Ayat take (to recite)."

Imam Ahmad recorded Abu Dharr saying that Allah's Messenger said:

لا تزّال أُمّي بَيْحِيْرٌ ما عَجلُوا الإفطارَ وأحرّوا السّحُور

(My Ummah will always retain goodness as long as they hasten in breaking the fast and delay the Suhur.)

There are several Hadiths that narrate that the Prophet called Suhur "the blessed meal."

There are narrations from several of the Salaf that they allowed the Suhur to be eaten later until close to Fajr. This is is reported from Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud, Hudhayfah, Abu Hurayrah, Ibn `Umar, Ibn `Abbas and Zayd bin Thabit. It is also reported from many of the
It is also recorded in the Two Sahihs that Al-Qasim said that `A`ishah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

"لا يَمْتَعْكُمْ أَذَانُ بِلَالِ عَنْ سَحْوِ كَمْ، فَإِنَّهُ يَنَادِيَ بْلَيْلٍ، فَكُلُوا وَأَشْرَبُوا حَتَّى تَسْمَعُوا أَذَانَ ابْنِ أَمِّ مَكْتُومٍ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُؤْدِنُ حَتَّى يَطْلَعُ الْفَجْرَ."

(The Adhan pronounced by Bilal should not stop you from taking Suhur, for he pronounces the Adhan at night. Hence, eat and drink until you hear the Adhan by Ibn Umm Maktum, for he does not call the Adhan until dawn.)

This is the wording collected by Al-Bukhari.

Imam Ahmad reported that Qays bin Talq quoted from his father that Allah's Messenger said:

"لَيْسَ الْفَجْرُ الْمُسْتَطْلِبُ فِي الْأَفْقِ وَلِكَنَّ المُعْتَرْضُ الْأَحْمَرَ."

(Dawn is not the (ascending) glow of white light of the horizon. Rather, it is the red (radiating) light.)

Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi also recorded this Hadith, but their wording is:

"كُلُوا وَأَشْرَبُوا، وَلَا يَهِيدَنَّكُمُ السَّاطِعُ المُصْعُدُ، فَكُلُوا وَأَشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَعْتَرْضُ لُكْمُ الْأَحْمَرَ."

(Eat and drink and do not be rushed by the ascending (white) light. Eat and drink until the redness (of the dawn) appears.)

Ibn Jarir (At-Tabari) recorded that Samurah bin Jundub narrated that Allah's Messenger said:
There is no Harm in beginning the Fast while Junub (a state of major ritual impurity)

Issue: Among the benefits of allowing sexual activity, eating and drinking until dawn for those who are fasting, is that it is allowed to start the fast while Junub (in the state of impurity after sexual discharge), and there is no harm in this case if one takes a bath any time in the morning after waking up, and completes the fast. This is the opinion of the Four Imams and the majority of the scholars. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded that `Aishah and Umm Salamah said that Allah's Messenger used to wake up while Junub from sexual intercourse, not wet dreams, and he would take a bath and fast. Umm Salamah added that he would not break his fast or make up for that day.

Muslim recorded that `Aishah said that a man asked:

Fasting ends at Sunset

Allah said:

(...then complete your fast till the nightfall.)

This Ayah orders breaking the fast at sunset. It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that `Umar bin Al-Khattab said that Allah's Messenger said:

(If the night comes from this direction (the east), and the day departs from that direction (the west), then the fasting person breaks his fast.)

It is reported that Sahl bin Sa`d As-Sa`idi narrated that Allah's Messenger said:
The people will retain goodness as long as they hasten in breaking the fast.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said:

(Allah the Exalted said, `The dearest among My servants to Me are those who hasten in breaking the fast the most.')

At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith and said that this Hadith is Hasan Gharib.

Prohibition of Uninterrupted Fasting (Wisal)

There are several authentic Hadiths that prohibit Al-Wisal, which means continuing the fast through the night to the next night, without eating. Imam Ahmad recorded Abu Hurayrah saying that Allah's Messenger said:

(Do not practice Al-Wisal in fasting.) So, they said to him, “But you practice Al-Wisal, O Allah's Messenger!" The Prophet replied, “(I am not like you, I am given food and drink during my sleep by my Lord.) So, when the people refused to stop Al-Wisal, the Prophet fasted two days and two nights (along with those who practiced Wisal) and then they saw the crescent moon (of the month of Shawwal). The Prophet said to them (angrily):
(If the crescent had not appeared, I would have made you fast for a longer period.)

That was as a punishment for them (when they refused to stop practicing Al-Wisal). This Hadith is also recorded in the Sahihayn.

The prohibition of Al-Wisal was also mentioned in a number of other narrations. It is a fact that practicing Al-Wisal was one of the special qualities of the Prophet, for he was capable and assisted in his practice of it. It is obvious that the food and drink that the Prophet used to get while practicing Al-Wisal was spiritual and not material, otherwise he would not be practicing Al-Wisal. We should mention that it is allowed to refrain from breaking the fast from sunset until before dawn (Suhur). A Hadith narrated by Abu Sa`id Khudri states that Allah's Messenger said:

«لا نُوَاصِلُوا فَاعِلَكُمْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُوَاصِلَ فَلِيُوَاصِلْ إِلَى السَّحْرَ»

(Do not practice Al-Wisal, but whoever wishes is allowed to practice it until the Suhur.)

They said, "You practice Al-Wisal, O Messenger of Allah!" He said:

«إِنِّي لَسْتُ كَهَيْبِيْتُكُمْ، إِنَّ أَبِي أَبِيَتُ لِي مُطْعِمُ يُطْعِمُنِي وَسَاقِ يَسْقِينِي»

(I am not similar to you, for I have One Who makes me eat and drink during the night.) This Hadith is also collected in the Two Sahihs.

The Rulings of I` tikaf

Allah said:

(وَلَا تَبَشَّرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَكَفُونَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ)

(And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I` tikaf in the Masjids.)
Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "This Ayah is about the man who stays in I'tikaf at the mosque during Ramadan or other months, Allah prohibited him from touching (having sexual intercourse with) women, during the night or day, until he finishes his I’tikaf." Ad-Dahhak said, "Formerly, the man who practiced I’tikaf would go out of the mosque and, if he wished, would have sexual intercourse (with his wife). Allah then said:

(وَلَا تَبْشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَكْفُونَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ)

(And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I’tikaf in the Masjids.) meaning, `Do not touch your wives as long as you are in I’tikaf, whether you were in the mosque or outside of it.'" It is also the opinion of Mujahid, Qatadah and several other scholars, that the Muslims used to have sexual intercourse with the wife while in I’tikaf if they departed the mosque until the Ayah was revealed. Ibn Abu Hatim commented, "It was reported that Ibn Mas'ud, Muhammad bin Ka'b, Mujahid, `Ata' Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Muqatil said that the Ayah means, `Do not touch the wife while in I’tikaf.'"

What Ibn Abu Hatim reported from these people is the agreed upon practice among the scholars. Those who are in I’tikaf are not allowed to have sexual intercourse as long as they are still in I’tikaf in the mosque. If one has to leave the mosque to attend to a need, such as to relieve the call of nature or to eat, he is not allowed to kiss or embrace his wife or to busy himself with other than his I’tikaf. He is not even allowed to visit ailing persons, but he can merely ask about their condition while passing by. I’tikaf has several other rulings that are explained in the books (of Fiqh), and we have mentioned several of these rulings at the end of our book on Sıyam (Fasting), all praise is due to Allah. Furthermore, the scholars of Fiqh used to follow their explanation of the rules for fasting with the explanation of the rules for I’tikaf, as this is the way these acts of worship were mentioned in the Qur'an.

By mentioning I’tikaf after fasting, Allah draws attention to practicing I’tikaf during the month of the fast, especially the last part of the month. The Sunnah of Allah's Messenger is that he used to perform I’tikaf during the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan until he died. Afterwards, the Prophet's wives used to perform I’tikaf as the Two Sahihs recorded from `A'ishah the Mother of the believers. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Safiyyah, the daughter of Huyai, went to Allah's Messenger to visit him in the mosque while he was in I’tikaf. She had a talk with him for a while, then she got up in order to return home. The Prophet accompanied her back home, as it was night. Her house was at Usamah bin Zayd's house on the edge of Al-Madinah. While they were walking, two Ansari men met them and passed by them in a hurry, for they were shy to bother the Prophet while he was walking with his wife. He told them:

(عَلَى رَسُّلِكُمْ، إِنَّهَا صَفِيَّةُ بَنْتُ حَيْيٍ)

(Do not run away! She is (my wife) Safiyyah bint Huyai.) Both of them said, "All praise is due to Allah, (How dare we think of any evil) O Allah's Messenger!" The Prophet said (to them):
(Shaytan reaches everywhere in the human body, that the blood reaches. I was afraid lest Shaytan might suggest an evil thought in your minds.)

Imam Ash-Shafi`i commented, “Allah's Messenger sought to teach his Ummah to instantly eliminate any evil thought, so that they do not fall into the prohibited. They (the two Ansari men) had more fear of Allah than to think evil of the Prophet. Allah knows best.”

The Ayah (2:187) prohibits sexual intercourse and anything like kissing or embracing that might lead to it during I`itikaf. As for having the wife helping the husband, it is allowed. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that `Aishah said, “Allah's Messenger would bring his head near me (in her room) and I would comb his hair, while I was on my menses. He would enter the room only to attend to what a man needs.”

Allah's statement:

(These are the limits (set) by Allah) means, `This is what We have explained, ordained, specified, allowed and prohibited for fasting. We also mentioned the fast's objectives, what is permitted during it, and what is required of it. These are the set limits that Allah has legislated and explained, so do not come near them or transgress them.' `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said, "(Allah's set limits mentioned in the Ayah) mean these four limits (and he then recited):

(Aحل لكم ليلة الصيام الرفَّث إلى نسألكم) (It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of As-Siyam (fasting).) and he recited up to:

(ثم أتموا الصيام إلى الليل) (then complete your Sawm (fast) till the nightfall.) My father and other’s used to say similarly and recite the same Ayah to us."

Allah said:
(Thus does Allah make clear His Ayat to mankind) meaning, `Just as He explains the fast and its rulings, He also explains the other rulings by the words of His servant and Messenger, Muhammad.' Allah continues:

(بِلِلَّنَّاسِ لِعَلَّهُمْ يَتَقُونَ)

(to mankind that they may attain Taqwa.) meaning, `So that they know how to acquire the true guidance and how to worship (Allah).’ Similarly, Allah said:

(هُوَ الَّذِي يُنْزِلُ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ آيَتَ بِينَتٍ لِيُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنَ الظُّلْمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(It is He Who sends down manifest Ayat to His servant (Muhammad) that He may bring you out from (types of) darkness into the light. And verily, Allah is to you full of kindness, Most Merciful.) (57:9)

(وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بِينَتٍ بَيْنَكُمْ بَالْبَاطِلِ وَنُدْلِلْكُمْ بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ البَالِئِمِ وَأَنْثَمُ نَعَلَمُونَ)

(188. And eat up not one another's property unjustly (in any illegal way, e.g., stealing, robbing, deceiving), nor give bribery to the rulers (judges before presenting your cases) that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully.)

**Bribery is prohibited and is a Sin**

Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "This (Ayah 2:188) is about the indebted person when there is no evidence of the loan. So he denies taking the loan and the case goes to the authorities, even though he knows that it is not his money and that he is a sinner, consuming what is not allowed for him." This opinion was also reported from Mujahid, Sа’id bin Jubayr, ‘Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatatdah, As-Su’di, Muqatil bin Hayan and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam. They all stated, "Do not dispute when you know that you are being unjust."
The Judge’s Ruling does not allow the Prohibited or prohibit the Lawful

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Umm Salamah narrated that Allah’s Messenger said:

«أَلَا إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ وَإِنَّمَا يَأْتِينَا الْخَصْمُ فَلَعْلَعْ بِغْضَكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَلْحَنٌ بَحْجِيْتُهُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَأَفْضِيْهِ لَهُ فَمَنْ قَضَىْتُ لَهُ بِحَقِّ مُسْلِمٍ فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ قَطَعَةُ مِن نَارٍ فَلْيَحْمُلْهَا أَوْ لَيَدِرْهَا»

(I am only human! You people present your cases to me, and as some of you may be more eloquent and persuasive in presenting his argument, I might issue a judgment in his benefit. So, if I give a Muslim’s right to another, I am really giving him a piece of fire; so he should not take it.)

The Ayah and the Hadith prove that the judgment of the authorities in any case does not change the reality of the truth. Hence, the ruling does not allow what is in fact prohibited or prohibit what is in fact allowed. It is only applicable in that case. So if the ruling agrees with the truth, then there is no harm in this case. Otherwise, the judge will acquire his reward, while the cheater will acquire the evil burden.

This is why Allah said:

(وَلا تَأَكُّلَوا أَمْوَآلكُمْ بِبَيْتَكُمْ بَالبَاطِلِ وَتَدْلُّوا بِهَا إِلَى الحُكَّامِ لِتَأَكُّلَوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بالإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(And eat up not one another’s property unjustly, nor give bribery to the rulers (judges before presenting your cases) that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully.)

meaning, ‘While you know the falsehood of what you claim.’ Qatadah said, ‘O son of Adam! Know that the judge’s ruling does not allow you what is prohibited or prohibit you from what is allowed. The judge only rules according to his best judgment and according to the testimony of the witnesses. The judge is only human and is bound to make mistakes. Know that if the judge erroneously rules in some one’s favor, then that person will still encounter the dispute when the disputing parties meet Allah on the Day of Resurrection. Then, the unjust person will be judged swiftly and precisely with that which will surpass whatever he acquired by the erroneous judgment he received in the life of this world.’
(189. They ask you (O Muhammad) about the crescents. Say: "These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage." It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, etc.) that you enter the houses from the back, but Al-Birr is from Taqwa. So enter houses through their proper doors, and have Taqwa of Allah that you may be successful.)

The Crescent Moons

Al-'Awfi related that Ibn `Abbas said, "The people asked Allah's Messenger about the crescent moons. Thereafter, this Ayah was revealed:

(189. They ask you (O Muhammad) about the crescents. Say: "These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind...) so that they mark their acts of worship, the `Iddah (the period of time a divorced woman or a widow is required to wait before remarrying) of their women and the time of their Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah)." `Abdur-Razzaq reported that Ibn `Umar narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

(Allah has made the crescents signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind. Hence, fast on seeing it (the crescent for Ramadan) and break the fast on seeing it (the crescent for Shawwal). If it (the crescent) was obscure to you then count thirty days (mark that month as thirty days).) WThis Hadith was also collected by Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak, and he said, "The chain is Sahih, and they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not recorded it."

Righteousness comes from Taqwa
Allah said:

(وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ يَأْتِي أَن تَأْتِوا الْبَيْتَ وَمِنْ ظُهُورِهَا)

(وَلَكَنْ الْبِرُّ مَنْ أَتَقَى وَأَتَوْا الْبَيْتَ مِنْ أَبْوَبِهَا)

(It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, etc.) that you enter the houses from the back, but Al-Birr is from Taqwa. So enter houses through their proper doors.)

Al-Bukhari recorded that Al-Bara' said, "During the time of Jahiliyyah, they used to enter the house from the back upon assuming the Ihram. Thereafter, Allah revealed (the following Ayah):

(وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ يَأْتِي أَن تَأْتِوا الْبَيْتَ وَمِنْ ظُهُورِهَا)

(وَلَكَنْ الْبِرُّ مَنْ أَتَقَى وَأَتَوْا الْبَيْتَ مِنْ أَبْوَبِهَا)

(It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, etc.) that you enter the houses from the back but Al-Birr is from Taqwa. So enter houses through their proper doors.)

Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded the same Hadith from Al-Bara' but with the wording; "The Ansar used to enter their houses from the back when returning from a journey. Thereafter, this Ayah (2:189 above) was revealed..."

Al-Hasan said, "When some people during the time of Jahiliyyah would leave home to travel, and then decide not to travel, they would not enter the house from its door. Rather, they would climb over the back wall. Allah the Exalted said:

(وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ يَأْتِي أَن تَأْتِوا الْبَيْتَ وَمِنْ ظُهُورِهَا)

(وَلَكَنْ الْبِرُّ مَنْ أَتَقَى وَأَتَوْا الْبَيْتَ مِنْ أَبْوَبِهَا)

(It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness) that you enter the houses from the back,).

Allah's statement:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفِلِحُونَ)

(...and have Taqwa of Allah that you may be successful.) Have Taqwa of Allah, means to do what He has commanded you and refrain from what He has forbidden for you,
(that you may be successful.) tomorrow when you stand before Him and He thus rewards you perfectly.

(وَقُتِّلُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقْتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُواْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحْبِبُ المُعَتَّدِينَ - وَقَتِلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقْتِلُوهُمْ وَأَخْرَجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوْكُمْ وَالْقَتَّالُ أَشْدَدُ مِنَ الْقَتَّالِ وَلَا تَقْتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّى يَقْتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنَّ قَتِلُوكُمْ فَاقْتِلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَفِّرِينَ - فَإِنْ انتَهَوْاْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ - وَقَتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِئَةٌ وَيَّكَنَّ الَّذِينَ لَهُ فَإِنْ انتَهَوْاْ فَلَا عَدَوْنَ إِلَّا عَلَى الْظَّلَمِينَ)

(190. And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors.) (191. And kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out. And Al-Fitnah is worse than killing. And fight not with them at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the sanctuary at Makkah), unless they (first) fight you there. But if they attack you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers.) (192. But if they cease, then Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) (193. And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allah) and the religion (all and every kind of worship) is for Allah (Alone). But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against Az-Zalimin (the polytheists and wrongdoers).)

The Command to fight Those Who fight Muslims and killing Them wherever They are found

Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi said that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that Abu Al-`Aliyah commented on what Allah said:
(And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you,)

Abu Al-'Aliyah said, "This was the first Ayah about fighting that was revealed in Al-Madinah. Ever since it was revealed, Allah's Messenger used to fight only those who fought him and avoid non-combatants. Later, Surat Bara'ah (chapter 9 in the Qur'an) was revealed." `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said similarly, then he said that this was later abrogated by the Ayah:

(فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدَنَّمُوْهُمْ)

(then kill them wherever you find them) (9:5).

However, this statement is not plausible, because Allah's statement:

(الَّذِينَ يُقْتِلُونَكُمْ)

(...those who fight you) applies only to fighting the enemies who are engaged in fighting Islam and its people. So the Ayah means, `Fight those who fight you', just as Allah said (in another Ayah):

(وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَآيَةٍ كَمَا يُقْتِلُونَكُمْ كَآيَةٍ)

(...and fight against the Mushrikin collectively as they fight against you collectively.) (9:36)

This is why Allah said later in the Ayah:

(وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ نَقْتُلُوْهُمْ وَأَخْرَجُوْهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوْهُمْ)

(And kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out.) meaning, `Your energy should be spent on fighting them, just as their energy is spent on fighting you, and on expelling them from the areas from which they have expelled you, as a law of equality in punishment.'

The Prohibition of mutilating the Dead and stealing from the captured Goods

Allah said:

(وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يَحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ)
This Ayah means, `Fight for the sake of Allah and do not be transgressors,' such as, by committing prohibitions. Al-Hasan Al-Basri stated that transgression (indicated by the Ayah), "includes mutilating the dead, theft (from the captured goods), killing women, children and old people who do not participate in warfare, killing priests and residents of houses of worship, burning down trees and killing animals without real benefit." This is also the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, `Umar bin `Abdul-'Aziz, Muqatil bin Hayyan and others. Muslim recorded in his Sahih that Buraydah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

Fight for the sake of Allah and fight those who disbelieve in Allah. Fight, but do not steal (from the captured goods), commit treachery, mutilate (the dead), or kill a child, or those who reside in houses of worship.

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Ibn `Umar said, "A woman was found dead during one of the Prophet's battles and the Prophet then forbade killing women and children. " There are many other Hadiths on this subject.

**Shirk is worse than Killing**

Since Jihad involves killing and shedding the blood of men, Allah indicated that these men are committing disbelief in Allah, associating with Him (in the worship) and hindering from His path, and this is a much greater evil and more disastrous than killing. Abu Malik commented about what Allah said:

(And Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.) Meaning what you (disbelievers) are committing is much worse than killing," Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that what Allah said:

(And Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.) "Shirk (polytheism) is worse than killing."
Fighting in the Sacred Area is prohibited, except in Self-Defense

Allah said:

(ولا تقتلوهم عند المسجد الحرام)

(And fight not with them at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the sanctuary at Makkah))

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that the Prophet said:

(إن هذا البلد حرمه الله يوم خلق السموات والأرض، فهو حرام بحرمته الله إلى يوم القيامة، ولم يحل لي إلا ساعة من نهار، وإنها ساعتي هذه حرام بحرمته الله إلى يوم القيامة، لا يعصده شجره، ولا يحتل خلاه، فإن أحد تركح يقتال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقولوا: إن الله أذن له رسوله ولم يذن لكم)

(Allah has made this city a sanctuary since the day He created the heavens and the earth. So, it is a sanctuary by Allah's decree till the Day of Resurrection. Fighting in it was made legal for me only for an hour in the daytime. So, it (i.e., Makkah) is a sanctuary, by Allah's decree, from now on until the Day of Resurrection. Its trees should not be cut, and its grass should not be uprooted. If anyone mentions the fighting in it that occurred by Allah's Messenger, then say that Allah allowed His Messenger, but did not allow you.)

In this Hadith, Allah's Messenger mentions fighting the people of Makkah when he conquered it by force, leading to some deaths among the polytheists in the area of the Khandamah. This occurred after the Prophet proclaimed:

(من أعلق بابه فهو آمن، ومن دخل المسجد فهو آمن، ومن دخل دار أبي سفيان فهو آمن)
(Whoever closed his door is safe. Whoever entered the (Sacred) Mosque is safe. Whoever entered the house of Abu Sufyan is also safe.)

Allah said:

(حَتَّى يُقْتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنْ قُتُلْكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَا لِكَ)

(جَزَآءُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(...unless they (first) fight you there. But if they attack you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers.)

Allah states: `Do not fight them in the area of the Sacred Mosque unless they start fighting you in it. In this case, you are allowed to fight them and kill them to stop their aggression.' Hence, Allah's Messenger took the pledge from his Companions under the tree (in the area of Al-Hudaybiyyah) to fight (the polytheists), after the tribes of Quraysh and their allies, Thaqif and other groups, collaborated against the Muslims (to stop them from entering Makkah to visit the Sacred House). Then, Allah stopped the fighting before it started between them and said:

(وَهُوَ الَّذِى كُفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنَّكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنَّهُمْ)

(بِبَطْنِ مَكَةَ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ أُظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(And He it is Who has withheld their hands from you and your hands from them in the midst of Makkah, after He had made you victors over them.) (48:24) and:

(وَلَوْلَا رَجَالٌ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَنسَاءٌ مُؤْمِنَاتٌ لَمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَنْ تَطْمُّهُمْ قَتَّالُوْهُمْ فَتُصْبِيْكُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَعَرَةً بَعْرُ)

(عَلَمَ لِيَدْخُلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مِنْ يَشَاءٍ لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا)

(لَعَدْبِنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيماً)

(Had there not been believing men and believing women whom you did not know, that you may kill them and on whose account a sin would have been committed by you without (your) knowledge, that Allah might bring into His mercy whom He wills if they (the believers and the disbelievers) had been apart, We verily, would have punished those of them who disbelieved with painful torment.) (48:25)

Allah's statement:
(But if they cease, then Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) which means, 'If they (polytheists) cease fighting you in the Sacred Area, and come to Islam and repent, then Allah will forgive them their sins, even if they had before killed Muslims in Allah's Sacred Area.' Indeed, Allah's forgiveness encompasses every sin, whatever its enormity, when the sinner repents it.

The Order to fight until there is no more Fitnah

Allah then commanded fighting the disbelievers when He said:

(حتَى لا تَكُون فِتْنَة)

(...until there is no more Fitnah) meaning, Shirk. This is the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi`, Muqatil bin Hayyan, As-Suddi and Zayd bin Aslam.

Allah's statement:

(ويَكُون الْدِّينُ لِلَّهِ)

(...and the religion (all and every kind of worship) is for Allah (Alone).) means, 'So that the religion of Allah becomes dominant above all other religions.' It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said: "The Prophet was asked, `O Allah's Messenger! A man fights out of bravery, and another fights to show off, which of them fights in the cause of Allah' The Prophet said:

«من قاتل لتكون كلمة الله هي العليا فهو في سبيل الله»

(He who fights so that Allah's Word is superior, then he fights in Allah's cause.) In addition, it is reported in the Two Sahihs:

«أُمِرْتُ أن أُقُاتِلِ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَقُولُوا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الله، فَإِذًا قَالُوهَا عَصَمُوا مَنْي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَموَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بَحْقَهَا وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ»
(I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight the people until they proclaim, `None has the right to be worshipped but Allah'. Whoever said it, then he will save his life and property from me, except for cases of the law, and their account will be with Allah.)

Allah’s statement:

(فَإِنْ اتَّبَعْتُكُمْ فَاعْتَدَّواٌ عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا
اعْتَدَّدُواٌ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against the wrongdoers.) indicates that, `If they stop their Shirk and fighting the believers, then cease warfare against them. Whoever fights them afterwards will be committing an injustice. Verily aggression can only be started against the unjust.' This is the meaning of Mujahid’s statement that only combatants should be fought. Or, the meaning of the Ayah indicates that, `If they abandon their injustice, which is Shirk in this case, then do not start aggression against them afterwards.' The aggression here means retaliating and fighting them, just as Allah said:

(فَإِنْ عَاقَبَتُمْ فَعَاقَبُواٌ بِمِثْلِ مَا
عَقِبْتُمْ بِهِ)

(Then whoever transgresses against you, you transgress likewise against him.) (2:194)

Similarly, Allah said:

(وَجَزَآهُ سَيْبَةٌ سَيْبَةٌ مِثْلَهَا)

(The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof.) (42:40), and:

(وَإِنْ عَاقَبَتُمْ فَعَاقَبُواٌ بِمِثْلِ مَا
عَقِبْتُمْ بِهِ)

(And if you punish them, then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted.) (16:126)

`Ikrimah and Qatadah stated, "The unjust person is he who refuses to proclaim, `There is no God worthy of worship except Allah'."

Under Allah’s statement:

(وَقَتَلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لا تَكُونَ فَتْحَةٌ)

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah) Al-Bukhari recorded that Nafi’ said that two men came to Ibn `Umar during the conflict of Ibn Az-Zubayr and said to him, "The people have
fallen into shortcomings and you are the son of `Umar and the Prophet's Companion. Hence, what prevents you from going out" He said, "What prevents me is that Allah has forbidden shedding the blood of my (Muslim) brother." They said, "Did not Allah say:

(وقتِ اللَّهِمَّ حَتَّى لا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً)

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allah))" He said, "We did fight until there was no more Fitnah and the religion became for Allah Alone. You want to fight until there is Fitnah and the religion becomes for other than Allah!"

`Uthman bin Salih added that a man came to Ibn `Umar and asked him, "O Abu `Abdur-Rahman! What made you perform Hajj one year and `Umrah another year and abandon Jihad in the cause of Allah, although you know how much He has encouraged performing it" He said, "O my nephew! Islam is built on five (pillars): believing in Allah and His Messenger, the five daily prayers, fasting Ramadan, paying the Zakah and performing Hajj (pilgrimage) to the House." They said, "O Abu `Abdur-Rahman! Did you not hear what Allah said in His Book:

( وإن طَائِفَةٌ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأُصِلِّحُوا بِيْنَهُمَا فَإِنَّ بَغْتَ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الأَخَرَى فَقُتِلُوا التَّيَ تَبْغَى حَتَّى تَفَقَّيْزَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ)

(And if two parties (or groups) among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both. But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that which outrages till it complies with the command of Allah.) (49:9) and:

(وقتِ اللَّهِمَّ حَتَّى لا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً)

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief))

He said, "That we did during the time of Allah's Messenger when Islam was still weak and (the Muslim) man used to face trials in his religion, such as killing or torture. When Islam became stronger (and apparent), there was no more Fitnah." He asked, "What do you say about `Ali and `Uthman" He said, "As for `Uthman, Allah has forgiven him. However, you hated the fact that Allah had forgiven him! As for `Ali, he is the cousin of Allah's Messenger and his son-in-law." He then pointed with his hand, saying, "This is where his house is located (meaning, `so close to the Prophet's house just as `Ali was so close to the Prophet himself')."

(الشُّهَرُ الحَرَامُ بِالشَّهَرِ الحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَتُ قَصَاصٌ فَمَن أُعَتِّدَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ)
(194. The sacred month is for the sacred month, and for the prohibited things, there is the Law of equality (Qisas). Then whoever transgresses against you, you transgress likewise against him. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is with Al-Muttaqin.)

**Fighting during the Sacred Months is prohibited, except in Self-Defense**

Ibn `Abbas, Ad-Dahhak, As-Suddi, Qatadah, Mqsam, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and `Ata said, "Allah's Messenger went for `Umrah on the sixth year of Hijrah. Then, the idolators prevented him from entering the Sacred House (the Ka`bah in Makkah) along with the Muslims who came with him. This incident occurred during the sacred month of Dhul-Qa`dah. The idolators agreed to allow them to enter the House the next year. Hence, the Prophet entered the House the following year, along with the Muslims who accompanied him, and Allah permitted him to avenge the idolators' treatment of him, when He said:

(الشَّهْرُ الحَرَامُ بَالشَّهْرِ الحَرَامَ وَالحُرُمَتْ قِصَاصٌ)

(The sacred month is for the sacred month, and for the prohibited things, there is the Law of equality (Qisas).)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said, "Allah's Messenger would not engage in warfare during the Sacred Month unless he was first attacked, then he would march forth. He would otherwise remain idle until the end of the Sacred Months." This Hadith has an authentic chain of narrators.

Hence, when the Prophet was told that `Uthman was killed (in Makkah) when he was camped at the area of Al-Hudaybiyyah, after he had sent `Uthman as his emissary to the polytheists, he accepted the pledge from his Companions under the tree to fight the polytheists. They were one thousand and four hundred then. When the Prophet was informed that `Uthman was not killed, he abandoned the fight and reverted to peace.

When the Prophet finished fighting with (the tribes of) Hawazin during the battle of Hunayn and Hawazin took refuge in (the city of) At-Ta`if, he laid siege to that city. Then, the (sacred) month of Dhul-Qa`dah started, while At-Ta`if was still under siege. The siege went on for the rest of the forty days (rather, from the day the battle of Hunayn started until the Prophet went back to Al-Madinah from Al-Ji`ranah, were forty days), as reported in the Two Sahihs and narrated by Anas. When the Companions suffered mounting casualties (during the siege), the Prophet ended the siege before conquering At-Ta`if. He then went back to Makkah, performed `Umrah from Al-Ji`ranah, where he divided the war booty of Hunayn. This `Umrah occurred during Dhul-Qa`dah of the eighth year of Al-Hijrah.
Allah's statement:

(فَمَن اعْتَدَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ يَمِثِّلُ مَا
اعْتَدَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ)  

(…whoever transgresses against you, you transgress likewise against him.) ordains justice even with the polytheists. Allah also said in another Ayah:

(وَإِنْ عَاقِبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبْهُمْ بِمِثْلِ مَا عَقِبْتُمْ بِهِ)  

(And if you punish, then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted.) (16:126)

Allah's statement:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ)  

(And fear Allah, and know that Allah is with Al-Muttaqin (the pious)) (2:194) commands that Allah be obeyed and feared out of Taqwa. The Ayah informs us that Allah is with those who have Taqwa by His aid and support in this life and the Hereafter.

(وَاتَّقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلاَ تَلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى
tَالْتَهَلَّكَةِ وَأَحْسَنْ نَأَمَّةٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسَنِينَ)  

(195. And spend in the cause of Allah and do not throw yourselves into destruction, and do good. Truly, Allah loves Al-Muhsinin (those who do good).)

The Command to spend in the Cause of Allah

Al-Bukhari recorded that Hudhayfah said:

(وَاتَّقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلاَ تَلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى
tَالْتَهَلَّكَةِ)  

(And spend in the cause of Allah and do not throw yourselves into destruction.) "It was revealed about spending." Ibn Abu Hatim reported him saying similarly. He then commented, "Similar is
reported from Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ata`, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan."

Aslam Abu `Imran said, "A man from among the Ansar broke enemy (Byzantine) lines in Constantinople (Istanbul). Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari was with us then. So some people said, `He is throwing himself to destruction.' Abu Ayyub said, `We know this Ayah (2:195) better, for it was revealed about us, the Companions of Allah's Messenger who participated in Jihad with him and aided and supported him. When Islam became strong, we, the Ansar, met and said to each other, `Allah has honored us by being the Companions of His Prophet and in supporting him until Islam became victorious and its following increased. We had before ignored the needs of our families, estates and children. Warfare has ceased, so let us go back to our families and attend to them.' So this Ayah was revealed about us:

(And spend in the cause of Allah and do not throw yourselves into destruction.) the destruction refers to staying with our families and estates and abandoning Jihad." This was recorded by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i, `Abd bin Humayd in his Tafsir, Ibn Abu Hatim, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Marduwyah, Al-Hafiz Abu Ya`la in his Musnad, Ibn Hibban and Al-Hakim. At-Tirmidhi said; "Hasan, Sahih, Gharib" Al-Hakim said, "It meets the criteria of the Two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) but they did not record it."

Abu Dawud's version mentions that Aslam Abu `Imran said, "We were at (the siege of) Constantinople. Then, `Uqbah bin `Amr was leading the Egyptian forces, while the Syrian forces were led by Fadalah bin `Ubayd. Later on, a huge column of Roman (Byzantine) soldiers departed the city, and we stood in lines against them. A Muslim man raided the Roman lines until he broke through them and came back to us. The people shouted, `All praise is due to Allah! He is sending himself to certain demise.' Abu Ayyub said, `O people! You explain this Ayah the wrong way. It was revealed about us, the Ansar when Allah gave victory to His religion and its following increased. We said to each other, `It would be better for us now if we return to our estates and attend to them.' Then Allah revealed this Ayah (2:195):'

Abu Bakr bin `Aiyash reported that Abu Ishaq As-Subai`y related that a man said to Al-Bara` bin `Azib, "If I raided the enemy lines alone and they kill me, would I be throwing myself to certain demise" He said, "No. Allah said to His Messenger:

(Then fight (O Muhammad ) in the cause of Allah, you are not tasked (held responsible) except for yourself.) (4:84) That Ayah (2:195) is about (refraining from) spending." Ibn Marduwyah reported this Hadith, as well as Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak who said; "It meets the criteria of the Two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) but they did not record it." Ath-Thawri and Qays bin Ar-Rabi` related it from Al-Bara`. but added:

(لا تُكلفُ إلاّ نفسكَ)
Destruction refers to the man who sins and refrains from repenting, thus throwing himself to destruction.

Ibn `Abbas said:

وَأَنفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَلَا تَلْقَوْا بِأَيْدِيْكُمْ إِلَى

النَّهْلَكَةِ

(And spend in the cause of Allah and do not throw yourselves into destruction) "This is not about fighting. But about refraining from spending for the sake of Allah, in which case, one will be throwing his self into destruction."

The Ayah (2:195) includes the order to spend in Allah's cause, in the various areas and ways that involve obedience and drawing closer to Allah. It especially applies to spending in fighting the enemies and on what strengthens the Muslims against the enemy. Allah states that those who refrain from spending in this regard will face utter and certain demise and destruction, meaning those who acquire this habit. Allah commands that one should acquire Ihsan (excellence in the religion), as it is the highest part of the acts of obedience. Allah said:

وَأَحْسِنُوا أَنَّ اللّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحسِنِينَ

(and do good. Truly, Allah loves Al-Muhsinin (those who do good).)
The Command to complete Hajj and `Umrah

After Allah mentioned the rulings for fasting and Jihad, he explained the rituals by commanding the Muslims to complete Hajj and `Umrah, meaning, to finish the rituals of Hajj and `Umrah after one starts them. This is why Allah said afterwards:

(فَإِنَّ أَحْصِرْ رَئِيْتُمْ)

(But if you are prevented) meaning, if your way to the House is obstructed, and you are prevented from finishing it. This is why the scholars agree that starting the acts of Hajj and `Umrah requires one to finish them. As for Makhul, he said, “Complete, means to start them from the Miqat (areas the Prophet designated to assume Ihram from).” `Abdur-Razzaq said that Az-Zuhri said: “We were told that `Umar commented on:

(وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلّهِ)

(And complete Hajj and `Umrah for Allah.) “Complete Hajj and `Umrah means performing each of them separately, and to perform `Umrah outside of the months of Hajj, for Allah the Exalted says:

(الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَةٌ)

(The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months.)”

As-Suddi said,
(And complete Hajj and `Umrah for Allah.) means, "Maintain the performance of Hajj and `Umrah." Ibn `Abbas was reported to have said, "Hajj is `Arafat, while `Umrah is Tawaf." Al-A` mash related that Ibrahim said that `Alqamah commented on Allah's statement:

وَأَتِمُّوا‏‏‏‏الْحَجَّ‏‏‏‏وَ‏‏‏‏الْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ (And complete Hajj and `Umrah for Allah.)

"Abdullah (Ibn Mas`ud) recited it this way: "Complete Hajj and `Umrah to the House, so that one does not exceed the area of the House during the `Umrah." Ibrahim then said, "I mentioned this statement to Sa`id bin Jubayr and he said; `Ibn `Abbas also said that." Sufyan reported that Ibrahim said that `Alqamah said (regarding the Ayah 2:196), "Perform the Hajj and `Umrah to the House." Ath-Thawri reported that Ibrahim read (the Ayah), "Perform the Hajj and `Umrah to the House."

**If One is prevented while in Route, He slaughters the Sacrifice, shaves his Head and ends Ihram**

Allah's statement:

قَلْنَ أَحْصِرُنَّكُمْ فَمَا أَسْتَيْسَرُ مِنَ الْهَدْوَى (But if you are prevented, sacrifice a Hady (animals for sacrifice) such as you can afford,) was revealed in the sixth year of Hijrah, the year of the treaty of Al-Hudaybiyyah when the polytheists prevented Allah's Messenger from reaching the House. Allah revealed Surat Al-Fath (chapter 48 in the Qur'an) then, and allowed the Muslims to slaughter any Hady (animals for sacrifice) they had. They had seventy camels with them for that purpose. They were also permitted to shave their heads and end their Ihram. When the Prophet commanded them to shave their heads and end the state of Ihram, they did not obey him, as they were awaiting that order to be abrogated. When they saw that the Prophet went out after shaving his head, they imitated him. Some of them did not shave, but only shortened their hair. This is why the Prophet said:

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ الْمُحْلَقِينَ (May Allah award His mercy to those who shaved.)

They said, "What about those who shortened the hair" He said in the third time, "And to those who shortened." Every seven among them shared one camel for their sacrifice. They were one thousand and four hundred Companions and were camping in the area of Al-Hudaybiyyah, outside the Sacred Area. It was also reported that they were within the boundaries of the Sacred Area. Allah knows best.

Being prevented from the House (Hasr) includes more than just being sick, fearing an enemy or getting lost on the way to Makkah. Imam Ahmad reported that Al-Hajjaj bin `Amr Al-Ansari said that he heard Allah's Messenger saying:
(Whoever suffered a broken bone or a limb, will have ended his Ihram and has to perform Hajj again.) He said, "I mentioned that to Ibn ` Abbas and Abu Hurayrah and they both said, `He (Al-Hajjaj) has said the truth."") This Hadith is also reported in the Four Collections. In the version of Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah, the Prophet said, "Whoever limped, had a broken bone or became ill..." Ibn Abu Hatim also recorded it and said, "It was reported that Ibn Mas` ud, Ibn Az-Zubayr, ` Alqamah, Sa` id bin Musayyib, ` Urwah bin Az-Zubayr, Mujahid, An-Nakha`i, ` Ata' and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that being prevented (Hasr) entails an enemy, an illness or a fracture." Ath-Thawri also said, "Being prevented entails everything that harms the person."

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that ` A`ishah said that Allah's Messenger went to Duba`ah bint Az-Zubayr bin ` Abdul-Muttalib who said, "O Messenger of Allah! I intend to perform Hajj but I am ill." He said, "Perform Hajj and make the condition: `My place is where You prevent (or halt) me." Muslim recorded similarly from Ibn ` Abbas. So saying such a condition for Hajj is allowed is based on this Hadith.

Allah's statement:

(فَمَا أَسْتَتَيْسَـرَ مِنَ الْهَدْدِ) (sacrifice a Hady such as you can afford)

(...sacrifice a Hady such as you can afford) includes a sheep also, as Imam Malik reported that ` Ali bin Abu Talib used to say. Ibn ` Abbas said, "The Hady includes eight types of animals: camels, cows, goats and sheep." ` Abdur-Razzaq reported that Ibn ` Abbas said about what Allah said:

(فَمَا أَسْتَتَيْسَـرَ مِنَ الْهَدْدِ) (sacrifice a Hady such as you can afford)

"As much as one could afford." Al-` Awfi said that Ibn ` Abbas said, "If one can afford it, then camels, otherwise cows, or sheep." Hisham bin ` Urwah quoted his father:

(فَمَا أَسْتَتَيْسَـرَ مِنَ الْهَدْدِ) (sacrifice a Hady (animal, i.e., a sheep, a cow, or a camel) such as you can afford) 'Depending on the price.'

The proof that sacrificing only a sheep is allowed in the case of being prevented from continuing the rites, is that Allah has required sacrificing whatever is available as a Hady, and the Hady is any type of cattle; be it camels, cows or sheep. This is the opinion of Ibn ` Abbas
the cousin of Allah's Messenger and the scholar of Tafsir. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that `A'ishah, the Mother of the believers, said, "The Prophet once offered some sheep as Hady."

Allah's statement:

(وَلَا تَحْلِفَا رُسُولَ ٱللَّهِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْدَى مَحْلَةٌ)

(...and do not shave your heads until the Hady reaches the place of sacrifice.) is a continuation of His statement:

(وَأَتْمُوْا الْحَجِّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ)

(And complete, the Hajj and `Umrah for Allah.) and is not dependent upon:

(فَإِنَّ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا أَسْتَيْسَرْ مِنَ الْهَدْدَى)

(But if you are prevented, then sacrifice a Hady) as Ibn Jarir has erroneously claimed. When the Prophet and his Companions were prevented from entering the Sacred House during the Al-Hudaybiyyah year by the polytheists from Quraysh, they shaved their heads and sacrificed their Hady outside the Haram (Sacred) area. In normal circumstances, and when one can safely reach the House, he is not allowed to shave his head until:

(حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْدَى مَحْلَةٌ)

(...and do not shave your heads until the Hady reaches the place of sacrifice.) and then he ends the rituals of Hajj or `Umrah, or both if he had assumed Ihram for both. It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that Hafsa said, "O Allah's Messenger! What is wrong with the people, they have finished their Ihram for `Umrah but you have not" The Prophet said,

«إِنِّي لَبَدْتُ رَأْسِي وَقَلَدْتُ هَدْدَي, فَلَا أَحْلُ حَتَّى أَنْحَرُ»

(I matted my hair and I have garlanded my Hady (animals for sacrifice), so I will not finish my Ihram till I offer the sacrifice.)

**Whoever shaved his Head during Ihram, will have to pay the Fidyah**

Allah said:
(And whosoever of you is ill or has an ailment on his scalp (necessitating shaving), he must pay a Fidyah.)

Al-Bukhari reported that `Abdur-Rahman bin Asbahani said that he heard `Abdullah bin Ma`qil saying that he sat with Ka`b bin `Ujrah in the mosque of Kufah (in Iraq). He then asked him about the Fidyah of the fasting. Ka`b said, "This was revealed concerning my case especially, but it is also for you in general. I was carried to Allah's Messenger and the lice were falling in great numbers on my face. The Prophet said:

»ما كنت أرى أن الجهاد بلغ بك هذا، أما تجدُ شاة«

(I never thought that your ailment (or struggle) had reached to such an extent as I see. Can you afford a sheep (for sacrifice)? I replied in the negative.) He then said:

»صم ثلاثة أيام أو أطعم سبعة مساكين، لكّ مساكين نصف صاع من طعام، وأحلق رأسك«

(Fast for three days or feed six poor persons, each with half a `a` of food (1 `a` = 3 kilograms approx.) and shave your head.)

So this is a general judgement derived from a specific case.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ka`b bin `Ujrah said, "Allah's Messenger came by while I was igniting the fire under a pot and while the lice were falling down my head or my eyelids. He said:

»يُؤذِيك هواء م رأسك«

(Do these lice in your head bother you) I said, `Yes.' He said:
Ayyub (one of the narrators of the Hadith) commented, "I do not know which alternative was stated first." The wording of the Qur'an begins with the easiest then the more difficult options: "Pay a Fidyah of fasting (three days), feeding (six poor persons) or sacrificing (an animal)." Meanwhile, the Prophet advised Ka`b with the more rewarding option first, that is, sacrificing a sheep, then feeding six poor persons, then fasting three days. Each Text is suitable in its place and context, all the thanks and praises are due to Allah.

Tamattu' during Hajj

Allah said:

(QDebug آمنثم فمن تمنع بالعمره إلى الحج فما
استئسير من الهدى)

(Then if you are in safety and whosoever performs the `Umrah (in the months of Hajj), before (performing) the Hajj, he must slaughter a Hady such as he can afford.)

That is, when you are able to complete the rites, so whoever among you connects his `Umrah with Hajj having the same Ihram for both, or, first assuming Ihram for `Umrah, and then assuming Ihram for Hajj when finished the `Umrah, this is the more specific type of Tamattu' which is well-known among the discussion of the scholars whereas in general there are two types of Tamattu', as the authentic Hadiths prove, since among the narrators are those who said, "Allah's Messenger performed Tamattu'," and others who said, "Qar" but there is no difference between them over the Hady.

So Allah said:

(QDebug آمنثم فمن تمنع بالعمره إلى الحج فما
استئسير من الهدى)

(Then if you are in safety and whosoever performs the `Umrah (in the months of Hajj), before (performing) the Hajj (i.e., Hajj At-Tamattu' and Al-Qiran), he must slaughter a Hady such as he can afford,) means let him sacrifice whatever Hady is available to him, the least of which is a sheep. One is also allowed to sacrifice a cow because the Prophet slaughtered cows on behalf
of his wives. Al-Awza`i reported that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger slaughtered cows on behalf of his wives when they were performing Tamattu`. This was reported by Abu Bakr bin Marduwyah.

This last Hadith proves that Tamattu` is legislated. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that `Imran bin Husayn said, "We performed Hajj At-Tamattu` in the lifetime of Allah's Messenger and then the Qur'an was revealed (regarding Hajj At-Tamattu`). Nothing was revealed to forbid it, nor did he (the Prophet) forbid it until he died. And somebody said what he wished (regarding Hajj At-Tamattu`) according to his own opinion." Al-Bukhari said that `Imran was talking about `Umar. It is reported in an authentic narration that `Umar used to discourage the people from performing Tamattu`. He used to say, "If we refer to Allah's Book, we should complete it," meaning:

(فَمَا تَمَتَّعَ بِالعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا أَسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدَى)

(...whosoever performs the `Umrah (in the months of Hajj), before (performing) the Hajj, he must slaughter a Hady such as he can afford.)

However `Umar did not say that Tamattu` is unlawful. He only prevented them so that the people would increase their trips to the House for Hajj (during the months of Hajj) and `Umrah (throughout the year), as he himself has stated.

**Whoever performs Tamattu` should fast Ten Days if He does not have a Hady**

Allah said:

(فَمَا لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةٌ أَيَامٌ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٌ إِذَا رَجِعَتْ مُثَلَّكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةً)

(...but if he cannot (afford it), he should fast three days during the Hajj and seven days after his return (to his home), making ten days in all.)

This Ayah means: "Those who do not find a Hady, let them fast three days during the Hajj season." Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, "If one does not have a Hady, he should fast three days during Hajj, before `Arafah day. If the day of `Arafah was the third day, then his fast is complete. He should also fast seven days when he gets back home." Abu Ishaq reported from Wabararah from Ibn `Umar who said, "One fasts one day before the day of Tarwiyah, the day of Tarwiyah (eighth day of Dhu-Hijjah) and then `Arafah day (the ninth day of the month of Dhu-Hijjah)." The same statement was reported by Ja`far bin Muhammad from his father from `Ali.
If one did not fast these three days or at least some of them before `Id day (the tenth day of Dhul-Hijjah), he is allowed to fast during the Tashriq days (11-12-13th day of Dhul-Hijjah). `A'ishah and Ibn `Umar said, "Fasting the days of Tashriq was only allowed for those who did not find the Hady," as Al-Bukhari has reported. Sufyan related that Ja`far bin Muhammad narrated that his father said that `Ali said, "Whoever did not fast the three days during the Hajj, should fast them during the days of Tashriq." This is also the position taken by `Ubayd bin `Umayr Al-Laythi, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri and `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr, referring to the general meaning of Allah's statement:

(فَصِيَّتَمُ تَلَفْتَةٍ أَيَامٍ فِي الحَجِّ)

(...fast three days during the Hajj...)

As for what Muslim reported that Qutaybah Al-Hudhali said that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَيَامُ التَّشْرِيقِ أَيَامٌ أَكْلٌ وَشَرْبٍ، وَذِكْرٌ اللَّهِ عَزّ وَجَلّ»

(The days of Tashriq are days of eating and drinking and remembering Allah the Exalted.)

This narration is general in meaning while what `A'ishah and Ibn `Umar narrated is specific.

Allah said:

(وَسَبْعَةٌ إِذَا رَجَعَنَّمُ)

(...and seven days after his return.)

There are two opinions regarding the meaning of this Ayah. First, it means `when you return to the camping areas'. The second, upon going back home. `Abdur-Razzaq reported that Salim narrated that he heard Ibn `Umar saying:

(فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَّتَمُ تَلَفْتَةٍ أَيَامٍ فِي الحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعَنَّمُ)

"...(but if he cannot (afford it), he should fast three days during the Hajj and seven days after his return,) means when he goes back to his family." The same opinion was reported from Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, `Ata`, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Imam Az-Zuhri and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.
Al-Bukhari reported that Salim bin `Abdullah narrated that Ibn `Umar said, “During the Farewell Hajj of Allah’s Messenger, he performed Tamattu’ with `Umrah and Hajj. He drove a Hady along with him from Dhul-Hulayfah. Allah’s Messenger started by assuming Ihram for `Umrah, and then for Hajj. And the people, too, performed the `Umrah and Hajj along with the Prophet. Some of them brought the Hady and drove it along with them, while the others did not. So, when the Prophet arrived at Makkah, he said to the people:"

(Whoever among you has driven the Hady, should not finish his Ihram till he completes his Hajj. And whoever among you has not (driven) the Hady with him, he should perform Tawaf of the Ka’bah and between As-Safa and Al-Marwah. Then, he should shave or cut his hair short and finish his Ihram, and should later assume Ihram for Hajj; but he must offer a Hady (sacrifice). And if anyone cannot afford a Hady, he should fast for three days during the Hajj and seven days when he returns home.)

He then mentioned the rest of the Hadith, which is reported in the Two Sahihs.

Allah said:

(تَلَكَ عَشَرَةُ كَامِلَةٌ)

(...making ten days in all.) to emphasize the ruling we mentioned above. This method is common in the Arabic language, for they would say, ‘I have seen with my eyes, heard with my ears and written with my hand,’ to emphasize such facts. Similarly, Allah said:

(وَلَا طَائِرٌ يَطِيرُ بِجَناحيٍ)

(...nor a bird that flies with its two wings) (6:38) and:

(وَلَا تَخْطُطُ بِبَيْنِينَكَ)
(...nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand) (29:48) and:

(وَوَعَدْنَا مُوسَىَّ تِلْثِينَ لِيَّةٍ وَأَثْمَنَاهَا بِعَشْرِ قُتْمَ مَيْكَتْ رَبَّهُ أَرْبَعِينَ لِيَّةً)

(And We appointed for Musa thirty nights and added (to the period) ten (more), and he completed the term, appointed by his Lord, of forty nights.) (7:142)

It was also said that the meaning of "ten days in all" emphasizes the order to fast for ten days, not less than that.

**The Residents of Makkah do not perform Tamattu"**

Allah said:

(ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكْنُ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الحَرَامِ)

(This is for him whose family is not present at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (i.e., non-resident of Makkah).) This Ayah concerns the residents of the area of the Haram, for they do not perform Tamattu’. `Abdur-Razzaq reported that Tawus said, “Tamattu’ is for the people, those whose families are not residing in the Haram area (Makkah), not for the residents of Makkah. Hence Allah's Statement:

(ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكْنُ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الحَرَامِ)

(This is for him whose family is not present at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (i.e., non-resident of Makkah).)

`Abdur-Razzaq then said, "I was also told that Ibn `Abbas said similar to Tawus." Allah said:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(...and fear Allah) meaning, in what He has commanded you and what He prohibited for you. He then said:
(...and know that Allah is severe in punishment) for those who defy His command and commit what He has prohibited.

(الحَج أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الحَج فَلا رَفَثَ وَلَا فَسُوقَ وَلَا حِدَالٌ فِي الحَج وَمَا تَفَعَّلَ مِنْ حِيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوْا فَإِنَّ حِيْرَ الزَّدَادِ النَّقَوْى وَانْقُونِ يَأْوِيَ اللَّهُ الأَلْبَبِ)

(197. The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known months. So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein (by assuming Ihram), then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj. And whatever good you do, Allah knows it. And take provisions for the journey, but the best provision is At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness). So fear Me, O men of understanding!)

When does Ihram for Hajj start

Allah said:

(الحَج أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ)

(The Hajj is (in) the well-known months.)

This Ayah indicates that Ihram for Hajj only occurs during the months of Hajj. This was reported from Ibn `Abbas, Jabir, `Ata', Tawus and Mujahid. The proof for this is Allah's statement that Hajj occurs during known, specific months, which indicates that Hajj is not allowed before that, just as the prayer has a fixed time (before which one's prayer is not accepted).

Ash-Shafi`i recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "No person should assume Ihram for Hajj before the months of the Hajj, for Allah said:

(الحَج أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ)

(The Hajj is (in) the well-known months.)

Ibn Khuzaymah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "No Ihram for Hajj should be assumed, except during the months of Hajj, for among the Sunnah of Hajj is that one assume Ihram for it during
the Hajj months. " This is an authentic narration and the Companion's statement that such and such is among the Sunnah is considered as a Hadith of the Prophet, according to the majority of the scholars. This is especially the case when it is Ibn ` Abbas who issued this statement, as he is the Tarjuman (translator, interpreter, explainer) of the Qur'an.

There is a Hadith about this subject too. Ibn Marduwyah related that Jabir narrated that the Prophet said:

لا يُنْبِغِي لِأحَدٍ أَنْ يُحْرُمَ بِالحَجِّ إِلَّا فِي أَشْهَرِ الحَجَّ

(No one should assume Ihram for Hajj, but during the months of Hajj.)

The chain of narrators for this Hadith is reasonable. Ash-Shafi'i and Al-Bayhaqi recorded this Hadith from Ibn Jurayj who related that Abu Az-Zubayr said that he heard Jabir bin ` Abdullah being asked, "Does one assume Ihram for Hajj before the months of the Hajj" He said, "No." This narration is more reliable than the narration that we mentioned from the Prophet. In short, this statement is the opinion of the Companion, supported by Ibn ` Abbas' statement that it is a part of the Sunnah not to assume Ihram for Hajj before the months of the Hajj. Allah knows best.

The Months of Hajj

Allah said:

(أشهر معلومة)

(...the well-known months.)

Al-Bukhari said that Ibn ` Umar said that these are Shawwal, Dhul-Qa` dah and the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah. This narration for which Al-Bukhari did not mention the chain of narrators, was collected by a continuous chain of narrators that Ibn Jarir rendered authentic, leading to Ibn ` Umar, who said:

(الحج أشهر معلومة)

(The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months.) "which are Shawwal, Dhul-Qa` dah and the (first) ten days of Dhul-Hijjah." Its chain is Sahih. Al-Hakim also recorded it in his Mustadtrak, and he said,"It meets the criteria of the Two Shaykhs."

This statement is also reported from ` Umar, ` Ali, Ibn Mas` ud, ` Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr, Ibn ` Abbas, ` Ata', Tawus, Mujahid, Ibrahim An-Nakha'i, Imam Ash-Sha'bi, Al-Hasan, Ibn Srin,
Makhul, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak bin Muzahim, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Muqatil bin Hayyan. This opinion was preferred by Ibn Jarir who said, "It is a common practice to call two months and a part of the third month as `months'. This is similar to the Arab's saying, 'I visited such and such person this year or this day.' He only visited him during a part of the year and a part of the day. Allah said:

(فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنٍ فَلا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ)

(But whosoever hastens to leave in two days, there is no sin on him.)

In this case, one will only be hastening for one and a half days."

Allah then said:

(فَمَنْ فِرَضَ فَيْهِنَّ الحَجَّ)

(So whosoever intends (Farada) to perform Hajj therein (by assuming Ihram),) meaning that one's assuming the Ihram requires a Hajj, for the person is required to complete the rituals of Hajj after assuming Ihram. Ibn Jarir said that Al-`Awfi said, "The scholars agree that (Farada) `intends' mentioned in the Ayah means it is a requirement and an obligation." "Ali bin Abu Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said:"

(فَمَنْ فِرَضَ فَيْهِنَّ الحَجَّ)

(So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein (by assuming Ihram), ) refers to those who assume Ihram for Hajj and `Umrah`. `Ata' said, "Intends', means, assumes the Ihram." Similar statements were attributed to Ibrahim, Ad-Dahhak and others.

Prohibition of Rafath (Sexual Intercourse) during Hajj

Allah said:

(قَالَ رَفَثُ)

(He should not have Rafath)

This Ayah means that those who assume the Ihram for Hajj or `Umrah are required to avoid the Rafath, meaning, sexual intercourse. Allah's statement here is similar to His statement:

(أَحَلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الْصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نَسَأَلِكُمْ)
(It is made lawful for you to have Rafath (sexual relations) with your wives on the night of the fast.) (2:187)

Whatever might lead to sexual intercourse, such as embracing, kissing and talking to women about similar subjects, is not allowed. Ibn Jarir reported that Nafi’ narrated that `Abdullah bin `Umar said, "Rafath means sexual intercourse or mentioning this subject with the tongue, by either men or women." `Ata' bin Abu Rabah said that Rafath means sexual intercourse and foul speech. This is also the opinion of `Amr bin Dinar. `Ata' also said that they used to even prevent talking (or hinting) about this subject. Tawus said that Rafath includes one's saying, "When I end the Ihram I will have sex with you." This is also the same explanation offered by Abu Al-`Aliyah regarding Rafath. `Ali bin Abu Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Rafath means having sex with the wife, kissing, fondling and saying foul words to her, and similar acts." Ibn `Abbas and Ibn `Umar said that Rafath means to have sex with women. This is also the opinion of Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Abu Al-`Aliyah who narrated it from `Ata' and Makhul, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, `Ata' bin Yasar, `Atiyah, Ibrahim, Ar-Rabi`, Az-Zuhri, As-Suddi, Malik bin Anas, Muqatil bin Hayyan, `Abdul-Karim bin Malik, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak, and others.

**The Prohibition of Fusuq during Hajj**

Allah said:

(ولا فسوق)

(...nor commit sin) Miqsam and several other scholars related that Ibn `Abbas said, "It is disobedience." This is also the opinion of `Ata,' Mujahid, Tawus, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Az-Zuhri, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Ata` bin Yasar, `Ata` Al-Khurasani and Muqatil bin Hayyan.

Ibn Wahb reported that Nafi` narrated that `Abdullah bin `Umar said, "Fusuq or sin mentioned in the Ayah (2:197) refers to committing what Allah has forbidden in the Sacred Area."

Several others said that Fusuq means cursing others, they based this on the authentic Hadith:

(سباب المسلمين فسوق وقتاله كفر)

(Cursing the Muslim is Fusuq, while fighting him is Kufr.)

`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said Fusuq here means slaughtering animals for the idols, as Allah said:

(أو فسق أهل لغير الله به)

(...or impious (Fisq) meat (of an animal) which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah.) (6:145)
Ad-Dahhak said that Fusuq is insulting one another with bad nicknames.

Those who said that the Fusuq means all types of disobedience are correct. Allah has also prohibited committing injustice during the months of Hajj in specific, although injustice is prohibited throughout the year. This is why Allah said:

(منْهَا أَرْبَعَةَ حُرْمٍ ذَلِكَ الَّذِينَ الْقَيْمَ فَلَا تَظْلِمُواْ
فيهِنَّ أَنفُسَكُمْ)

(...of them four are sacred. That is the right religion, so wrong not yourselves therein.) (9:36)

Allah said about the Sacred Area:

(وَمَن يَرْدُ فِيهِ بِالْحَادِيثِ يَظْلِمُ نَذِقَةً مِنْ عَذَابِ الْيَمِيمِ)

(...and whoever inclines to evil actions therein or to do wrong, him We shall cause to taste from a painful torment.) (22:25)

It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

(وَلا جَدَالٌ فِي الْحَجِّ)

(Whoever performed Hajj to this (Sacred) House and did not commit Rafath or Fusuq, will return sinless, just as the day his mother gave birth to him.)

The Prohibition of arguing during Hajj

Allah said:

(وَلا جَدَالٌ فِي الْحَجِّ)

(nor should there be Jidal during Hajj) meaning, disputes and arguments. Ibn Jarir related that 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud said that what Allah said:
(...nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj.) means to argue with your companion (or fellow) until you make him angry. This is similar to the the opinion that Mqsam and Ad-Dahhak related to Ibn ` Abbas. This is also the same meaning reported from Abu Al-` Aliyah, `Ata`, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Jabir bin Zayd, `Ata` Al-Khurasani, Makhul, As-Suddi, Muqatil bin Hayyan, `Amr bin Dinar, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, `Ata bin Yasar, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Az-Zuhri.

The Encouragement for Righteous Deeds and to bring Provisions for Hajj

Allah said:

(وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ)  
(And whatever good you do, Allah knows it.)

After Allah prohibited evil in deed and tongue, He encouraged righteous, good deeds, stating that He is knowledgeable of the good that they do, and He will reward them with the best awards on the Day of Resurrection.

Allah said next:

(وَتَزَوَّدُواْ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْزَّادِ الْتَقْوَى)  
(And take provisions (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).)

Al-Bukhari and Abu Dawud reported that Ibn ` Abbas said, "The people of Yemen used to go to Hajj without taking enough supplies with them. They used to say, `We are those who have Tawakkul (reliance on Allah).' Allah revealed this Ayah:

(وَتَزَوَّدُواْ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْزَّادِ الْتَقْوَى)  
(And take provisions (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).)

Ibn Jarir and Ibn Marduwyah narrated that Ibn ` Umar said, "When people assumed Ihram, they would throw away whatever provisions they had and would acquire other types of provisions. Allah revealed:

(وَتَزَوَّدُواْ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْزَّادِ الْتَقْوَى)  
(And take provisions (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).)
(And take a provisions (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).) Allah forbade them from this practice and required them to take flour and Sawiq (a type of food usually eaten with dates) with them."

The Provisions of the Hereafter

Allah said:

(فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الرَّزَادِ النَّقْوَى)

(...but the best provision is At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).) When Allah required mankind to supply themselves with what sustains them for the journeys of this life, He directed them to the necessary provisions for the Hereafter: Taqwa. Allah said in another Ayah:

(وَرِيشَةٌ وَلِبَاسٌ النَّقْوَى ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ)

(...and as an adornment; and the raiment of Taqwa, that is better.) (7:26)

Allah mentioned the material covering and then He mentioned the spiritual covering, which includes humbleness, obedience and Taqwa. He also stated that the latter provision is better and more beneficial than the former.

(وَاتَقُونَ يَأْوَلِي الأَلْبَابِ)

(198. There is no sin on you if you seek the bounty of your Lord (during pilgrimage by trading). Then when you leave `Arafat, remember Allah (by glorifying His praises, i.e., prayers and invocations) at the Mash`ar-il-Haram. And remember Him (by invoking Allah for all good) as He has guided you, and verily you were before, of those who were astray).
Commercial Transactions during Hajj

Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Ukaz, Mjannah and Dhul-Majaz were trading posts during the time of Jahiliyyah. During that era, they did not like the idea of conducting business transactions during the Hajj season. Later, this Ayah was revealed:

(There is no sin on you if you seek the bounty of your Lord.) during the Hajj season."

Abu Dawud and others recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "They used to avoid conducting business transactions during the Hajj season, saying that these are the days of Dhimr. Allah revealed:

(There is no sin on you if you seek the bounty of your Lord (during pilgrimage by trading).)

This is also the explanation of Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Mansur bin Al-Mu`tamir, Qatadah, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and others. Ibn Jarir reported that Abu Umaymah said that when Ibn `Umar was asked about conducting trade during the Hajj, he recited the Ayah:

(There is no sin on you if you seek the bounty of your Lord (during pilgrimage by trading).)

This Hadith is related to Ibn `Umar with a strong chain of narrators. This Hadith is also related to the Prophet, as Ahmad reported that Abu Umamah At-Taymi said, "I asked Ibn `Umar, 'We buy (and sell during the Hajj), so do we still have a valid Hajj?' He said, 'Do you not perform Tawaf around the House, stand at `Arafat, throw the pebbles and shave your heads' I said, 'Yes.' Ibn `Umar said, 'A man came to the Prophet and asked him about what you asked me, and the Prophet did not answer him until Jibril came down with this Ayah:

(There is no sin on you if you seek the bounty of your Lord (during pilgrimage by trading).)

The Prophet summoned the man and said: (You are pilgrims)." Ibn Jarir narrated that Abu Salih said to `Umar, "O Leader of the faithful! Did you conduct trade transactions during the Hajj" He said, "Was their livelihood except during Hajj"

Standing at `Arafat
Allah said:

(فَإِذًا أَفْضَنَّم مَنْ عَرَقَتْ فَأَذَكَّرْوَا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ
الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ)

(Then when you leave `Arafat, remember Allah (by glorifying His praises, i.e., prayers and invocations) at the Mash`ar-il-Haram.)

`Arafat is the place where one stands during the Hajj and it is a pillar of the rituals of Hajj. Imam Ahmad and the Sunan compilers recorded that `Abdur-Rahman bin Ya`mar Ad-Diyli said that he heard Allah's Messenger saying:

«الحَجُّ عَرَقَاتٌ تَلَانَاتٌ فَمَنْ أَذْرَكَ عَرَقَةً قَبْلَ أَنْ
يَطْلَعَ الْفَجْرُ فَقْدُ أَذْرَكَ، وَأَيَّامٌ مَنْىِ تَلَانَةٌ، فَمَنْ
تَعُجِّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنَ فَلَا إِنَّمَ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ تَآَخَرَ فَلَا إِنَّمَ
عَلَيْهِ»

(Hajj is `Arafat, (thrice). Hence, those who have stood at `Arafat before dawn will have performed (the rituals of the Hajj). The days of Mina are three, and there is no sin for those who move on after two days, or for those who stay.)

The time to stand on `Arafat starts from noon on the day of `Arafah until dawn the next day, which is the day of the Sacrifice (the tenth day of Dhul-Hijjah). The Prophet stood at `Arafat during the Farewell Hajj, after he had offered the Zuhr (noon) prayer, until sunset. He said, "Learn your rituals from me." In this Hadith (i.e., in the previous paragraph) he said, "Whoever stood at `Arafat before dawn, will have performed (the rituals of Hajj)." c` Urwah bin Mudarris bin Harithah bin Lam At-Ta`i said, "I came to Allah's Messenger at Al-Muzdalifah when it was time to pray. I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! I came from the two mountains of Tayy', and my animal became tired and I became tired. I have not left any mountain, but stood on it. Do I have a valid Hajj?" Allah's Messenger said:

«مَنْ شَهَدَ صَلَايَانِ هَذِهِ فَقَوَّفَ مَعَنَا حَتَّى نَذْقَعَ،
وَقَدْ قَوَّفَ بَعْرَقَةَ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ لَيْلًا أَوْ نُهَارًا فَقَدْ تَمَّ 
حَجُّهُ وَقَضَى تَقْفَتَهُ»
(Whoever performed this prayer with us, stood with us until we moved forth, and had stood at `Arafat before that, day or night, will have performed the Hajj and completed its rituals)."

This Hadith was collected by Imam Ahmad and the compilers of the Sunan, and At-Tirmidhi graded it Sahih. It was reported that the mount was called `Arafat because, as `Abdur-Razzaq reported that `Ali bin Abu Talib said, "Allah sent Jibril to Prophet Ibrahim and he performed Hajj for him (to teach him its rituals). When Ibrahim reached `Arafat he said, `I have `Araftu (I know this place).' He had come to that area before. Thereafter, it was called `Arafat." Ibn Al-Mubarak said that `Ata' said, "It was called `Arafat because Jibril used to teach Ibrahim the rituals of Hajj. Ibrahim would say, `I have `Araftu, I have `Araftu.' It was thereafter called `Arafat." Similar statements were attributed to Ibn `Abbas, Ibn `Umar and Abu Mij laz. Allah knows best.

`Arafat is also called Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram, Al-Mash`ar Al-Aqsa and Ilal, while the mount that is in the middle of `Arafat is called Jabal Ar-Rahmah (Mount of Mercy).

The Time to leave `Arafat and Al-Muzdalifah

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "During the time of Jahiliyyah, the people used to stand at `Arafat. When the sun would be on top of the mountains, just as the turban is on top of a man's head, they would move on. Allah's Messenger delayed moving from `Arafat until sunset." Ibn Marduwyah related this Hadith and added, "He then stood at Al-Muzdalifah and offered the Fajr (Dawn) prayer at an early time. When the light of dawn broke, he moved on." This Hadith has a Hasan chain of narrators. The long Hadith that Jabi r bin `Abdullah narrated, which Muslim collected, stated, "The Prophet kept standing there (meaning at `Arafat) until sunset, when the yellow light had somewhat gone and the disc of the sun had disappeared. Then, the Prophet made Usamah sit behind him, and in order to keep her under control, pulled the nose string of Al-Qaswa' so hard, that its head touched the saddle. He gestured with his right hand and said, "Proceed calmly people, calmly!" Whenever he happened to pass over an elevated tract of sand, he lightly loosened the nose string of his camel till she climbed up and this is how they reached Al-Muzdalifah. There, he led the Maghrib (Evening) and `Isha' (Night) prayers with one Adhan and two Iqamah (which announces the imminent start of the acts of the prayer) and did not glorify Allah in between them (i.e., he did not perform voluntary Rak`ah). Allah's Messenger then laid down till dawn and offered the Fajr (Dawn) prayer with Adhan and Iqamah, when the morning light was clear. He again mounted Al-Qaswa', and when he came to Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram, he faced towards Qiblah, supplicated to Allah, glorifying Him and saying, La ilaha illallah, and he continued standing until the daylight was very clear. He then went quickly before the sun rose."

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Usamah bin Zayd was asked, "How was the Prophet's pace when he moved" He said, "Slow, unless he found space, then he would go a little faster."

Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram

`Abdur-Razzaq reported that Ibn `Umar said that all of Al-Muzdalifah is Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram. It was reported that Ibn `Umar was asked about Allah's statement:
(...remember Allah (by glorifying His praises, i.e., prayers and invocations) at the Mash`ar-il-Haram.) He said, "It is the Mount and the surrounding area." It was reported that Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram is what is between the two Mounts (refer to the following Hadith), as Ibn `Abbas, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Al-Hasan and Qatadah have stated.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Jubayr bin Mut`im narrated that the Prophet said:

«كلّ عرفات موقفٍ، وارفعوا عن عرّنة، وكلّ مزدقة موقفٍ، وارفعوا عن مُحسَرٍ، وكلّ فجّاج مكة منحرٍ، وكلّ أيام التشرُيق ذبحٌ»

(All of `Arafat is a place of standing, and keep away from `Uranah. All of Al-Muzdalifah is a place for standing, and keep away from the bottom of Muhassir. All of the areas of Makkah are a place for sacrifice, and all of the days of Tashriq are days of sacrifice.)

Allah then said:

(واذْكُروُهُمَا هَدَاكُمْ)

(And remember Him (by invoking Allah for all good) as He has guided you.)

This Ayah reminds Muslims of Allah's bounty on them that He has directed and taught them the rituals of Hajj according to the guidance of Prophet Ibrahim Al-Khalil. This is why Allah said:

(...and verily, you were, before, of those who were astray.)

It was said that this Ayah refers to the condition before the guidance or the Qur'an or the Messenger, all of which are correct meanings.
(199. Then depart from the place whence all the people depart and ask Allah for His forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.

The Order to stand on `Arafat and to depart from it

This Ayah contains Allah's order to those who stand at `Arafat to also move on to Al-Muzdalifah, so that they remember Allah at Al-Mash'ar Al-Haram. Allah commands the Muslim to stand with the rest of the pilgrims at `Arafat, unlike Quraysh who (before Islam) used to remain in the sanctuary, near Al-Muzdalifah, saying that they are the people of Allah's Town and the servants of His House. Al-Bukhari reported that `Aishah said, "Quraysh and their allies, who used to be called Al-Hums, used to stay in Al-Muzdalifah while the rest of the Arabs would stand at `Arafat. When Islam came, Allah commanded His Prophet to stand at `Arafat and then proceed from there. Hence Allah's statement:

(من حَيْثُ أُقِفَتْ النَّاسُ)

(...from the place whence all the people depart.)

This was also said by Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ata', Qatadah and As-Suddi and others. Ibn Jarir chose this opinion and said that there is Ijma` (a consensus among the scholars) for it.

Imam Ahmad reported that Jubayr bin Mut`im said, "My camel was lost and I went out in search of it on the day of `Arafah, and I saw the Prophet standing in `Arafat. I said to myself, `By Allah he is from the Hums. What has brought him here?' This Hadith is also reported in the Sahihayn. Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that `depart' mentioned in the Ayah refers to proceeding from Al-Muzdalifah to Mina to stone the pillars. Allah knows best.

Asking Allah for His Forgiveness

Allah said:

(وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(...and ask Allah for His forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.)

Allah frequently orders remembrance of Him after acts of worship are finished. Muslim reported that Allah's Messenger used to ask Allah for His forgiveness thrice after the prayer is finished. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that the Prophet encouraged Tasbih (saying Subhan Allah, i.e., Glorified is Allah), Tahmid (saying Al-Hamdu Lillah, i.e., praise be to Allah) and Takbir (saying Allahu Akbar, i.e., Allah is the Most Great) thirty-three times each (after prayer).

Ibn Marduwyah collected the Hadith that Al-Bukhari reported from Shaddad bin Aws, who stated that Allah's Messenger said:
The master of supplication for forgiveness, is for the servant to say: `O Allah! You are my Lord, there is no deity worthy of worship except You. You have created me and I am Your servant. I am on Your covenant, as much as I can be, and awaiting Your promise. I seek refuge with You from the evil that I have committed. I admit Your favor on me and admit my faults. So forgive me, for none except You forgives the sins.' Whoever said these words at night and died that same night will enter Paradise. Whoever said it during the day and died will enter Paradise.)

Furthermore, it is reported in the Two Sahihs that `Abdullah bin `Amr said that Abu Bakr said, "O Messenger of Allah! Teach me an invocation so that I may invoke (Allah) with it in my prayer. He told me to say:

(Allahumma inni zalamtu nafsi z ulman kathiran, wa la yaghfirudh-dhunuba illa Anta faghfirli maghfiratan min `indika, war-hamni innaka Antal-Ghafur-ur-Rahim (O Allah! I have done great injustice to myself and none except You forgives sins, so please forgive me and be merciful to me as You are the Forgiver, the Merciful).)

There are many other Hadiths on this subject.
(200. So when you have accomplished your Manasik, remember Allah as you remember your forefathers or with far more remembrance. But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.) (201. And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!") (202. For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is swift at reckoning.)

The Order for Remembrance of Allah and seeking Good in this Life and the Hereafter upon completing the Rites of Hajj

Allah commands that He be remembered after the rituals are performed.

(...as you remember your forefathers)

Ṣa`id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas said, "During the time of Jahiliyyah, people used to stand during the (Hajj) season, and one of them would say, "My father used to feed (the poor), help others (end their disputes, with his money), pay the Diyah (i.e., blood money)," and so forth. The only Dhirr that they had was that they would remember the deeds of their fathers. Allah then revealed to Muhammad:

(200. So when you have accomplished your Manasik, remember Allah as you remember your forefathers or with far more remembrance. But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.) (201. And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!") (202. For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is swift at reckoning.)

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(Remember Allah as you remember your forefathers or with far more remembrance.)

Therefore, remembering Allah the Exalted and Ever High is always encouraged. We should mention that when Allah used "or" in the Ayah, He meant to encourage the people to remember Him more than they remember their forefathers, not that the word entails a doubt (as to which is larger or bigger). This statement is similar to the Ayat:
(فَهِىُّ الْحِجَّارَةَ أَوْ أَشْدُدُ قَسْوَةً)

(...as stones or even worse in hardness) (2:74) and,

(يُحْشَوْنُ النَّاسُ كَحَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشْدُدَ حَشْيَةً)

(...fear men as they fear Allah or even more) (4:77) and,

(وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى مَائَةٍ أَلْفٍ أَوْ يَزِيدُونَ)

(And We sent him to a hundred thousand (people) or even more) (37:147) and,

(فَكَانَ قَابَ قُوْسِينَ أَوْ أَدْنَى)

(And was at a distance of two bows' length or (even) nearer.) (53:9)

Allah encourages calling Him in supplication after remembering Him, because this will make it more likely that the supplication will be accepted. Allah also criticizes those who only supplicate to Him about the affairs of this life, while ignoring the affairs of the Hereafter. Allah said:

(فَمَنَّ النَّاسَ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبِّنَا عَائَتَنَا فِى الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِى الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خُلْقٍ)

(But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.) meaning, they have no share in the Hereafter. This criticism serves to discourage other people from imitating those mentioned.

Sa’id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Some bedouins used to come to the standing area (`Arafat) and supplicate saying, `O Allah! Make it a rainy year, a fertile year and a year of good child bearing.' They would not mention any of the affairs of the Hereafter. Thus, Allah revealed about them:

(فَمَنَّ النَّاسَ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبِّنَا عَائَتَنَا فِى الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِى الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خُلْقٍ)
(But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.)

The believers who came after them used to say:

(ربّنَا إِنَّا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةَ وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةَ وَقَنَّا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!)

Next, Allah revealed:

(وَأَلْقَى لَهُمْ نَصِيبًا مَّمَّا كَسبُوا وَاللّهُ سَرِيعُ الحَسَابِ)

(For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is swift at reckoning.)

Hence, Allah praised those who ask for the affairs of both this life and the Hereafter. He said:

(وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يُقُولُ رَبّنَا إِنَّا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةَ وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةَ وَقَنَّا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!"

The supplication mentioned and praised in the Ayah includes all good aspects of this life and seeks refuge from all types of evil. The good of this life concerns every material request of well-being, spacious dwelling, pleasing mates, sufficient provision, beneficial knowledge, good profession or deeds, comfortable means of transportation and good praise, all of which the scholars of Tafsir have mentioned regarding this subject. All of these are but a part of the good that is sought in this life. As for the good of the Hereafter, the best of this includes acquiring Paradise, which also means acquiring safety from the greatest horror at the gathering place. It also refers to being questioned lightly and the other favors in the Hereafter.

As for acquiring safety from the Fire, it includes being directed to what leads to this good end in this world, such as avoiding the prohibitions, sins of all kinds and doubtful matters.
Al-Qasim bin `Abdur-Rahman said, "Whoever is gifted with a grateful heart, a remembering tongue and a patient body, will have been endowed with a good deed in this life, a good deed in the Hereafter and saved from the torment of the Fire."

This is why the Sunnah encourages reciting this Du`a’ (i.e., in the Ayah about gaining a good deed in this life and the Hereafter). Al-Bukhari reported that Anas bin Malik narrated that the Prophet used to say:

«اللّهُمَّ رَبِّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَّا عَذَابَ النَّارِ»

(O Allah, our Lord! Give us that which is good in this life, that which is good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of the Fire.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Anas said, "Allah's Messenger visited a Muslim man who had become as weak as a sick small bird. Allah's Messenger said to him, 'Were you asking or supplicating to Allah about something' He said, 'Yes. I used to say: O Allah! Whatever punishment you saved for me in the Hereafter, give it to me in this life.' Allah's Messenger said:

«سُبْحَانَ اللهِ لَا تُطَيِّقُهُ أو لَا تَسْتَطَيِّعُهُ، فَهَلَا قَلْتَ»

(ربَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَّا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(All praise is due to Allah! You cannot bear it -or stand it-. You should have said: (Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!))

The man began reciting this Du`a and he was cured." Muslim also recorded it.

Al-Hakim reported that Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "A man came to Ibn `Abbas and said, 'I worked for some people and settled for a part of my compensation in return for their taking me to perform Hajj with them. Is this acceptable' Ibn `Abbas said, 'You are among those whom Allah described:

(أوَلِئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مَّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللّهُ سَرِيعُ الحِسابِ)
(For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is swift at reckoning.)

Al-Hakim then commented: "This Hadith is authentic according to the criteria of the Two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) although they did not record it."

وَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَةٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجلَ فِي يَوْمِينَ فَلَا إِذْمَ علَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِذْمَ علَيْهِ لِمَنْ أتَقَى وَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ وَأَعْلَمُوا أنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

(203. And remember Allah during the Appointed Days. But whosoever hastens to leave in two days, there is no sin on him and whosoever stays on, there is no sin on him, if his aim is to do good and obey Allah (fear Him), and know that you will surely be gathered unto Him.)

**Remembering Allah during the Days of Tashriq - Days of Eating and Drinking**

Ibn `Abbas said, `The Appointed Days are the Days of Tashriq (11-12-13th of Dhul-Hijjah) while the Known Days are the (first) ten (days of Dhul-Hijjah)."` Ikrimah said that:

وَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَةٍ

(And remember Allah during the Appointed Days.) means reciting the Takbir -- Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, during the days of Tashriq after the compulsory prayers.

Imam Ahmad reported that `Uqbah bin `Amr said that Allah's Messenger said:

بَوْمُ عِرْفَة، وَبَوْمُ النَّحْر، وَأَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيق، عِيدُنَا أَهْلُ الإسْلَامِ، وَهَيْ أَيَّامٌ أَكْلٌ وَشَرْبٌ

(The day of `Arafah (9th of Dhul-Hijjah), the day of the Sacrifice (10th) and the days of the Tashriq (11-12-13th) are our `Id (festival) for we people of Islam. These are days of eating and drinking.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Nubayshah Al-Hudhali said that Allah's Messenger said:

أَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيق أَيَّامٌ أَكْلٌ وَشَرْبٌ وَذِكْرِ الله
(The days of Tashriq are days of eating, drinking and Dhikr (remembering) of Allah.)

Muslim also recorded this Hadith

We also mentioned the Hadith of Jubayr bin Mut`im:

«عَرَفَةَ كُلَّهَا مَوْقِفٌ، وَأَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ كُلَّهَا ذَبْحٌ»

(All of `Arafat is a standing place and all of the days of Tashriq are days of Sacrifice.)

We also mentioned the Hadith by `Abdur-Rahman bin Ya`mar Ad-Diyli:

«وَأَيَّامٌ مِنْهُمْ ثَلَاثَةُ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمِيْنِ فَلَا إِنَّمَأْ أَلَّلَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِنَّمَأْ أَلَّلَهُ عَلَيْهِ»

(The days of Mina (Tashriq) are three. Those who hasten in two days then there is no sin in it, and those who delay (i.e., remain in Mina for a third day) then there is no sin in it.)

Ibn Jarir reported that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ أَيَّامُ طَعْمٍ وَذِكْرِ الله»

(The days of Tashriq are days of eating and remembering Allah.)

Ibn Jarir reported that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger sent `Abdullah bin Hudhafah to Mina proclaiming:

«لَا تَصُومُوا هَذِهِ الْأَيَامَ، فَإِنهاَ أَيَامُ أَكْلٍ وَشَرْبٍ وَذِكْرٌ اللَّهِ عَزْ وَجَلَّ»

(Do not fast these days (i.e., Tashriq days), for they are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allah the Exalted and Most Honored.)

The Appointed Days

Miqsam said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Appointed Days are the days of Tashriq, four days: the day of the Sacrifice (10th of Dhul-Hijjah) and three days after that.

This opinion was also reported of Ibn `Umar, Ibn Az-Zubayr, Abu Musa, `Ata', Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Malik, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Yahya bin Abu Kathir, Al-Hasan,
Qatadah, As-Suddi, Az-Zuhri, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak, Muqatil bin Hayyan, `Ata` Al-Khurasani, Malik bin Anas, and others. In addition, the apparent meaning of the following Ayah supports this opinion:

(Qm tajal fî yoomiin fala ina`m `alii`i` wa mn t`akhir)

(But whosoever hastens to leave in two days, there is no sin on him and whosoever stays on, there is no sin on him.)

So the Ayah hints to the three days after the day of Sacrifice.

Allah's statement:

(Wa d`ikruwa al-lah fî a`yam ma`uddadat)

(And remember Allah during the Appointed Days) directs remembering Allah upon slaughtering the animals, after the prayers, and by Dhikr (supplication) in general. It also includes Takbir and remembering Allah while throwing the pebbles every day during the Tashriq days. A Hadith that Abu Dawud and several others collected states:

(Tawaf around the House, Sa`i between As-Safa and Al-Marwah and throwing the pebbles were legislated so that Allah is remembered in Dhikr.)

When mentioning the first procession (refer to 2:199) and the second procession of the people upon the end of the Hajj season, when they start to return to their areas, after they had gathered during the rituals and at the standing places, Allah said,

(Wa t`qou al-lah wa `a`lamou ana`kum `iliah n`hsharawun)

(and obey Allah (fear Him), and know that you will surely be gathered unto Him.)

Similarly, Allah said:

(Wh`al-dhi dar`akum fi al-ar`r wa `iliah n`hsharawun)

(And it is He Who has created you on the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered back.) (23:79)
The Characteristics of the Hypocrites

As-Suddi said that these Ayat were revealed about Al-Akhnas bin Shariq Ath-Thaqafi who came to Allah's Messenger and announced his Islam although his heart concealed otherwise.

Ibn `Abbas narrated that these Ayat were revealed about some of the hypocrites who criticized Khubayb and his companions who were killed during the Raji` incident. Thereafter, Allah sent down His condemnation of the hypocrites and His praise for Khubayb and his companions:

(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah.)
Ibn Jarir related that Al-Qurazi said that Nawf Al-Bikali, who used to read (previous Divine) Books said, "I find the description of some members of this Ummah in the previously revealed Books of Allah: they (hypocrites) are people who use the religion to gain material benefit. Their tongues are sweeter than honey, but their hearts are more bitter than Sabir (a bitter plant, aloe). They show the people the appearance of sheep while their hearts hide the viciousness of wolves. Allah said, `They dare challenge Me, but they are deceived by Me. I swear by Myself that I will send a Fitnah (trial, calamity) on them that will make the wise man bewildered.' I contemplated about these statements and found them in the Qur'an describing the hypocrites:

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَعْجِبُكَ قُوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا)
(وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِى قُلْبِهِ)

(And of mankind there is he whose speech may please you (O Muhammad ), in this worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart,)

This statement by Al-Qurazi is Hasan Sahih. Allah said:

(وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِى قُلْبِهِ)

(...and he calls Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart,)

This Ayah indicates that such people pretend to be Muslims, but defy Allah by the disbelief and hypocrisy that their hearts conceal. Similarly Allah said:

(يُسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ)

(They may hide (their crimes) from men, but they cannot hide (them) from Allah.) (4:108)

This Tafsir was reported from Ibn ` Abbas by Ibn Ishaq. It was also said that the Ayah means that when such people announce their Islam, they swear by Allah that what is in their hearts is the same of what their tongues are pronouncing. This is also a correct meaning for the Ayah that was chosen by `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam. It is also the choice of Ibn Jarir who related it to Ibn ` Abbas and Mujahid. Allah knows best.

Allah said:

(وَهُوَ أَلْدُ الْخَصَامِ)

(Yet he is the most Aladd of the opponents.) (2:204) The Ayah used the word Aladd here, which literally means `wicked' (here it means `quarrelsome'). A variation of the word Ludda was also used in another Ayah:
(So that you (Muhammad) warn with it (the Qur’an) a Ludda people.) (19:97)

Hence, a hypocrite lies, alters the truth when he quarrels and does not care for the truth. Rather, he deviates from the truth, deceives and becomes most quarrelsome. It is reported in Sahih that Allah’s Messenger said:

آية المُنافقَةِ تَلَاثٍ: إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ غَدَرَ، وَإِذَا حَاصَمَ فَجَرَ

(The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie. Whenever he promises, he always breaks it (his promise). If you have a dispute with him, he is most quarrelsome.)

Imam Bukhari reported that ’A’ishah narrated that the Prophet said:

إنَّ أَبْعَضَ الرِّجَالِ إِلَى اللّهِ الْأَلَّدُ الْخَصِيمُ

(The most hated person to Allah is he who is Aladd and Khasim (meaning most quarrelsome).)

Allah then said:

وَإِذَا تُوْلِى سَعَى فِى الأَرْضِ لِيْفَسَدْ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالْنََّسَلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَسَادَ

(And when he turns away (from you O Muhammad), he struggles in the land to make mischief therein and to destroy the crops and the cattle, and Allah likes not mischief.)

This Ayah indicates that such persons are deviant in the tongue, evil in the deeds, their words are fabricated, their belief is wicked and their works are immoral. The Ayah used the (Arabic word) Sa’a (literally, ‘tries’ or ‘intends’). This word was also used to describe Pharaoh:

نِمَّ أَذْبَرْ يَسَعَى فَحَشَرَ فَنَادَى فَقَالَ أَناَ رَبُّكُ الْأَلْبَاءِ فَأَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالًا الأُخَرَةِ وَالأُولِىٰ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لِعِبْرَةٍ لَمَّن يَخْشَى
(Then he turned his back, Yas`a (striving hard against Allah). Then he gathered (his people) and cried aloud saying, 'I am your lord, most high.' So Allah, seized him with a punishing example for his last and first transgression. Verily, in this is an instructive admonition for whosoever fears Allah.) (79:22-26)

Sa`a was also used in the Ayah:

(يأتيَ الذين آمنُوا إذا نودى لصلاة من يوم الجماعة فاسعوا إلى ذكر الله)

(O you who believe (Muslims)! When the call is proclaimed for the Salah (prayer) on the day of Friday (Jumu`ah prayer), As`aw come to the remembrance of Allah.) (62:9)

This Ayah means, 'When the call to the Friday prayer is announced) intend and then proceed to attend the Friday prayer.' We should mention that hastening to the mosque is condemned by the Sunnah (as this is another meaning for the word Sa`a):

«إذا أتيتم الصلاة فلنا تأثوها وأنتم تسعون وتأثوها وأليكم السكينة والوقار»

(When you come to attend the prayer, do not come in a Sa`i (haste). Rather, come to it while walking at ease and in peace.)

The hypocrite has no motive in this life but to cause mischief and to destroy the crops and the offspring, including what the animals produce and what the people depend on for their livelihood. Mujahid said, "If the hypocrite strives for mischief in the land, Allah prevents the rain from falling and thus the crops and the offspring perish." The Ayah continues:

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَسَادَ)

(...and Allah likes not mischief.) that is, Allah does not like those who possess these characteristics, or those who act like this.

Rejecting Advice is Characteristic of the Hypocrites

Allah said:

(وَإِذَا قَيِلَ لَهُ ائْتِ اللَّهَ أَحْذِنْهُ الْعِزَّةَ باللَّهِمِ)

(And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah", he is led by arrogance to (more) crime.)
This Ayah indicates that when the hypocrite, who deviates in his speech and deeds, is advised and commanded to fear Allah, refrain from his evil deeds and adhere to the truth, he refuses and becomes angry and outraged, as he is used to doing evil. This Ayah is similar to what Allah said:

(وإذا تُثْلِي علَيْهِم مَعْرُوف فِي وُجُوهِ الْخَيْرِ ِمَعْرُوفٍ، يُتْحَمِّلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مَعْرُوفٍ، يُكْذِبُونَ، يَكْفِرُونَ، يَسْعُونَ بَعْضَهُم بَعْضٍ بِشَرٍّ مِن ذَلِكَ حَيْبَةٍ، فَأَقْتُبَّ نَفْسَكَ حَيْبَةً، وَبِئْسَ الْمُضَيْرُ
(And when Our clear verses are recited to them, you will notice a denial on the faces of the unbelievers! They are nearly ready to attack with violence those who recite Our verses to them. Say: “Shall I tell you of something worse than that The Fire (of Hell) which Allah has promised to those who disbelieved, and worst indeed is that destination!” (22:72)

This is why in this Ayah, Allah said:

(فِحْسَبَهُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَبَنَسَ الْمُهَادُ)
(So enough for him is Hell, and worst indeed is that place to rest) meaning, the Fire is enough punishment for the hypocrite.

The Sincere Believer prefers pleasing Allah

Allah said:

(وَمِنِ النَّاسِ مَن يَشَرِّى نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ)
(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah.)

After Allah described the evil characteristics of the hypocrites, He mentioned the good qualities of the believers. Allah said:
(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah.)

Ibn 'Abbas, Anas, Sa'id bin Musayyib, Abu 'Uthman An-Nahdi, 'Ikrimah and several other scholars said that this Ayah was revealed about Suhayb bin Sinan Ar-Rumi. When Suhayb became a Muslim in Makkah and intended to migrate (to Al-Madinah), the people (Quraysh) prevented him from migrating with his money. They said that if he forfeits his property, he is free to migrate. He abandoned his money and preferred to migrate, and Allah revealed this Ayah about him. `Umar bin Khattab and several other Companions met Suhayb close to the outskirts of Al-Madinah at Al-Harrah (flat lands with black stones). They said to him, "The trade has indeed been successful." He answered them, "You too, may Allah never allow your trade to fail. What is the matter?" `Umar told him that Allah has revealed this Ayah (2:207) about him. It was also reported that Allah's Messenger said, "The trade has been successful, O Suhayb!"

The meaning of the Ayah (2:207) includes every Mujahid in the way of Allah. Allah said in another Ayah:

(Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah's cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Tawrah and the Injil and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.) (9:111)

When Hisham bin `Amr penetrated the lines of the enemy, some people criticized him. `Umar bin Al-Khattab and Abu Hurayrah refuted them and recited this Ayah:

(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah.)
(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to (His) servants.)

(يَايُهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَّمُ كَآفةً وَلَا تَبَغَّوا حُطُوتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ)

(فإِنَّ زَلَّتَمُ مَنْ بَعْدَ مَا جَآءَتُكُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ قَاعِلُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(208. O you who believe! Enter Sīm perfectly, and follow not the footsteps of Shaytān (Satan). Verily, he is to you a plain enemy.) (209. Then if you slide back after the clear signs (Prophet Muhammad , and this Qur'an and Islam) have come to you, then know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise).

**Entering Islam in its Entirety is obligated**

Allah commands His servants who believe in Him and have faith in His Messenger to implement all of Islam's legislation and law, to adhere to all of its commandments, as much as they can, and to refrain from all of its prohibitions. ‘Al-‘Awfi said that Ibn ‘Abbas said, and also Mujahid, Tawus, Ad-Dahhak, ‘Ikrimah, Qatada h, As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd said that Allah's statement:

(ۚۛ) ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَّمُ

(Enter Sīm) means Islam. Allah's statement:

(ۚۛ) كَآفةً

(...perfectly) means, in its entirety. This is the Tafsir of Ibn ‘Abbas, Mujahid, Abu Al-‘Aliyah, ‘Ikrimah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak. Mujahid said that the Ayah means, 'Perform all the good works and the various pious deeds, this is especially addressed to those from among the People of the Scripture who embraced the faith.'

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn ‘Abbas said that:

(ۚۛ) يَايُهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَّمُ كَآفةً)
(O you who believe! Enter Islam perfectly) refers to the believers among the People of the Scripture. This is because they believed in Allah, some of them still followed some parts of the Tawrah and the previous revelations. So Allah said:

(إِدْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَّمِ كَآِقَةٍ)

(Enter Islam perfectly.) Allah thus commanded them to embrace the legislation of the religion of Muhammad in its entirety and to avoid abandoning any part of it. They should no longer adhere to the Tawrah.

Allah then said:

(وَلا تَبَعُّوا حُطُوَّتِ الشَّيْطَانِ)

(...and follow not the footsteps of Shaytan) meaning, perform the acts of worship and avoid what Satan commands you to do. This is because:

(إِنِّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمُ ٱلْسُّوءَ وَٱلْفَاحِشَةَ وَأَن تَفْوَلُوا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(He (Shaytan) commands you only what is evil and Fahsha' (sinful), and that you should say about Allah what you know not.) (2:169) and:

(إِنَّمَا يُدْعَوُ حَزْبُهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَبِ السَّعِيرِ)

(He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire.) (35:6) Hence, Allah said:

(إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ)

(Verily, he is to you an open enemy.)

Allah said:

(فَإِنَّ زَلَلْتُمْ مَن بَعْدَ مَا جَآءَتْكُمُ الْبَيَانَتُ)

(Then if you slide back after the clear signs have come to you) meaning, if you deviate from the Truth after clear proofs have been established against you,
(...then know that Allah is All-Mighty) in His punishment, and no one can escape His vengeance or defeat Him.

(All-Wise) in His decisions, actions and rulings. Hence Abu Al-` Aliyah, Qata`dah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said, "He is Mighty in His vengeance, Wise in His decision."

(Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them over the shadows of the clouds and the angels) on the Day of Resurrection to judge the early and the latter creations. Allah shall then reward each according to his or her deeds; and whoever does good shall see it, and whoever does evil shall see it. This is why Allah said:

(Then) the case would be already judged. And to Allah return all matters (for decision).)

Similarly, Allah said:
(Nay! When the earth is ground to powder. And your Lord comes with the angels in rows. And Hell will be brought near that Day. On that Day will man remember, but how will that remembrance (then) avail him) (89:21-23) and:

(Do they then wait for anything other than that the angels should come to them, or that your Lord (Allah) should come, or that some of the signs of your Lord should come (i.e., portents of the Hour, e.g., rising of the sun from the west)!) (6:158)

Abu Ja`far Razi reported that Abu Al-`Aliyah narrated that:

(Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them over the shadows of the clouds and the angels) means, the angels will descend on the shadows of clouds, while Allah comes as He wills. Some of the reciters read it,

Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them and also the angels over the shadows of the clouds. This is similar to Allah's other statement:
(And remember) the Day when the heaven shall be rent asunder with clouds, and the angels will be sent down, with a grand descending.) (25:25)

 ASNBN IH SDRX 1. KFM AYNEH MEN AYAH BINA'AH MANN YIB迭L NAMAELAH MEN BAUD MA JAYATHA QAN Allah SADID UQABA ZINEENLIDNIEN KFAROA HIYOH DUNIYA WYEUXRONMENDHNINAMENWALDHNINANFQROMEYOMR EMAQMA WAllah YERZQ MEND NISAE BGGIER HASAB

(211. Ask the Children of Israel how many clear Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) We gave them. And whoever changes Allah's favor after it has come to him, e.g., renounces the religion of Allah (Islam) and accepts Kufr (disbelief), then surely, Allah is severe in punishment.) (212. Beautified is the life of this world for those who disbelieve, and they mock at those who believe. But those who have Taqwa, will be above them on the Day of Resurrection. And Allah gives (of His bounty, blessings, favors, and honors on the Day of Resurrection) to whom He wills without limit.)

The Punishment for changing Allah's Favor and mocking the Believers

Allah mentioned that the Children of Israel, were witnesses to many clear signs that attest to the truth of Moses regarding what he was sent with for them. They witnessed his hand (when it became lit with light), his parting the sea, his striking the rock (and water flowed from the rock), the clouds that shaded them during the intense heat, the manna and the quails, and so forth. These signs attested to the existence of the Creator and the truth of Moses by whose hand these signs appeared. Yet, so many among them changed Allah's favor, by preferring disbelief to faith and by ignoring Allah's favors,

(And whoever changes Allah's favor after it had come to him, then surely, Allah is severe in punishment.)

Similarly, Allah said about the disbelievers of Quraysh:
(Have you not seen those who have changed the blessings of Allah into disbelief, and caused their people to dwell in the house of destruction Hell, in which they will burn, and what an evil place to settle in!)

(14:28, 29)

Then Allah states that He has made the life of this world beautiful for the disbelievers who are satisfied with it, who collect wealth, but refrain from spending it on what they have been commanded, which could earn them Allah's pleasure. Instead, they ridicule the believers who ignore this life and who spend whatever they earn on what pleases their Lord. The believers spend seeking Allah's Face, and this is why they have gained the ultimate happiness and the best share on the Day of the Return. Therefore, they will be exalted above the disbelievers at the Gathering Place, when they are gathered, during the resurrection and in their final destination. The believers will reside in the highest grades in the utmost highs, while the disbelievers will reside in the lowest of lows (in the Fire).

This is why Allah said:

(And Allah gives to whom He wills without limit.)

This Ayah indicates that Allah gives sustenance to whomever He wills of His servants without count or limit in this and the Hereafter. A Hadith has stated (that Allah said):

(And Allah gives to whom He wills without limit.)

This Ayah indicates that Allah gives sustenance to whomever He wills of His servants without count or limit in this and the Hereafter. A Hadith has stated (that Allah said):

(O son of Adam! Spend (in Allah's cause) and I (Allah) will spend on you.) The Prophet said:

(O son of Adam! Spend (in Allah's cause) and I (Allah) will spend on you.) The Prophet said:

(O Bilal! Spend and do not fear deprivation from the Owner of the Throne.)

Allah said:
(...and whatsoever you spend of anything (in Allah's cause), He will replace it.) (34:39) In addition, it is reported in the Sahih (that the Prophet said):

«أنّ ملكين ينزلان من السماء سبحة كل يوم فيقول أحدهما: اللهم أعط مَنْفَقًا خَلقًا، ويقول الآخر: اللهم أعط مُمسِكًا ثُلّةً»

(Every day two angels come down from heavens and one of them says, `O Allah! Compensate every person who spends in Your cause,' and the other (angel) says, `O Allah! Destroy every miser.') Also in the Sahih:

«يقول ابن آدم: مالي مالي. وَهَلْ لِكَ مِنْ مَالِكَ إِنَا مَا أَكُلْتَ فَأَفْتَنِيْتِ، وَمَا لَبِسْتُ فَأَبْلَيْتِ، وَمَا تَصَدَّقْتَ فَأَمْضَيْتِ، وَمَا سَوِى ذَلِكَ فَذَاهِبْ وتَارَكْهُ للْنَّاسَ»

(The son of Adam says, `My money, my money!' Yet, what is your money except that which you eat and use up, wear and tear, and spend in charity and thus keep (in your record). Other than that, it will go away and will be left for the people (the inheritors).)

In addition, Imam Ahmad reported that the Prophet said:

«الْدُنْيَا دَارُ مَنْ لا دَارَ لَهُ، وَمَالُ مَنْ لا مَالَ لَهُ، وَلَهَا يَجْمَعُ مَنْ لا عَقَلَ لَهُ»

(The Dunya (life of this world) is the residence of those who have no residence, the wealth of those who have no wealth, and it is harvested by those who have no sense of reason.)

(كان الناس أمة وحدة قبعت الله النبيين مبشرين ومنذرين وأنزل معهم الكتاب بالحق)
(213. Mankind was one community and Allah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings, and with them He sent down the Scripture in truth to judge between people in matters wherein they differed. And only those to whom (the Scripture) was given differed concerning it, after clear proofs had come unto them, through hatred, one to another. Then Allah by His leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed. And Allah guides whom He wills to the straight path).

**Disputing, after the Clear Signs have come, indicates Deviation**

Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn `Abbas said, “There were ten generations between Adam and Nuh, all of them on the religion of Truth. They later disputed so Allah sent the Prophets as warners and bringers of glad tidings.” He then said that this is how `Abdullah read the Ayah:

\[
\text{كان الناس أمة واحدة فاختلقوا}
\]

The people were one Ummah and they then disputed.

Al-Hakim recorded this in his Mustadrak and said, “Its chain of narrators is Sahih, but they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it.” Abu Ja`far Razi reported that Abu Al-`Aliyah said that Ubayy bin Ka`b read the Ayah as:

\[
\text{كان الناس أمة واحدة فاختلقوا بِغِيَارِ الله الَّذِين َعَامَلُوا َلَمَّا اخْتَلَفُوا}
\]

The people were one Ummah and they then disputed and Allah sent the Prophets as warners and bringers of glad tidings.

`Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma`mar said that Qatadah said that Allah's statement:

\[
(\text{كان الناس أمة واحدة})
\]

(Mankind was one community) means; “They all had the guidance. Then:
They disputed and Allah sent Prophets.

The first to be sent was Nuh.”

`Abdur-Razzaq reported that Abu Hurayrah commented on:

(فَهَدَى الَّذِينَ عَامِلُوا لِمَا احْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ)

(Then Allah by His leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed. ) saying that the Prophet said:

«نَحْنُ الَّذِينَ أَوْلُونِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةَ، نَحْنُ أَوْلُ النَّاسِ دُحْوَلاً الْجَنَّةَ، بَيْدَ أَنْهُمْ أُوْلُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا وَأُوْتَيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ، فَهَدَانَا اللَّهُ لِمَا احْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ، فَهَدَاهَا الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي احْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ فَهَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهُ، فَالْنَّاسُ لَنَا فِيهِ تَبْعَعُ، فَعَدَّا لِلِّيَهُودِ، وَبَعْدَ عَدٍّ لِلَّنَصَارَى»

(We are the last (nation), but the first (foremost) on the Day of Resurrection. We are the first people to enter Paradise, although they (Jews and Christians) have been given the Book before us and we after them. Allah has guided us to the truth wherever they disputed over it. This is the day (Friday) that they disputed about, Allah guided us to it. So, the people follow us, as tomorrow is for the Jews and the day after is for the Christians.)

Ibn Wahb related that `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said that his father said about the Ayah:

(فَهَدَى الَّذِينَ عَامِلُوا لِمَا احْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ)
(Then Allah by His leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed.)

They disputed about the day of Congregation (Friday). The Jews made it Saturday while the Christians chose Sunday. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to Friday. They also disputed about the true Qiblah. The Christians faced the east while the Jews faced Bayt Al-Maqdis. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the true Qiblah (Ka`bah in Makkah). They also disputed about the prayer, as some of them bow down, but do not prostrate, while others prostrate, but do not bow down. Some of them pray while talking and some while walking. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth. They also disputed about the fast; some of them fast during a part of the day, while others fast from certain types of foods. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth. They also disputed about the prayer, as some of them bow down, but do not prostrate, while others prostrate, but do not bow down. Some of them pray while talking and some while walking. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth. They also disputed about the fast; some of them fast during a part of the day, while others fast from certain types of foods. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth.

They also disputed about `Isa. The Jews rejected him and accused his mother of a grave sin, while the Christians made him a god and the son of God. Allah made him by His Word and a spirit from (those He created) Him. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth.

Allah then said:

(بِإِذِّنِهِ)

(...by His leave) meaning, `By His knowledge of them and by what He has directed and guided them to,' according to Ibn Jarir.

(وَاللَّهُ يُهْدِى مَن يَشَاءُ)

(And Allah guides whom He wills) means from among His creation. (Allah said:)

(إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ)

(...to the straight way) meaning, He commands the decision and the clear proof. Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported that `A`ishah narrated that when Allah's Messenger used to wake up at night to pray, he would say:
(O Allah, the Lord of (angels) Jibril, Mika'il and Israfil, Creator of the heavens and earth and Knower of the seen and the unseen. You judge between Your servants regarding what they have disputed in, so guide me to what have been the subject of dispute of the truth by Your leave. Indeed, You guide whom You will to the straight path.(

A Du' a reads:

اللَّهُمَّ أَرْنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا، وَارْزُقْنَا اِبْتِغَاعَهُ، وَأَرْنَا البَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا، وَارْزُقْنَا اِجْتَنَابَهُ، وَلَا تَجْعَلْهُ مُلْبِسًا عَلَيْنَا فَتْضِلَّ، وَاجْعَلْنَا لَلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا.

(O Allah! Show us the truth as truth, and bestow adherence to it on us. Show us the evil as evil, and make us stay away from it, and do not confuse us regarding the reality of evil so that we will not be led astray by it, and make us leaders for the believers.)

(214. Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, “When (will come) the help of Allah” Yes! Certainly, the help of Allah is near!)

Victory only comes after succeeding in the Trials

Allah said:

(أَمْ حَسَبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُم مَّتَلُ الْذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسْتَهْمُ البَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزَلَّلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الْرَّسُولُ وَالذِينَ إِمَامًا مَّتَى نَصْرَ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ)
(Or think you that you will enter Paradise) before you are tested and tried just like the nations that came before you This is why Allah said:

وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الْذَّيْنِ خَلَوَا مِن قَبْلَكُمْ مَسْنُونٌ

(البَأسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ)

(...without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments) meaning, illnesses, pain, disasters and hardships. Ibn Mas` ud, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Sa` id bin Jubayr, Murrah Al-Hamdani, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` , As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that

(البَأسَاءُ)

(Al-Ba'sa`) means poverty. Ibn `Abbas said that

(وَالضَّرَّاءُ)

(...and Ad-Darra`) means ailments.

(وُزَنْلُوا)

(and were so shaken) for fear of the enemy, and were tested, and put to a tremendous trial. An authentic Hadith narrated that Khabbab bin Al-Aratt said, `We said, `O Messenger of Allah! Why do you not invoke Allah to support us Why do you not supplicate to Allah for us` He said:

إنَّ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ كَانَ أَحْدُهُمْ يَوْضَعُ المَكِشَارُ عَلَى مَفْرَقٍ رَأْسِهِ فِي خَلْصَهُ إِلَى قَدْمَيْهِ لَا يَصَرُّفُهُ ذُلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ، وَيُمْشِطُ بِأَمْشَاطِ الحَدِيدِ مَا بَيْنَ لَحْمِهِ وَعَظُمْهِ لَا يَصَرُّفُهُ ذُلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ`.

(The saw would be placed on the middle of the head of one of those who were before you (believers) and he would be sawn until his feet, and he would be combed with iron combs between his skin and bones, yet that would not make him change his religion.)

He then said:
(By Allah! This matter (religion) will spread (or expand) by Allah until the traveler leaves Sā`a` to Hadramawt (both in Yemen, but at a great distance from each other) fearing only Allah and then the wolf for the sake of his sheep. You are just a hasty people.)

And Allah said:

الم - ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى للمتقين -
الذين يؤمنون بالغيب ويقيمون الصلاة ومما رزقتهم ينفقون

(Alif-Lam-Mim. Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars.) (29:1-3)

The Companions experienced tremendous trials during the battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates). Allah said:

إذ جاءوكم من فوقكم ومن أسفل منكم وإن زاغت الأبصار وبلغت القلوب الحنجرة وتطالون بالله الصنونا - هنالك ابتلوا المؤمنون ونزلوا زلزالا شديداً - وإذ يقول المتفقون والذين في قلوبهم مرض ما وعَدَّنا الله ورسوله إلا عروراً)
(When they came upon you from above you and from below you, and when the eyes grew wild and the hearts reached to the throats, and you were harboring doubts about Allah. There, the believers were tried and shaken with a mighty shaking. And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease (of doubts) said: "Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusion!") (33:10-12)

When Heraclius asked Abu Sufyan, "Did you fight him (Prophet Muhammad)?" He said, "Yes." Heraclius said, "What was the outcome of warfare between you?" Abu Sufyan said, "Sometimes we lose and sometimes he loses." He said, "Such is the case with Prophets, they are tested, but the final victory is theirs."

Allah's statement:

(مَتَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوَا مِنْ قَبْلَكُمْ)

(...without (such) (trials) as came to those who passed away before you) meaning, their way of life. Similarly, Allah said:

(فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشْدَدَ مِنْهُم بَطْشًا وَمَضَى مَتَلُ الْأَوْلِيَانِ)

(Then We destroyed men stronger (in power) than these and the example of the ancients has passed away (before them)) (43:8) and:

(وَزُلِّزَلُوا حَتَّى يَفُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ إِمَامُوا
mَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ)

(...were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, "When (will come) the help of Allah.")

They pleaded (to Allah) for victory against their enemies and invoked Him for aid and deliverance from their hardships and trials. Allah said:

(أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ)

(Yes! Certainly, the help of Allah is near!)

Allah said:

(فَإِنَّ مَعَ العَسْرِ يُسْرًا - إِنَّ مَعَ العُسْرِ يُسْرًا)

(Verily, along with every hardship is relief. Verily, along with every hardship is relief.) (94:5, 6)
So just as there is hardship, its equal of relief will soon arrive. This is why Allah said:

(ُلا إِنْ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ)

(Yes! Certainly, the help of Allah is near!)

(يُسْلُوْنَكَ مَا يُنفِقُونَ فَلَمَّا أَنفَقُتمْ مَنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلَّوْلَدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَمَّى وَالْمَسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَمَنْ تَقَفُّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ)

(215. They ask you (O Muhammad) what they should spend. Say: "Whatever you spend of good must be for parents and kindred and orphans and Al-Masakin (the poor) and the wayfarer, and whatever you do of good deeds, truly, Allah knows it well.")

Who deserves the Nafaqah (Spending or Charity)

Muqatil bin Hayyan said that this Ayah was revealed about the voluntary charity. The Ayah means, `They ask you (O Muhammad) how they should spend,' as Ibn `Abbas and Mujahid have stated. So, Allah explained it for them, saying:

(فَلْ مَّا أَنفَقْتُمْ مَنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلَّوْلَدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَمَّى وَالْمَسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ)

(Say: "Whatever you spend of good must be for parents and kindred and orphans and Al-Masakin and the wayfarer,") meaning, spend it on these categories or areas. Similarly, a Hadith states (that those who deserve one's generosity the most, are):

«أمْكَ وَأَبَاكَ وَأَخْتَكَ وَأَخَاكَ ثُمَّ أَدْنَاكَ أَدْنَاكَ»

(Your mother, father, sister, brother, the closest and then the farthest (relatives).)

Maymun bin Mihran once recited this Ayah (2:215) and commented, "These are the areas of spending. Allah did not mention among them the drums, pipe, wooden pictures, or the curtains that cover the walls."

Next, Allah said:
(...and whatever you do of good deeds, truly, Allah knows it well.) meaning, whatever you perform of good works, Allah knows them and He will reward you for them in the best manner, no one will be dealt with unjustly, even the weight of an atom.

(216. Fighting is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know.)

**Jihad is made Obligatory**

In this Ayah, Allah made it obligatory for the Muslims to fight in Jihad against the evil of the enemy who transgress against Islam. Az-Zuhri said, "Jihad is required from every person, whether he actually joins the fighting or remains behind. Whoever remains behind is required to give support, if support is warranted; to provide aid, if aid is needed; and to march forth, if he is commanded to do so. If he is not needed, then he remains behind." It is reported in the Sahih:

«من مات ولم يَغُر وَلَم يَحْدَث نَفْسَهُ بِالْعَزْوَى، مَات مِبْتَة جَاهِلْيَة»

(Whoever dies but neither fought (i.e., in Allah's cause), nor sincerely considered fighting, will die a death of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic era of ignorance).)

On the day of Al-Fath (when he conquered Makkah), the Prophet said:

«لا هِجْرَة بَعْدَ الْقُتْلَ وَلَكْنَ جِهَادٌ وَنِيَّةٌ، وَإِذَا اسْتَنْفَرُرُمْ قَانُفْرُوا»
(There is no Hijrah (migration from Makkah to Al-Madinah) after the victory, but only Jihad and good intention. If you were required to march forth, then march forth.)

Allah's statement:

(وَهُوَ كَرَهَ لَكُمْ)

(...though you dislike it) means, `Fighting is difficult and heavy on your hearts.' Indeed, fighting is as the Ayah describes it, as it includes being killed, wounded, striving against the enemies and enduring the hardship of travel. Allah then said:

(وَعَسِى أَنْ تَكُرُّ هُوَ أَشَيْثَى وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ)

(...and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you) meaning, fighting is followed by victory, dominance over the enemy, taking over their lands, money and offspring. Allah continues:

(وَعَسِى أَنْ تُحْبُّوا شَيْثَى وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ)

(...and that you like a thing which is bad for you.)

This Ayah is general in meaning. Hence, one might covet something, yet in reality it is not good or beneficial for him, such as refraining from joining the Jihad, for it might lead to the enemy taking over the land and the government. Then, Allah said:

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(Allah knows, but you do not know.) meaning, He has better knowledge than you of how things will turn out to be in the end, and of what benefits you in this earthly life and the Hereafter. Hence, obey Him and adhere to His commands, so that you may acquire the true guidance.

(يَسْلَوْنَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الحَرَامِ قَتَالٍ فِيهِ فَلْ قَتَالْ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدَّ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكَفَرَ بِهِ وَالَّذِي عَزِزَ حَيْثُ أَحَدُ أَنْفُسِهِ فَلْ قَتَالَ)

(Great is the battle in the Sacred month! Refrain from fighting in it, and beware of disbelieving in it and its ways. Let them fight in its place if they are believers.)
(217. They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, "Fighting therein is a great (transgression) but a greater (transgression) with Allah is to prevent mankind from following the way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants, and Al-Fitnah is worse than killing." And they will never cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion (Islamic Monotheism) if they can. And whosoever of you turns back from his religion and dies as a disbeliever, then his deeds will be lost in this life and in the Hereafter, and they will be the dwellers of the Fire. They will abide therein forever.) (218. Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (for Allah's religion) and have striven hard in the way of Allah, all these hope for Allah's mercy. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.)

The Nakhlah Military Maneuvers, and the Ruling on Fighting during the Sacred Months

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Jundub bin `Abdullah said: Allah's Messenger assembled a group of men under the command of Abu `Ubaydah bin Jarrah. When he was about to march, he started crying for the thought of missing Allah's Messenger. Consequently, the Messenger relieved Abu `Ubaydah from command, appointed `Abdullah bin Jahsh instead, gave him some written instructions and commanded him not to read the instructions until he reached such and such area. He also said to `Abdullah:

لا تَكَرِهِنَّ أحَدًا عَلَى السِّيَر مَعَكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِكَ

(Do not compel any of your men to continue marching with you thereafter.)

When `Abdullah read the instructions, he recited Istirja' saying, `Truly! to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return'; and refer to (2:156) and said, "I hear and obey Allah and His
Messenger." He then told his companions the story and read the instructions to them, and two men went back while the rest remained. Soon after, they found Ibn Hadrami (one of the disbelievers of Quraysh) and killed him not knowing that that day was in Rajab or Jumadi (where Rajab is the Sacred Month). The polytheists said to the Muslims, "You have committed murder in the Sacred Month." Allah then revealed:

(يَسْلَوْنَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قَتَالٍ فِيهِ قَتَالٌ ﷺ)

(They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, "Fighting therein is a great (transgression)...")

Abdul-Malik bin Hisham, who compiled the Sirah (life story of the Prophet ), related that Ziyad bin `Abdullah Bakka'i said that Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar Al-Madani wrote in his book on the Sirah, "Allah's Messenger sent `Abdullah bin Jahsh bin Riyab Al-Asadi in Rajab, after he (the Prophet ) came back from the first battle of Badr. The Prophet sent eight people with him, all from among the Muhajirun and none from the Ansar. He also gave him some written instructions and ordered him not to read them until he marched for two days. `Abdullah should then read the instructions and march to implement them, but should not force any of those who were with him to accompany him.

The companions of `Abdullah bin Jahsh were all from the Muhajirun, from the tribe of Banu `Abd Shams bin `Abd Manaf, there was Abu Hudhayfah bin Utbah bin Rabi`ah bin `Abd Shams bin `Abd Manaf. From their allies, there was `Abdullah bin Jahsh, who was the commander of the army unit, and `Ukkashah bin Mihsan from the tribe of Banu Asad bin Khuzaymah. From the tribe of Banu Nawfal bin `Abd Manaf, there was `Utbah bin Ghazwan bin Jabir, one of their allies. From the tribe of Banu Zuhrah bin Kilab, there was Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas. From Banu Ka`b, there were their allies: `Adi bin `Amr bin Ar-Rabi`ah not from the tribe of Ibn Wa`il; Waqid bin `Abdullah bin `Abd Manaf bin `Arin bin Tha`labah bin Yarbu` from Banu Tamim; and Khalid bin Bukair from the tribe of Banu Sa`d bin Layth, Suhayl bin Bayda` from Banu Al-Harith bin Fihr was also among them. When `Abdullah bin Jahsh marched for two days, he opened and read the (Prophet's) instructions, "When you read these instructions, march until you set camp at Nakhlah between Makkah and At-Ta`if. There, watch the movements of the caravan of Quraysh and collect news about them for us." When `Abdullah bin Jahsh read the document, he said, "I hear and obey." He then said to his companions, "Allah's Messenger has commanded me to march forth to Nakhlah to watch the movements of the caravan of Quraysh and to inform him about their news. He has prohibited me from forcing any of you (to go with me). So, those who seek martyrdom, they should march with me. Those who dislike the idea of martyrdom, let them turn back. Surely, I will implement the command of Allah's Messenger." He and his companions continued without any of them turning back.

`Abdullah entered the Hijaz area (western Arabia) until he reached an area called Buhran, close to Furu`. There, Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas and `Utbah bin Ghazwan lost the camel that they were riding in turns, and they went back to search for it while `Abdullah bin Jahsh and the rest of his companions continued until they reached Nakhlah. Then, a caravan belonging to the Quraysh passed by carrying raisins, food stuff and some trade items for the Quraysh. `Amr bin Hadrami, whose name was `Abdullah bin `Abbad, was in the caravan, as well as `Uthman bin `Abdullah bin Al-Mughirah and his brother Nawfal bin `Abdullah from the tribe of Makhzum, and Al-Hakam bin Kaysan, a freed slave of Hisham bin Al-Mughirah. When they saw the Companions they were frightened, but when they saw `Ukkashah bin Mihsan their fears
subsided, since his head was shaved. They said, "These people seek the `Umrah, so there is no need to fear them."

The Companions conferred among themselves. That day was the last day in the (sacred) month of Rajab. They said to each other, "By Allah! If you let them pass, they will soon enter the Sacred Area and take refuge in it from you. If you kill them, you will kill them during the Sacred Month." They at first hesitated and did not like to attack them. They then began encouraging themselves and decided to kill whomever they could among the disbelievers and to confiscate whatever they had. Hence, Waqid bin `Abdullah At-Tamimi shot an arrow at `Amr bin Al-Hadrami and killed him. `Uthman bin `Abdullah and Al-Hakam bin Kaysan gave themselves up, while Nafwal bin `Abdullah was able to outrun them in flight. Later on, `Abdullah bin Jahsh and his companions went back to Allah's Messenger in Al-Madinah with the caravan and the two prisoners. Ibn Ishaq went on: I was told that some members of the family of `Abdullah bin Jahsh said that `Abdullah said to his companions: "Allah's Messenger will have one-fifth of what we have confiscated." This occurred before Allah required one-fifth for His Messenger from the war booty. So, `Abdullah designated one-fifth of the caravan for Allah's Messenger and divided the rest among his companions. Ibn Ishaq also stated that at first, when the Sariyah came back to Allah's Messenger , he said to them:

مَا أَمْرُنَّكُمْ بِقِتَالٍ فِي الْشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامَ

(I have not commanded you to conduct warfare during the Sacred Month. )

He left the caravan and the two prisoners alone and did not take any share of the war booty.

When Allah's Messenger did that, the soldiers from the attack were concerned and felt that they were destroyed, and their Muslim brethren criticized them for what they did. The Quraysh said that Muhammad and his Companions violated the sanctity of the Sacred Month and shed blood, confiscated property and took prisoners during it. Those who refuted them among the Muslims who remained in Makkah replied that the Muslims had done that during the month of Sha`ban (which is not a sacred month). Meanwhile, the Jews were pleased about what happened to Allah's Messenger . They said, "Amr bin Hadrami was killed by Waqid bin `Abdullah: 'Amr, means the war has started, Hadrami means the war has come, as for Waqid (bin 'Abdullah): the war has raged (using some of the literal meanings of these names to support their fortune-telling!)." But, Allah made all that turn against them.

The people continued talking about this matter, then Allah revealed to His Messenger :

يَسْلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الحَرَامِ قَتَالٍ فِيهِ قَلْ قَتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكَفَّرُ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أُهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عَنِّ اللَّهِ وَالْقَيْسَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتَالِ
(They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, "Fighting therein is a great (transgression) but a greater (transgression) with Allah is to prevent mankind from following the way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants, and Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.)

This Ayah means, 'If you had killed during the Sacred Month, they (disbelievers of Quraysh) have hindered you from the path of Allah and disbelieved in it. They also prevented you from entering the Sacred Mosque, and expelled you from it, while you are its people,

(أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)

(...a greater (transgression) with Allah) than killing whom you killed among them. Also:

(وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقُتْلِ)

(...and Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.) means, trying to force the Muslims to revert from their religion and re-embrace Kufr after they had believed, is worse with Allah than killing.' Allah said:

(وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقِيلُونَ نَكُمْ حَنَّا يَرْدُوكُمْ عَنِ دِينِكُمْ
إن استَطَاعُوا)

(And they will never cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion (Islamic Monotheism) if they can.)

So, they will go on fighting you with unrelenting viciousness.

Ibn Ishaq went on: When the Qur'an touched this subject and Allah brought relief to the Muslims instead of the sadness that had befallen them, Allah's Messenger took possession of the caravan and the two prisoners. The Quraysh offered to ransom the two prisoners, `Uthman bin `Abdullah and Hakam bin Kaysan. Allah's Messenger said:

"لَا نَقِدِيْكُمْ هُمَا حَنَّا يَقِدُّمُ صَاحِبَانَا"

(We will not accept your ransom until our two companions return safely.) meaning Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas and `Utbah bin Ghazwan, "For we fear for their safety with you. If you kill them, we will kill your people." Later on, Sa`d and `Utbah returned safely and Allah's Messenger accepted the Quraysh's ransom for their prisoners. As for Al-Hakam bin Kaysan, he became Muslim and his Islam strengthened. He remained with Allah's Messenger until he was martyred during the incident at Bir Ma` unah (when the Prophet sent seventy Companions to Najd to teach them Islam, but Banu Sulaim killed them all except two). As for `Uthman bin `Abdullah, he went back to Makkah and died there as a disbeliever.
Ibn Ishaq went on: When `Abdullah bin Jahsh and his companions were relieved from their depressing thoughts after the Qur'an was revealed about this subject, they sought the reward of the fighters (in Allah's way). They said, "O Messenger of Allah! We wish that this incident be considered a battle for us, so that we gain the rewards of the Mujahidin." Then, Allah revealed:

(Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (for Allah's religion) and have striven hard in the way of Allah, all these hope for Allah's mercy. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

Hence, Allah has greatly elevated their hopes of gaining what they had wished for.

(Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (for Allah's religion) and have striven hard in the way of Allah, all these hope for Allah's mercy. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

(219. They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin, and (some) benefits for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is (spare) beyond your needs." Thus Allah makes clear to you His Laws in order that you may give thought."

(220. In (to) this worldly life and in the Hereafter. And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers. And Allah knows (the one) who means mischief (e.g., to swallow their property) from (the one) who means good (e.g., to save their property). And if Allah had wished, He could have put you into difficulties. Truly, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise."
The Gradual Prohibition of Khamr (Alcoholic Drink)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Maysarah said that `Umar once said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr!" Allah sent down the Ayah of Surat Al-Baqarah:

(يُسْلُونَكَ عَنَّ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرَ فَلْ فيهمَا إِنَّمَا كَبِيرُ)

(They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin...)

`Umar was then summoned and the Ayah was recited to him. Yet, he still said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr." Then, this Ayah that is in Surat An-Nisa' was revealed:

(يَأُيُوْدُ الدِّينَ عِامَّتَكُمْ لا تَقْرِبُوا الْصَّلَوَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَرَى)

(O you who believe! Approach not As-Salah (the prayer) when you are in a drunken state.) (4:43)

Then, when the prayer was called for, a person used to herald on behalf of Allah's Messenger, "No drunk person should attend the prayer." `Umar was summoned again and the Ayah was recited to him. Yet, he still said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr." Then, the Ayah that is in Surat Al-Ma'idah was revealed, "Umar was again summoned and the Ayah was recited to him. When he reached:

(فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ)

(So, will you not then abstain) (5:91) he said, "We did abstain, we did abstain." This is also the narration that Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasai collected in their books. `Ali bin Al-Madini and At-Tirmidhi said that the chain of narrators for this Hadith is sound and authentic. We will mention this Hadith again along with what Imam Ahmad collected by Abu Hurayrah Allah's saying in Surat Al-Ma'idah:
(Intoxicants and gambling, and Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.)

Allah said:

(They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drinks and gambling.)

As for Al-Khamr, `Umar bin Khattab, the Leader of the faithful, used to say, "It includes all what intoxicates the mind." We will also mention this statement in the explanation of Surat Al-Ma'idah, along with the topic of gambling.

Allah said:

(Say: In them is a great sin, and (some) benefits for men.)

As for the harm that the Khamr and gambling cause, it effects the religion. As for their benefit, it is material, including benefit for the body, digesting the food, getting rid of the excrements, sharpening the mind, bringing about a joyous sensation and financially benefiting from their sale. Also, (their benefit includes) earnings through gambling that one uses to spend on his family and on himself. Yet, these benefits are outweighed by the clear harm that they cause which affects the mind and the religion. This is why Allah said:

(...but the sin of them is greater than their benefit.)

This Ayah was the beginning of the process of prohibiting Khamr, not explicitly, but it only implied this meaning. So when this Ayah was recited to `Umar, he still said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr." Soon after, Allah sent down a clear prohibition of Khamr in Surat Al-Ma'idah:
(O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, and Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam are an abomination of Shaytan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful. Shaytan wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from As-Salih (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain) (5:90, 91)

We will mention this subject, by the will of Allah, when we explain Surat Al-Ma'idah.

Ibn `Umar, Ash-Sha`bi, Mujahid, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Aslam stated that the first Ayah revealed about Khamr was:

(They ask you about Khamr and gambling. Say: "In them there is great sin.") (2:219)

Then, the Ayah in Surat An-Nisa' was revealed (on this subject) and then the Ayah in Surat Al-Ma'idah which prohibited Khamr.

Spending whatever One could spare of his Money on Charity

Allah said:

(And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is (spare) beyond your needs.")
Al-Hakam said that Miqsam said that Ibn `Abbas said that this Ayah means, whatever you can spare above the needs of your family. This is also the opinion of Ibn `Umar, Mujahid, `Ata', Ikrimah, Sa'id bin Jubayr, Muhammad bin Ka'b, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Al-Qasim, Salim, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

Ibn Jarir related that Abu Hurayrah said that a man said, "O Messenger of Allah! I have a Dinar (a currency)." The Prophet said:

» أَنْفِقْهَا عَلَى نَفْسِكَ

(Spend it you on yourself.) He said, "I have another Dinar." He said:

» أَنْفِقْهَا عَلَى أَهْلِكَ

(Spend it on your wife.) He said, "I have another Dinar." He said:

» أَنْفِقْهَا عَلَى وَلَدِكَ

(Spend it on your offspring.) He said, "I have another Dinar." He said:

» فَأَنْفِقْ أَبْصَرَ

(You have better knowledge (meaning how and where to spend it in charity).)

Muslim also recorded this Hadith in his Sahih.

Muslim recorded that Jabir said that Allah's Messenger said to a man:

» أَبْدَا إِنْفِسْكَ قَتْصِدَقْ عَلَيْهَا، فَإِنْ فَضْلٌ شَيْءٌ فِلَأَهْلِكَ، فَإِنْ فَضْلٌ شَيْءٌ عَنْ أَهْلِكَ فِلْذِي قَرَابَتِكَ، فَإِنْ فَضْلٌ عَنْ ذِي قَرَابَتِكَ شَيْءٌ فِهْكَدَا وَفِهْكَدَا

(Start with yourself and grant it some charity. If anything remains, then spend it on your family. If anything remains, then spend it on your relatives. If anything remains, then spend it like this and like that (i.e., on various charitable purposes).)
A Hadith states:

«أَبْنَآ أَدَمَ إِنَّكَ أَنْ تَبْدِلَ الْفَضْلَ حَيْرَ كَ، وَأَنْ تُمْسِكَهُ شَرَّ لَكَ، وَلَا تَثَمَّ مَعَ كَفَافٍ»

(O son of Adam! If you spend whatever you can spare, it would be better for you; but if you keep it, it would be worse for you. You shall not be blamed for whatever is barely sufficient.)

Allah said:

(كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الآيَاتِ لِعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِيهَا الدُّنْيَا وَالْأَخْرَةَ)

(Thus Allah makes clear to you His Ayat in order that you may give thought. In (to) this worldly life and in the Hereafter.)

meaning, just as He stated and explained these commandments for you, He also explains the rest of His Ayat regarding the commandments and His promises and warnings, so that you might give thought in this life and the Hereafter. `Ali bin Abu Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas commented, "Meaning about the imminent demise and the brevity of this life, and the imminent commencement of the Hereafter and its continuity." a

Maintaining the Orphan's Property

Allah said:

(وَيُسْلَّمُنَّكَ عَنَّ الْيَتَّمَّى فَلْ إِسْلَاحُ لَهُمْ حَيْرٌ وَإِنَّ تَخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُقْسِدَ مِنَ المُسْلِحِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْتَنَّكُمْ)

(And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers. And Allah knows him who means mischief (e.g., to swallow their property) from him who means good (e.g., to save their property). And if Allah had wished, He could have put you into difficulties.)

Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When the Ayat:
(And come not near to the orphan's property, except to improve it.) (6:152) and

(Verily, those who unjutly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only fire into their bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire!) (4:10) were revealed, those who took care of some orphans, separated their food and drink from the orphans' food and drink. When some of the orphans' food and drink remained, they would keep it for them until they eat it or otherwise get spoiled. This situation was difficult for them and they mentioned this subject to Allah's Messenger.

(And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers." Hence, they joined their food and drink with the food and drink of the orphans.) This Hadith was also collected by Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i and Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak. Several others said similarly about the circumstances surrounding the revelation of the Ayah (2:220), including Mujahid, 'Ata', Ash-Sha`bi, Ibn Abu Layla, Qatadah and others among the Salaf and those after them.

Ibn Jarir reported that `A'ishah said, "I dislike that an orphan's money be under my care, unless I mix my food with his food and my drink with his drink."

Allah said:

(And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers." Hence, they joined their food and drink with the food and drink of the orphans.)

(...and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers.) meaning, there is no harm if you mix your food and drink with their food and drink, since they are your brothers in the religion. This is why Allah said afterwards:
(And Allah knows (the one) who means mischief (e.g., to swallow their property) from (the one) who means good (e.g., to save their property). ) meaning, He knows those whose intent is to cause mischief or righteousness. He also said:

(ولو شئ الله لأعتنكم إن الله عزيز حكيم)

(And if Allah had wished, He could have put you into difficulties. Truly, Allah is Al-Mighty, All-Wise) meaning, if Allah wills, He will make this matter difficult for you. But, He made it easy for you, and allowed you to mix your affairs with the orphans' affairs in a way that is better. Similarly, Allah said:

(ولا تقربوا مال اليدتين إلا بالتي هي أحسن)

(And come not near to the orphan's property, except to improve it.) (6:152)

Allah has thus allowed spending from the orphan's estate by its executor, in reasonable proportions, on the condition that he has the intention to compensate the orphan later on, when he can afford it. We will mention about it in detail in Surat An-Nisa' by Allah's will.

(ولا تنكحوا المشركين حتي يؤمنوا ولا امتلكوا مشركين حتي يؤمنوا وأعجبوكم ولا تنكحوا المشركين حتي يؤمنوا ولا امتلكوا مشركين حتي يؤمنوا والله يدعو العبد مؤمن خير من مشرك ولو أعجبكم أولئك يدعون إلى النار والله يدعو إلى الجنة والمعفرة بإذنه ويبيين أيته للناس لعلهم يتفكرون)

(221. And do not marry Al-Mushrikat (idolatresses) till they believe (worship Allah Alone). And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) Mushrikah (idolatress), even though she pleases you. And give not (your daughters) in marriage to Al-Mushrikin till they believe (in Allah Alone) and verily, a believing servant is better than a (free) Mushrik (idolator), even though he pleases you. Those (Mushrikin) invite you to the Fire, but Allah invites (you) to Paradise and forgiveness by His leave, and makes His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) clear to mankind that they may remember.)
The Prohibition of marrying Mushrik Men and Women

Allah prohibited the believers from marrying Mushrik women who worship idols. Although the meaning is general and includes every Mushrik woman from among the idol worshippers and the People of the Scripture, Allah excluded the People of the Scripture from this ruling. Allah stated:

(من الذين أوثوا الكتب من قبلكم إذا أعناكم مهنم أُجُورُ هَنَّ مُحَصَّنِينَ غَيْرُ مُسَافِحِينَ)

((Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before your time when you have given their due dowry, desiring chastity (i.e., taking them in legal wedlock) not committing illegal sexual intercourse.) (5:5)

`Ali bin Abu Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said about what Allah said:

(وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا المُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنْنَ)

(And do not marry Al-Mushrikat (female idolators) till they believe (worship Allah Alone).)

"Allah has excluded the women of the People of the Scripture." This is also the explanation of Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Makhul, Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, Zayd bin Aslam and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and others. Some scholars said that the Ayah is exclusively talking about idol worshippers and not the People of the Scripture, and this meaning is similar to the first meaning we mentioned. Allah knows best.

Abu Ja`far bin Jarir (At-Tabari) said, after mentioning that there is Ijma` that marrying women from the People of the Scripture is allowed, "Umar disliked this practice so that the Muslims do not refrain from marrying Muslim women, or for similar reasons." An authentic chain of narrators stated that Shaqiq said: Once Hudhayfah married a Jewish woman and `Umar wrote to him, "Divorce her." He wrote back, "Do you claim that she is not allowed for me so that I divorce her" He said, "No. But, I fear that you might marry the whores from among them." Ibn Jarir related that Zayd bin Wahb said that `Umar bin Khattab said, "The Muslim man marries the Christian woman, but the Christian man does not marry the Muslim woman." This Hadith has a stronger, authentic chain of narrators than the previous Hadith.

Ibn Abu Hatim said that Ibn `Umar disliked marrying the women from the People of the Scripture. He relied on his own explanation for the Ayah:

(وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا المُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنْنَ)

(And do not marry Al-Mushrikat (female idolators) till they believe (worship Allah Alone).)
Al-Bukhari also reported that Ibn `Umar said, "I do not know of a bigger Shirk than her saying that Jesus is her Lord!"

Allah said:

(وَلَأَمَّةٌ مُؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مَنْ مُشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أُعْجِبْتُمُّ)

(And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) Mushrikah (female idolators), even though she pleases you.)

It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said:

(سَبْحَانَ الْمَرَأَةِ ﺣَرَابَ ٰ أَرْبَعَ: لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسْبِهَا وَلِجِمَالِهَا وَلِديْنِهَا، فَاذْتَقَرْ بِذَاتِ الْدِّينِ، تَرْبِتْ يَدَاكَ)

(A woman is chosen for marriage for four reasons: her wealth, social status, beauty, and religion. So, marry the religious woman, may your hands be filled with sand (a statement of encouragement).)

Muslim reported this Hadith from Jabir. Muslim also reported that Ibn `Amr said that Allah's Messenger said:

(الدُّنِيَا مَتَاعٌ، وَخَيْرُ مَتَاعِ الدُّنْيَا المَرَأَةُ الصَّالِحَةِ)

(The life of this world is but a delight, and the best of the delights of this earthly life is the righteous wife.)

Allah then said:

(وَلاَ تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَى يُؤْمِنُواً)

(And give not (your daughters) in marriage to Al-Mushrikin till they believe (in Allah Alone).) meaning, do not marry Mushrik men to believing women. This statement is similar to Allah's statement:

(لاَ هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلاَ هُمْ يَحْلُونَ لَهُنَّ)

(They are not lawful (wives) for them, nor are they lawful (husbands) for them.) (60:10)
Next, Allah said:

(وَلَعْبَدُ مُؤْمِنٍ خَيْرٌ مَنْ مُشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجِبَكُمْ)

(. .and verily, a believing servant is better than a (free) Mushrik (idolator), even though he pleases you.)

This Ayah indicates that a believing man, even an Abyssinian servant, is better than a Mushrik man, even if he was a rich master.

(وَلَوْلَئِكَ يُدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ)

(Those (Al-Mushrikun) invite you to the Fire) meaning, associating and mingling with the disbelievers makes one love this life and prefer it over the Hereafter, leading to the severest repercussions. Allah said:

(وَاللَّهُ يُدْعُو إِلَى الجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ)

(...but Allah invites (you) to Paradise and forgiveness by His leave) meaning, by His Law, commandments and prohibitions. Allah said:

(وَيُبِينَنَّ آيَتَهُ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ)

(...and makes His Ayat clear to mankind that they may remember.)
Sexual Intercourse with Menstruating Women is prohibited

Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas said that the Jews used to avoid their menstruating women, they would not eat, or even mingle with them in the house. The Companions of the Prophet asked about this matter and Allah revealed:

وَيَسْلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ فَلْهُوَ أَذِىٍ فَاغْتَزِلُوا
الْنساءِ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرِبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرُنَّ

(They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: "That is an Adha, therefore, keep away from women during menses and go not in unto them till they are purified.)

Allah's Messenger said:

اصْنَعُوا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا النَّكَاحَ

(`' Do everything you wish, except having sexual intercourse.)

When the Jews were told about the Prophet's statement, they said, "What is the matter with this man He would not hear of any of our practices, but would defy it." Then, Usayd bin Hudayr and 'Abbad bin Bishr came and said, "O Messenger of Allah! The Jews said this and that, should we have sex with our women (meaning, during the menstruation period)" The face of Allah's Messenger changed color, until the Companions thought that he was angry with them. They left. Soon after, some milk was brought to Allah's Messenger as a gift, and he sent some of it for them to drink. They knew then that Allah's Messenger was not angry with them. Muslim also reported this Hadith. Allah said:

(فَاغْتَزِلُوا النَّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ)

(...therefore, keep away from women during menses.) meaning, avoid the sexual organ. The Prophet said:
(Do anything you wish except having sexual intercourse.)

This is why most of the scholars said that it is allowed to fondle the wife, except for having sexual intercourse (when she is having her menses). Abu Dawud reported that `Ikrimah related to one of the Prophet's wives that she said that whenever the Prophet wanted to fondle (one of his wives) during her menses, he would cover her sexual organ with something.

Abu Ja`far bin Jarir related that Masruq went to `A'ishah and greeted her, and `A'ishah greeted him in return. Masruq said, "I wish to ask you about a matter, but I am shy." She replied, "I am your mother and you are my son." He said, "What can the man enjoy of his wife when she is having her menses?" She said, "Everything except her sexual organ." This is also the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Al-Hasan and `Ikrimah.

One is allowed to sleep next to his wife and to eat with her (when she is having her menses). `A'ishah said, "Allah's Messenger used to ask me to wash his hair while I was having the menses. He would lay on my lap and read the Qur'an while I was having the period." It is also reported in the Sahih that `A'ishah said, "While having the menses, I used to eat from a piece of meat and give it to the Prophet who would eat from the same place I ate from. I used to have sips of a drink and would then give the cup to the Prophet who would place his mouth where I placed my mouth."

It is also reported in the Two Sahihis that Maymunah bint Al-Harith Al-Hilaliyah said, "Whenever the Prophet wanted to fondle any of his wives during the periods (menses), he used to ask her to wear an Izar (a sheet covering the lower-half of the body)." These are the wordings collected by Al-Bukhari. Similar was reported from `A'ishah. In addition, Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah reported that `Abdullah bin Sa`d Al-Ansari asked Allah's Messenger, "What am I allowed of my wife while she is having her menses?" He said, "What is above the Izar (a sheet covering the lower-half of the body)." Hence, Allah's statement:

(وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرُنَّ)

(وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرُنَّ)

(...and go not in unto them till they are purified.) explains His statement:

(فَاغْعَلُوا الْنَّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ)

(فَاغْعَلُوا الْنَّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ)

(...therefore, keep away from women during menses.)

Allah prohibited having sexual intercourse with the wife during menstruation, indicating that sexual intercourse is allowed otherwise.

Allah's statement:

(فَإِذَا تَطْهُرُنَّ قَاتِلُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ)

(فَإِذَا تَطْهُرُنَّ قَاتِلُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ)
(And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allah has ordained for you.) indicates that men should have sexual intercourse with their wives after they take a bath. The scholars agree that the woman is obliged to take a bath, or to perform Tayammum with sand, if she is unable to use water, before she is allowed to have sexual intercourse with her husband, after the monthly period ends. Ibn `Abbas said:

"(till they are purified) means from blood, and,

(And when they have purified themselves) means with water." This is also the Tafsir of Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Al-Layth bin Sa`d and others.

**Anal Sex is prohibited**

Allah said:

(...as Allah has ordained for you,) this refers to Al-Farj (the vagina), as Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and other scholars have stated. Therefore, anal sex is prohibited, as we will further emphasize afterwards, Allah willing. Abu Razin, `Ikrimah and Ad-Dahhak and others said that:

(...then go in unto them as Allah has ordained for you.) means when they are pure, and not during the menses. Allah said afterwards:

(Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance) from the sin even if it was repeated,
(and loves those who purify themselves.) meaning, those who purify themselves from the impurity and the filth that include having sexual intercourse with the wife during the menses and anal sex.

The Reason behind revealing Allah's Statement: "Your Wives are a Tilth for You.

Allah said:

(پیسّاَوُّکِمْ حَرْتَتْ لَکُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you.)

Ibn `Abbas commented, "Meaning the place of pregnancy." Allah then said:

(...so go to your tilth, when or how you will,) meaning, wherever you wish from the front or from behind, as long as sex takes place in one valve (the female sexual organ), as the authentic Hadiths have indicated.

For instance, Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn Al-Munkadir said that he heard Jabir say that the Jews used to claim that if one has sex with his wife from behind (in the vagina) the offspring would become cross-eyed. Then, this Ayah was revealed:

(پیسّاَوُّکِمْ حَرْتَتْ لَکُمْ قَأْتَوْا حَرْتَتْکِمْ أَنَّی شِئَنَّمُ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.)

Muslim and Abu Dawud also reported this Hadith.

Ibn Abu Hatim said that Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir narrated that Jabir bin `Abdullah told him that the Jews claimed to the Muslims that if one has sex with their wife from behind (in the vagina) their offspring will become cross-eyed. Allah revealed afterwards:

(پیسّاَوُّکِمْ حَرْتَتْ لَکُمْ قَأْتَوْا حَرْتَتْکِمْ أَنَّی شِئَنَّمُ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.)

Ibn Jurayj (one of the reporters of the Hadith) said that Allah's Messenger said:
(From the front or from behind, as long as that occurs in the Farj (vagina).)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Ayah,

(نِسَآؤُوكُمْ خَرْتُكَمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you) was revealed about some people from the Ansar who came to the Prophet and asked him (about having sex with the wife from behind). He said to them:

"انتِهَا عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ إِذَا كَانَ فِي الْفَرْجِ"

(Have sex with her as you like as long as that occurs in the vagina.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin Sabit said: I went to Hafsah bint `Abdur-Rahman bin Abu Bakr and said, "I wish to ask you about something, but I am shy." She said, "Do not be shy, O my nephew." He said, "About having sex from behind with women." She said, "Umm Salamah told me that the Ansar used to refrain from having sex from behind (in the vagina). The Jews claimed that those who have sex with their women from behind would have offspring with crossed-eyes. When the Muhajirun came to Al-Madinah, they married Ansar women and had sex with them from behind. One of these women would not obey her husband and said, 'You will not do that until I go to Allah's Messenger (and ask him about this matter).' She went to Umm Salamah and told her the story. Umm Salamah said, 'Wait until Allah's Messenger comes.' When Allah's Messenger came, the Ansari woman was shy to ask him about this matter, so she left. Umm Salamah told Allah's Messenger the story and he said:

"اذْعِي الْأَنْصَارِيَّةَ"

(Summon the Ansari woman.)"

She was summoned and he recited this Ayah to her:

(نِسَآؤُوكُمْ خَرْتُكَمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.) He added:

"صِمَامًا وَاحِدًا"

(Only in one valve (the vagina).)"
This Hadith was also collected by At-Tirmidhi who said, "Hasan."

An-Nasa'i reported that Ka'b bin `Aqimah said that Abu An-Nadr said that he asked Nafi', "The people are repeating the statement that you relate from Ibn `Umar that he allowed sex with women in their rear (anus)." He said, "They have said a lie about me. But let me tell you what really happened. Ibn `Umar was once reciting the Qur'an while I was with him and he reached the Ayah:

(واَلْيَوْمَ ِلَكُمْ ِحَرْثٌ ِكُلُّمَ قَأْثَوْا ِحَرْثَكَمْ َأَنْتُى ِشَيْنَمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.) He then said, `O Nafi! Do you know the story behind this Ayah? I said, `No.' He said, `We, the people of Quraysh, used to have sexual intercourse with our wives from the back (in the vagina). When we migrated to Al-Madinah and married some Ansar women, we wanted to do the same with them. They disliked it and made a big issue out of it. The Ansar women had followed the practice of the Jews who have sex with their women while they lay on their sides. Then, Allah revealed:

(واَلْيَوْمَ ِلَكُمْ ِحَرْثٌ ِكُلُّمَ قَأْثَوْا ِحَرْثَكَمْ َأَنْتُى ِشَيْنَمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.)"

This has an authentic chain of narrators.

Imam Ahmad reported that Khuzaymah bin Thabit Al-Khatami narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

(لاَ يُسْتَخْحِيُّ اللهُ مِنَ ِالْحَقِّ ثَلَاثًا لَا تَأْثِنَا النِّسَاءَ في أَعْجَابِهِنَّ)

(Allah does not shy from the truth - he said it thrice-, do not have anal sex with women.)

This Hadith was collected by An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.

Abu `Isa At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i reported that Ibn `Abbas narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

(لاَ يُنْظَرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى رَجُلٍ أَثَى رِجَلًا أوْ امْرَأَةٌ فِي الدُّبْرَاءِ)

(Allah does not look at a man who had anal sex with another man or a woman.)
At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Gharib." This is also the narration that Ibn Hibban collected in his Sahih, while Ibn Hazm stated that this is an authentic Hadith.

In addition, Imam Ahmad reported that `Ali bin Talaq said, "Allah's Messenger forbade anal sex with women, for Allah does not shy away from truth." Abu `Isa At-Tirmidhi also reported this Hadith and said, "Hasan".

Abu Muhammad `Abdullah bin `Abdur-Rahman Darimi reported in his Musnad that Sa`id bin Yasar Abu Hubab said: I said to Ibn `Umar, "What do you say about having sex with women in the rear?" He said, "What does it mean?" I said, "Anal sex." He said, "Does a Muslim do that?" This Hadith has an authentic chain of narrators and is an explicit rejection of anal sex from Ibn `Umar.

Abu Bakr bin Ziyad Naysaburi reported that Isma`il bin Ruh said that he asked Malik bin Anas, "What do you say about having sex with women in the anus?" He said, "You are not an Arab. Does sex occur but in the place of pregnancy? Do it only in the Farj (vagina)." I said, "O Abu `Abdullah! They say that you allow that practice." He said, "They utter a lie about me, they lie about me." This is Malik's firm stance on this subject. It is also the view of Sa`id bin Musayyib, Abu Salamah, `Ikrimah, Tawus, `Ata , Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Urwh bin Az-Zubayr, Mujahid bin Jabr, Al-Hasan and other scholars of the Salaf (the Companions and the following two generations after them). They all, along with the majority of the scholars, harshly rebuked the practice of anal sex and many of them called this practice a Kufr.

Allah said:

(وَقَدَّمُوا لَأَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(And send for your own selves beforehand.) meaning, by performing the acts of worship while refraining from whatever Allah has prohibited for you. This is why Allah said afterwards:

(وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُم مُلْقَوُهُ)

(And fear Allah, and know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter),)

meaning, He will hold you accountable for all of your deeds,

(وَبَشَّرُ المُؤْمِنِينَ)

(...and give good tidings to the believers (O Muhammad .) meaning, those who obey what Allah has commanded and refrain from what He has prohibited. Ibn Jarir reported that `Ata' said, or related it to Ibn `Abbas,
(...and send for your own selves beforehand.) means, mention Allah's Name, by saying, 'Bismillah,' before having sexual intercourse.” Al-Bukhari also reported that Ibn `Abbas narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لوُ أَنْ أَحْدَكُمْ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَهْلَهُ قَالَ: بَاسْمٍ اللهَ الْلِّهَمَ جَنَبْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ وَجنَبْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ مَا رَقَتَنَا، فَأَنَّهُ اِنْ يَقُدَّرُ بِيْنَهُمَا وَلَدًّا فِي ذلِكَ، لَمْ يَضْرُّهُ الْشَّيَاطِينُ أَبَدًا»

(If anyone of you on having sexual relations with his wife said: ‘In the Name of Allah. O Allah! Protect us from Satan and also protect what you bestow upon us (i.e., the coming offspring) from Satan,’ and if it is destined that they should have a child then, Satan will never be able to harm him.)


(224. And make not Allâh's (Name) an excuse in your oaths against doing good and acting piously, and making peace among mankind. And Allâh is All-Hearer, All-Knower (i.e., do not swear much and if you have sworn against doing something good then give an expiation for the oath and do good).) (225. Allâh will not call you to account for that which is unintentional in your oaths, but He will call you to account for that which your hearts have earned. And Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Forbearing.)

The Prohibition of swearing to abandon a Good Deed

Allâh commands, ‘You should not implement your vows in Allâh's Name to refrain from pious acts and severing the relations with the relatives, if you swear to abandon such causes.’ Allâh said in another Ayah:
(And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, Al-Masakin (the poor), and those who left their homes for Allah's cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you) (24:22)

Continuity in a sinful vow is more sinful than breaking it by expiation. Allah's Messenger said:

وَلَأَيَتَّلُ أُولُوْلَا القَضَلَ مِنَّكُمْ وَالسَّعَةَ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أَوْلِيَ الْقُرْبَى وَالْمَسْكِينَ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْقُوا وَلِيَصْفَحُوا أَلاَ تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُعْفَرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

(By Allah! It is more sinful to Allah that one of you implements his vow regarding (severing the relations with) his relatives than (breaking his promise and) paying the Kaffarah that Allah has required in such cases.)

This is how Muslim reported this Hadith and also Imam Ahmad.

` Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn ` Abbas said that what Allah said:

وَلَا تَجَعَّلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةَ لَآَيِّمَنَّكُمْ

(And make not Allah's (Name) an excuse in your oaths) means, "Do not vow to refrain from doing good works. (If you make such vow then) break it, pay the Kaffarah and do the good work." This was also said by Masruq, Ash-Sha` bi, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Mujahid, Tawus, Sa` id bin Jubayr, `Ata`, Ikrimah, Makhul, Az-Zuhri, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak, `Ata` Al-Khurasani and As-Suddi.

Supporting this view, which is the majority view, is what is reported in the Two Sahihs that Abu Musa Al-Ash` ari narrated that Allah's Messenger said:
(By Allah! Allah willing, I will not vow to do a thing and then see a better act, but I would do what is better and break my vow.) Muslim reported that Abu Hurayrah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«إنِّي وَاللَّهِ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ، لَا أَحْلِفُ عَلَى يَمِينٍ فَأَرَأَى غَيْرَهَا حُسْرَا مِنْهَا إِلَّا أَتْبَعْتُ الَّذِي هُوَ حُسْرٌ وَتَحْلَّلَتِهَا»

(Whoever makes a vow and then finds what is better than his vow (should break his vow,) pay the Kaffarah and perform the better deed.)

The Laghw (Unintentional) Vows

Allah said:

(لاَ يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغُوِّ فِى أَيْمَنَكُمْ)

(Allah will not call you to account for that which is unintentional in your oaths.)

This Ayah means, `Allah does not punish or hold you accountable for the Laghw (unintentional) vows that you make.' The Laghw vows are unintentional and are just like the habitual statements that the tongue repeats, without really intending them. For instance, it is reported in the Two Sahihs that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«مَنْ حَلفَ فَقَالَ فِي حَلَفِهِ بَاللَّهٍ وَالْأُلْوَىِ، فَلْيُقِلْ
لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِلَى اللَّهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْكَافِرُ»

(Whoever swore and (unintentionally) mentioned Al-Lat and Al-`Uzza (two idols) in his vow, should then say, `There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah'.)

The Messenger said this statement to some new Muslims whose tongues were, before Islam, used to vowing by their idol Al-Lat. Therefore, the Prophet ordered them to intentionally recite the slogan of Ikhlas, just as they mentioned these words by mistake, so that it (the word of Ikhlas) may eradicate the word (of Shirk). This is why Allah said:
(وَلَكِنْ يُوَلَّتْكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبَكُمْ)

(...but He will call you to account for that which your hearts have earned.) and in another Ayah:

(بِمَا عَقَدْنَتْ الْأَيْمَانِ)

(...for your deliberate oaths) (5:89)

Abu Dawud reported under Chapter: `The Laghw Vows' that `Aṭa' said that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«اللَّهُوَ في الْيَمِينِ هُوَ كَلَامُ الرَّجُلِ فِي بَيْتِهِ: كَلَا
وَاللَّهِ، وَبَلَى وَاللَّهِ»

(The Laghw in the vows includes what the man says in his house, such as, `No, by Allah,' and, `Yes, by Allah'.)

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Laghw vow includes vowing while angry."

He also reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Laghw vow includes vowing to prohibit what Allah has allowed, and this type does not require a Kaffarah (expiation)." Similar was said by Sā'id bin Jubayr.

In addition, Abu Dawud related under Chapter: `Vowing while Angry' that Sā?id bin Musayyib said that two Ansari brothers both received inheritance and one of them asked that the inheritance be divided. His brother said, "If you ask me about dividing the inheritance again, then all of what I have will be spent on the Ka`bah's door." `Umar said to him, "The Ka`bah does not need your money. So break your vow, pay the Kaffarah and come to terms with your brother. I heard Allah's Messenger saying:

«لَا يَمِينَ عَلَيْكَ وَلَا نَذُرُ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الرَّبِّ عَرْزً
وَجَلًّ، وَفِي قَطِيعَةِ الرَّحْمِ، وَقَيْمَةَ لا تَمْلَكَ»

(Do not make a vow against yourself, nor to disobey the Lord, cut the relations of the womb or dispose of what you do not own.)"

Allah said:
(وَلَكَنُ يُؤَخْذُوكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتُ قُلُوبُكُمْ)

(. . .but He will call you to account for that which your hearts have earned,)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and several others said that this Ayah means swearing about a matter while knowing that he is lying. Mujahid and others said this Ayah is similar to what Allah said:

(وَلَكَنُ يُؤَخْذُوكُمْ بِمَا عَقِدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانِ)

(...but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths.) (5:89) Allah said (2:225 above):

(وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Forbearing.) meaning, He is Oft-Forgiving to His servants and Most Forbearing with them.

(لِلْذِّينَ يَؤْلُونَ مِن نَسَائِهِمْ تَرْبُصٌ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهَرٍ فَإِنْ قَآءَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحْمِيٌّ وَإِنْ عَزَّمُواُ الطَّلُقَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(226. Those who take an oath not to have sexual relation with their wives must wait for four months, then if they return, verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) (227. And if they decide upon divorce, then Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

The Ila' and its Rulings

Ila' is a type of vow where a man swears not to sleep with his wife for a certain period, whether less or more than four months. If the vow of Ila' was for less than four months, the man has to wait for the vow's period to end and then is allowed to have sexual intercourse with his wife. She has to be patient and she cannot ask her husband, in this case, to end his vow before the end of its term. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that `Aishah said that Allah's Messenger swore he would stay away from his wives for a month. He then came down after twenty-nine days saying:

«الشَّهَرُ تَسْعَىَ وَعِشْرُونَ»
(The (lunar) month is twenty-nine days.)

Similar was narrated by `Umar bin Al-Khattab and reported in the Two Sahihis. If the period of Ila' is for more than four months, the wife is allowed in this case to ask her husband, upon the end of the four months, to end the Ila' and have sexual relations with her. Otherwise, he should divorce her, by being forced to do so by the authorities if necessary, so that the wife is not harmed. Allah said:

(那些人应作证，不要和他们的妻子发生关系)

(Those who take an oath not to have sexual relations with their wives) meaning, swear not to have sexual relations with the wife. This Ayah indicates that the Ila' involves the wife and not a slave-women, as the majority of the scholars have agreed,

(...must wait for four months,) meaning, the husband waits for four months from the time of the vow and then ends the Ila' (if the vow was for four or more months) and is required to either return to his wife or divorce her. This is why Allah said next:

(...must wait for four months,)

(...then if they return,) meaning, to a normal relationship, having sexual intercourse with the wife. This is the Tafsir of Ibn `Abbas, Masruq, Ash-Sha`bi, Sa`id bin Jubayr and Ibn Jarir.

(...verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) with any shortcomings that occurred in the rights of the wife because of the vow of Ila'.

Allah said:

(And if they decide upon divorce,) indicating that divorce does not occur by merely passing the four month mark (during the Ila'). Malik reported from Nafi` that `Abdullah bin `Umar said, "If the man swears to Ila' from his wife, then divorce does not occur automatically even after the four months have passed. When he stops at the four months mark, he should either divorce or return." Al-Bukhari also reported this Hadith. Ibn Jarir reported that Suhayl bin Abu Salih said that his father said, "I asked twelve Companions about the man who does Ila' with his wife. They all stated that he does not have to do anything until the four months have passed and then has to either retain or divorce her." Ad-Daraqutni also reported this from Suhayl.
It is also reported from `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, Abu Ad-Darda', `Aishah, Ibn `Umar and Ibn `Abbas. This is also the opinion of Sa`id bin Musayyib, `Umar bin `Abdul-`Aziz, Mujahid, Tawus, Muhammad bin Ka`b and Al-Qasim.

(228. And divorced women shall wait (as regards their marriage) for three menstrual periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs, if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect) to what is reasonable, but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.)

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) of the Divorced Woman

This Ayah contains a command from Allah that the divorced woman, whose marriage was consummated and who still has menstruation periods, should wait for three (menstrual) periods (Quru') after the divorce and then remarry if she wishes.

The Meaning of Al-Quru

Ibn Jarir related that `Alqamah said: We were with `Umar bin Al-Khattab when a woman came and said, "My husband divorced me one or two periods ago. He then came back to me while I had prepared my water for taking a bath, took off my clothes and closed my door." `Umar asked `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, "What do you think" He said, "I think that she is still his wife, as long as she is not allowed to resume praying (i.e., until the third period ends before he takes her back)." `Umar said, "This is my opinion too." This is also the opinion of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, Abu Ad-Darda', Ubada bin As-Samit, Anas bin Malik, Ibn Mas`ud, Mu`adh, Ubayy bin Ka`b, Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari and Ibn `Abbas. Furthermore, this is the opinion of Sa`id bin Musayyib, `Alqamah, Aswad, Ibrahim, Mujahid, `Ata', Tawus, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Muhammad bin Srin, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ash-Sha`bi, Ar-Rabi`, Muqatil bin Hayyan,
As-Suddi, Makhul, Ad-Dahhak and `Ata' Al-Khurasani. They all stated that the Quru' is the menstruation period. What testifies to this is the Hadith that Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i reported that Fatimah bint Abu Hubaiysh said that Allah's Messenger said to her:

»دَعِي الصَّلَاةَ أَيْبَامَ أَقْرَائِيكَ\«

(Do not pray during your Aqra' (pl. for Quru', the menstruation period).)

If this Hadith was authentic, it would have been a clear proof that the Quru' is the menstruation period. However, one of the narrators of this Hadith, Al-Mundhir, is an unknown person (in Hadith terminology), as Abu Hatim has stated, although Ibn Hibban has mentioned Al-Mundhir in his book Ath-Thiqat.

A Woman's Statement about Menses and Purity is to be accepted

Allah said:

وَلَا يَحْلُوهُمْ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمُّنَّ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ

(...and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs,) meaning, of pregnancy or menstruation periods. This is the Tafsir of Ibn `Abbas, Ibn `Umar, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hakam bin `Utaybah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak and others.

Allah then said:

إِنْ كَنَّ يُؤْمِنُنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرِ

(...if they believe in Allah and the Last Day.)

This Ayah warns women against hiding the truth (if they were pregnant or on their menses), indicating that they are the authority in such matters as they alone know such facts about themselves. Since verifying such matters is difficult, Allah left this decision with them. Yet, women were warned not to hide the truth in case they wish to end the `Iddah sooner, or later, according to their desires. Women were thus commanded to say the truth (if they were pregnant or on their menses), no more and no less.

The Husband has the Right to take back his Divorced Wife during the `Iddah (Waiting Period)

Allah said:
(And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation.)

Hence, the husband who divorces his wife can take her back, providing she is still in her `Iddah (time spent before a divorced woman or a widow can remarry) and that his aim, by taking her back, is righteous and for the purpose of bringing things back to normal. However, this ruling applies where the husband is eligible to take his divorced wife back. We should mention that (when this Ayah 2:228 was revealed), the ruling that made the divorce thrice and specified when the husband is ineligible to take his divorced wife back, had not been revealed yet.

Previously, the man used to divorce his wife and then take her back even if he had divorced her a hundred separate times. Thereafter, Allah revealed the following Ayah (2:229) that made the divorce only thrice. So there was now a reversible divorce and an irreversible final divorce.

The Rights the Spouses have over Each Other

Allah said:

(وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِی عَلَیهِنَّ بِالمَعْرُوفِ)

(And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect) to what is reasonable.)

This Ayah indicates that the wife has certain rights on her husband, just as he has certain rights on her, and each is obliged to give the other spouse his due rights. Muslim reported that Jabir said that Allah's Messenger said:
Fear Allah regarding your women, for you have taken them by Allah's covenant and were allowed to enjoy them sexually by Allah's Words. You have the right on them that they do not allow anyone you dislike to sit on your mat. If they do that, then discipline them leniently. They have the right to be spent on and to be bought clothes in what is reasonable.

Bahz bin Hakim said that Mu`awiyah bin Haydah Al-Qushayri related that his grandfather said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is the right the wife of one of us has" The Prophet said:

»أَن تَطَعُّمْهَا إِذَا طِعْمَتْ، وَتَكْسُوْهَا إِذَا اكْتَسَيْتِ، وَلَا تَضْرِبِ الْوَجْهَ، وَلَا تَفْتَحُ، وَلَا تَهَجْرُ إِلَّا فِي الْبَيْتُ«

(To feed her when you eat, buy her clothes when you buy for yourself and to refrain from striking her on the face, cursing her or staying away from her except in the house.)

Waki` related that Ibn `Abbas said, "I like to take care of my appearance for my wife just as I like for her to take care of her appearance for me. This is because Allah says:

(وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلِيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(And they (women) have rights similar (to those of their husbands) over them to what is reasonable.)" This statement is reported by Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abu Hatim.

**The Virtue Men have over Women**

Allah said:

(وَالرَّجَالُ عَلِيْهِنَّ دِرَجَةً)

(but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them.)

This Ayah indicates that men are in a more advantageous position than women physically as well as in their mannerism, status, obedience (of women to them), spending, taking care of the affairs and in general, in this life and in the Hereafter. Allah said (in another Ayah):

(الرَّجَالُ قَوَامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ وَبِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَغْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضِ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقْوَا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ)
(Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means.) (4:34)

Allah's statement:

(وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise) means, He is Mighty in His punishment of those who disobey and defy His commands. He is Wise in what He commands, destines and legisitates.

(الْطَّلَقُ مَرَّتَانِ فَإِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ بِإِحْسَانٍ وَلَا يُلْلُهُ لَكُمْ أَن تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا عَلِينَّمَثُو هُنَّ شَيْبًا إِلاًّ أَن يَخَافَا أَلا يُقِيمَا حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ حُقَّمُ أَلا يُقِيمَا حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَإِلا جُنَاحٌ عَلَيْهِمَا فِي مَا اقْتَدَتِ بِهِ ذَلِكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَإِلا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأَوْلُوْكَ هُمُ الظَّلِيمُونَ - فَإِن طَلَقْهَا فَإِلا تَحْلُلُ لِهْ مِن بَعْدٍ حَتَّى نَتْكَحَّ رَوْحًا غَيْرُهُ فَإِن طَلَقْهَا فَإِلا جُنَاحٌ عَلَيْهِمَا أَن يَتْرَاجَعَا إِن ظَنَّا أَن يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ وَذَلِكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يَبِينَهَا لَقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(229. The divorce is twice, after that either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness. And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of what you gave them (the Mahr, bridal-money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah (e.g., to deal with each other on a fair basis). Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by Allah, then there is no sin on either of them if she gives back (the Mahr or a part of it). These are the limits ordained by Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by Allah, then such are the wrongdoers.) (230. And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she has married another husband. Then, if the other husband divorces her, it is no sin on both of them that they reunite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah. These are the limits of Allah, which He makes plain for the people who have knowledge.)
Divorce is Thrice

This honorable Ayah abrogated the previous practice in the beginning of Islam, when the man had the right to take back his divorced wife even if he had divorced her a hundred times, as long as she was still in her `Iddah (waiting period). This situation was harmful for the wife, and this is why Allah made the divorce thrice, where the husband is allowed to take back his wife after the first and the second divorce (as long as she is still in her `Iddah). The divorce becomes irrevocable after the third divorce, as Allah said:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانٌ فَإِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ)

(بِإِحْسَانٍ)

(The divorce is twice, after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness.)

In his Sunan, Abu Dawud reported in Chapter: “Taking the Wife back after the third (Divorce) is an abrogated practice,” that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah:

(وَالمُطَلَّقَةُ يُتَرِبَّصْنَ بِأَلْفَضْسِينَ ثَلَاثَةَ فَرْوَعٍ وَلاَ يِحْلُ للَّهِ مَا خَلَقَهُ مِنْ أَحَمَّهُنَّ)

(And divorced women shall wait (as regards their marriage) for three menstrual periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs.) (2:228) The man used to have the right to take back his wife even if he had divorced her thrice. Allah abrogated this and said:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانٌ)

(The divorce is twice.)

This Hadith was also collected by An-Nasa'i. Ibn Abu Hatim reported that `Urwh said that a man said to his wife, “I will neither divorce you nor take you back.” She said, “How” He said, “I will divorce you and when your term of `Iddah nears its end, I will take you back.” She went to Allah's Messenger and told him what happened, and Allah revealed:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانٌ)

(The divorce is twice.)
Ibn Jarir (At-Tabari) also reported this Hadith in his Tafsir.

Allah said:

(...after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness.) meaning, `If you divorce her once or twice, you have the choice to take her back, as long as she is still in her ʿIddah, intending to be kind to her and to mend differences. Otherwise, await the end of her term of ʿIddah, when the divorce becomes final, and let her go her own way in peace, without committing any harm or injustice against her.' `Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn ʿAbbas said, "When the man divorces his wife twice, let him fear Allah, regarding the third time. He should either keep her with him and treat her with kindness, or let her go her own way with kindness, without infringing upon any of her rights."

**Taking back the Mahr (Dowry)**

Allah said:

(ولَا يَحْجُلُ لَكُمْ أَن تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا ءاَيَّتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا)

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of (the dowry) what you gave them,) meaning, you are not allowed to bother or pressure your wives to end this situation by giving you back the Mahr and any gifts that you have given them (in return for divorce). Similarly, Allah said:

(وَلَا تَغْضُبُوهُنَّ لِيَدْهَبُوا بِغَضْبِ مَا ءاَيَّتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَن يَأْتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبِينَةٍ)

(...and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of what you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse.) (4:19)

However, if the wife willingly gives back anything with a good heart, then Allah said regarding this situation:

(فَإِن طِيْنَ لَكُمْ عَن شَيْءٍ مَنْهُ مَثْنَا فَكَلَّوهُ هَنِئًا مَرْيَئًا)

(...but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm.) (4:4)
Allowing Khul` and the Return of the Mahr in that Case

When the spouses have irreconcilable differences wherein the wife ignores the rights of the husband, dislikes him and becomes unable to live with him any longer, she is allowed to free herself (from married life) by giving him back what he had given her (in gifts and Mahr). There is no sin on her in this case nor on him if he accepts such offer. This is why Allah said:

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of what you gave them, except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah (e.g., to deal with each other on a fair basis). Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by Allah, then there is no sin on either of them if she gives back.)

Sometimes, the woman has no valid reason and she still asks for her marriage to be ended. In this case, Ibn Jarir reported that Thawban said that Allah's Messenger said:

»أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٌ سَأَلَتْ زَوْجَهَا طَلَاقًا فِي غَيْرِ مَأْثَرٍ فَأَذْهَبْ يَأْتِيهَا الْجَنَّةُ بَاسًا، فَحَرَّامُ عَلَيْهَا رَأْيَةُ الْجَنَّةِ "

(Any woman who asks her husband for divorce without justification, then the scent of Paradise will be forbidden for her.)

At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith and stated that it is Hasan.

Ibn Jarir said that the Ayah (2:229) was revealed about Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas and his wife Habibah bint `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul. In his Muwatta', Imam Malik reported that Habibah bint Sahl Al-Ansariyah was married to Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas and that Allah's Messenger once went to the Fajr (Dawn) prayer and found Habibah bint Sahl by his door in the dark. Allah's Messenger said, "Who is this?" She said, "I am Habibah bint Sahl, O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "What is the matter?" She said, "I and Thabit bin Qays", meaning, (she can no longer be with) her husband. When her husband Thabit bin Qays came, Allah's Messenger said to him:
(This is Habibah bint Sahl, she said what Allah has permitted her to say.)

Habibah also said, "O Messenger of Allah! I still have everything he gave me." Allah's Messenger said:

"خُذْ مِنْهَا"

(Take it from her.) So, he took it from her and she remained in her family's house."

This was reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and An-Nasai.

Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the wife of Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas came to the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I do not criticize his religion or mannerism. But I hate committing Kufr in Islam (by ignoring his rights on her)." Allah's Messenger said:

"أَتَرْدِئَنَّ عَلَيْهِ حَدِيقَتِهَا"

(Will you give him back his garden)

She said, "Yes." Allah's Messenger said:

"اقْبِلْ الْحَدِيقَةَ وَطِلِّقُهَا تَطْلِيقَةً"

(Take back the garden and divorce her once.)

An-Nasa'i also recorded it.

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) for the Khul"

At-Tirmidhi reported that Rubayi` bint Mu`awwidh bin `Afra' got a Khul` during the time of Allah's Messenger and the Prophet ordered her to wait for one menstruation period for `Iddah.

Transgressing the set limits of Allah is an Injustice

Allah said:
(These are the limits ordained by Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by Allah, then such are the wrongdoers.)

This means that the laws that Allah has legislated are His set limits, so do not transgress them. An authentic Hadith states:

"إنَّ اللهَ حَدَّ حُدُودًا فَلَا تَعْتَدُّوا هَا، وَفَرَضَ فِرَائضَ فَلَا تُضْيِعُوا هَا، وَحَرَّمَ مَحَارِمَ فَلَا تَنْهَكُوهَا، وَسَكَتَ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ رَحْمَةً لَكُمْ مِنْ غَيْرِ نِسْيَانَ فَلَا تَسَلَّوا عَنْ هَا"

(Allah has set some limits, so do not transgress them; and commanded some commands, so do not ignore them; and made some things unlawful, so do not commit them. He has also left some matters (without rulings) as a mercy with you, not because He has forgotten them, so do not ask about them.)

**Pronouncing Three Divorces at the same Time is Unlawful**

The last Ayah we mentioned was used as evidence to prove that it is not allowed to pronounce three divorces at one time. What further proves this ruling is that Mahmud bin Labid has stated— as An-Nasa`i recorded—that Allah's Messenger was told about a man who pronounced three divorces on his wife at one time, so the Prophet stood up while angry and said:

"أَيَلَعَبُ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَا بَيْنَ أُظْهَرُكُمْ"

(The Book of Allah is being made the subject of jest while I am still amongst you)

A man then stood up and said, "Should I kill that man, O Messenger of Allah"

**The Wife cannot be taken back after the Third Divorce**
Allah said:

(فَإِذَا طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَجَّلِّهِ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدٍ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرِهِ)

(And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful for him thereafter until she has married another husband.)

This Ayah indicates that if the man divorces his wife for the third time after he divorced her twice, then she will no longer be allowed for marriage to him. Allah said:

(حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرِهِ)

(...until she has married another husband.) meaning, until she legally marries another man. For instance, if she has sexual intercourse with any man, even her master (if she was a servant), she would still be ineligible for marriage for her ex-husband (who divorced her thrice), because whomever she had sexual relations with was not her legal husband. If she marries a man without consummating the marriage, she will not be eligible for her ex-husband. Muslim reported that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger was asked about a woman who marries a man who thereafter divorces her (thrice). She then marries another man and he divorces her before he has sexual relations with her, would she be allowed for her first husband Allah's Messenger said:

(لا، حَتَّى يَدْوِقَ عَسَيْلَتَهَا)

(No, until he enjoys her `Usaylah (sexual relation).) Al-Bukhari also reported this Hadith.

Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah said, "The wife of Rifa`ah Al-Qurazi came while I and Abu Bakr were with the Prophet and she said, 'I was Rifa`ah's wife, but he divorced me and it was an irrevocable divorce. Then I married `Abdur-Rahman bin Az-Zubayr, but his sexual organ is minute like a string.' She then took a small string of her garment (to resemble how small his sexual organ was). Khalid bin Sa`id bin Al-`As, who was next to the door and was not yet allowed in, said, 'O Abu Bakr! Why do you not forbid this (woman) from what she is revealing frankly before the Prophet?' The Prophet merely smiled. Then, Allah's Messenger asked her:"

(كَأَنْتُمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَرَجُعُونَ إِلَى رَقَاعَةٍ، لَا، حَتَّى تَدْوِقِي عُسَيْلَتَهُ، وَيَدْوِقِي عُسَيْلَتَكَ)

(Do you want to remarry Rifa`ah? You cannot unless you experience his `Usaylah and he experiences your `Usaylah (i.e., had a complete sexual relation with your present husband).)"
Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and An-Nasa’i also recorded this Hadith. Muslim’s wording is “Rifa`ah divorced his wife for the third and final time.”

The word ‘Usaylah mentioned in the Hadith means sexual intercourse. Imam Ahmad and An-Nasa’i reported that `A’ishah said that Allah’s Messenger said:

أَلَى إِنَّ الْعُسْيَلَةَ النَّجَمَاءَ

(‘Usaylah is sexual intercourse.)

The Curse on the Participants of Tahlil/Halalah

The reason for the woman (who was divorced thrice) to marry another man must be that the man desires her and has the intention of having an extended married life with her. These are the legal goals and aims behind marriage. If the reason behind the second marriage was to make the woman eligible for her ex-husband again, then this is the Tahlil that the Hadiths have cursed and criticized. In addition, when the reason behind this marriage (if it was Tahlil) is announced in the contract, it would make the contract invalid according to the majority of the scholars.

Imam Ahmad reported that `Abdullah bin Mas’ud said, “Allah’s Messenger cursed the one who does Tahlil, the one in whose favor it is done, those who eat Rib (usury) and those who feed it (pay the usury).” At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa’i reported this Hadith and At-Tirmidhi said, “This Hadith is Hasan.” He said, “This is what is acted upon according to people of knowledge among the Companions, among whom are `Umar, `Uthman and Ibn `Umar. It was also the saying of the scholars of Fiqh among the Tabi`in (second generation of Islam). And it has been reported from `Ali, Ibn Mas’ud and Ibn `Abbas.”

In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim reported that Nafi` said: “A man came to Ibn `Umar and asked him about a man who divorced his wife three times. Then, his brother married her to make Tahlil for his brother, without the brother knowing this fact. He then asked, "Is she allowed for the first (husband)" He said, "No, unless it is a marriage that involves desire. We used to consider this an act of adultery during the time of Allah’s Messenger.” Al-Hakim said, “This Hadith has a Sahih chain although they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it.” The wording of this Hadith indicates that the ruling came from the Prophet. Abu Bakr bin Abu Shaybah, Al-Jawzjani, Harb Al-Kirmani and Abu Bakr Al-Athram said that Qabisah bin Jabir said that `Umar said, "If the participants to Tahlil are brought to me, I will have them stoned.”

When does a Woman who was divorced Three Times become Eligible for Her First Husband

Allah said:

(فَإِنَّ طَلَّقَهَا)}
(And if he has divorced her) meaning, the second husband after he had complete sexual relations with her,

(فَإِنَّهُ أَجَلَّهَا عَلَيْهَا آيً تَرَاجَعًا)

(it is no sin on both of them that they reunite) meaning, the wife and her first husband,

(إِنَّ الْمُحْمَدَ أَن يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ)

(provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah.) meaning, they live together honorably. Mujahid said, "If they are convinced that the aim behind their marriage is honorable." Next, Allah said:

(وَتَلَّكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ)

(These are the limits of Allah,) His commandments and legislation,

(يَبِينَهَا)

(He makes plain)

(لَقُومٍ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(for the people who have knowledge.)

(وَإِذَا طَلَّقُوهُنَّ النِّسَاءَ قَبْلَ غَيْرِ أَجَلٍٍ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرْحُوْهُنَّ يَمْعَرُونَهُمْ وَلَا تَمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضَرَارًا لَّهُمْ وَلَا يَخْرُوجُوا مِنْ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَسْخَرُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَيْتَمْ مَعْمَةً اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ)
(231. And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, either take them back on a reasonable basis or set them free on a reasonable basis. But do not take them back to hurt them, and whoever does that, then he has wronged himself. And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in jest, but remember Allah's favors on you (i.e., Islam), and that which He has sent down to you of the Book (i.e., the Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah (the Prophet's Sunnah, legal ways, Islamic jurisprudence) whereby He instructs you. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is All-Aware of everything).

Being Kind to the Divorced Wife

This is a command from Allah to men that when one of them divorces his wife with a reversible divorce, he should treat her kindly. So when her term of `Iddah (waiting period) nears its end, he either takes her back in a way that is better, including having witnesses that he has taken her back, and he lives with her with kindness. Or, he should release her after her `Iddah finishes and then kindly asks her to depart from his house, without disputing, fighting with her or using foul words. Allah then said:

(ولا نمسكوهم ضيرارًا لتتعتدوا)

(But do not take them back to hurt them.)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Masruq, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that a man used to divorce his wife, and when her `Iddah came near its end, he would take her back to harm her and to stop her from marrying someone else. He then divorced her and she would begin her `Iddah and when her `Iddah term neared its end, he would take her back again, so that the term of `Iddah would be prolonged for her. After that, Allah prohibited this practice. Allah has also threatened those who indulge in such practices, when He said:

(وممن يفعل ذلك فقد ظلم نفسه)

(...and whoever does that, then he has wronged himself.) meaning, by defying Allah's commandments. Allah then said:

(ولا تتعتدوا أيت الله هزوي)

(And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in jest.)

Ibn Jarir said that Abu Musa (Al-Ash`ari) narrated that Allah's Messenger once became angry at the Ash`ari tribe. Abu Musa went to him and said, "O Messenger of Allah! Are you angry with the Ash`ariyyin" The Prophet said:
Masruq said that the Ayah refers to the man who harms his wife by divorcing her and then taking her back, so that the `Iddah term is prolonged for her. Al-Hasan, Qatadah, `Ata’ Al-Khurasani, Ar-Rabi’ and Muqatil bin Hayyan said, “He is the man who divorces his wife and says, `I was joking.' Or he frees a servant or gets married and says, `I was only joking.' Allah revealed:

(One of you says, `I divorced her' -then says- `I took her back!' This is not the appropriate way Muslims conduct divorce. Divorce the woman when she has fulfilled the term of the prescribed period.)

Then such men were made to bear the consequences of their actions.

Allah then said:

(And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in a jest,)

(And fear Allah) meaning, concerning what you perform and what you avoid,
(and know that Allah is All-Aware of everything.) none of your secret or public affairs ever escapes His knowledge, and He will treat you accordingly.

(232. And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands, if they mutually agree on reasonable basis. This (instruction) is an admonition for him among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day. That is more virtuous and purer for you. Allah knows and you know not.)

The Wali (Guardian) of the Divorced Woman should not prevent Her from going back to Her Husband

Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn ` Abbas said, "This Ayah was revealed about the man who divorces his wife once or twice and her `Iddah finishes. He later thinks about taking her back in marriage and the woman also wishes that, yet, her family prevents her from remarrying him. Hence, Allah prohibited her family from preventing her." Masruq, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Az-Zuhri and Ad-Dahhak stated that this is the reason behind revealing the Ayah (2:232). These statements clearly conform to the apparent meaning of the Ayah. There is no Marriage without a Wali (for the Woman)

The Ayah (2:232) also indicates that the woman is not permitted to give herself in marriage. Rather, she requires a Wali (guardian such as her father, brother, adult son, and so forth) to give her away in marriage, as Ibn Jarir and At-Tirmidhi have stated when they mentioned this Ayah. Also, a Hadith states that:

"لَا نُزُوجُ المَرَاةُ المَرَأَةَ، وَلَا نُزُوجُ المَرَأَةُ نَفْسَهَا، فَإِنَّ الزَّائِيةَ هِيَ الَّتِي تُنْزِجُ نَفْسَهَا"
Another Hadith states:

«لا نكاح إلا بولى مشرد وشاهدي عدال»

(No marriage is valid except with the participation of a mature Wali and two trustworthy witnesses.)

The Reason behind revealing the Ayah (2:232)

It was reported that this Ayah was revealed about Ma`qil bin Yasar Al-Muzani and his sister. Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih, when he mentioned the Tafsir of this Ayah (2:232), that the husband of the sister of Ma`qil bin Yasar divorced her. He waited until her `Iddah finished and then asked to remarry her, but Ma`qil refused. Then, this Ayah was sent down:

(...do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands.)

Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Abu Hatim, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Marduwyah and Al-Bayhaqi reported this Hadith from Al-Hasan from Ma`qil bin Yasar. Al-Tirmidhi rendered this Hadith authentic and in his narration, Ma`qil bin Yasar gave his sister in marriage for a Muslim man during the time of Allah's Messenger. She remained with him for a while and he divorced her once and did not take her back until her `Iddah finished. They then wanted to get back with each other and he came to ask her for marriage. Ma`qil said to him, "O ungrateful one! I honored you and married her to you but you divorced her. By Allah! She will never be returned to you." But Allah knew his need for his wife and her need for her husband and He revealed:

(And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, ) until He said:

(...and you know not.)

When Ma`qil heard the Ayah, he said, "I hear and obey my Lord." He then summoned the man and said, "I will honor you and let you remarry (my sister)." Ibn Marduwyah added (that Ma`qil said), "And will pay (the expiation) for breaking my vow."

Allah said:
(This (instruction) is an admonition for him among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day.) meaning, prohibiting you from preventing the women from marrying their ex-husbands, if they both agree to it.

(among you) O people,

(who believes in Allah and the Last Day.) meaning, believes in Allah's commandments and fears His warnings and the torment in the Hereafter. Allah said:

(That is more virtuous and purer for you.) meaning, obeying Allah's Law by returning the women to their ex-husbands, and abandoning your displeasure, is purer and cleaner for your hearts,

(Allah knows) the benefits you gain from what He commands and what He forbids.

(and you know not) the benefits in what you do or what you refrain from doing.

(And the Lord has decreed the birth of both of you to be a mercy from Him to you. He desires yourwell-being and desiring good desiring good)
n(233. The mothers should suckle their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them. And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis. And fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Seeing of what you do.)

The Suckling Period is only Two Years

This is a direction from Allah to the mothers to suckle their infants through the complete term of suckling, which is two years. Hence, suckling after two years is not included in this address. Allah said:

(لمَّا أَرَادَ أَنْ يُّيَتِّمَ الرَّضَاَعَةَ)

(...who desire to complete the term of suckling,

Therefore, the suckling that establishes Tahrim (prohibition, i.e., one cannot marry his mother or sister from suckling) is what occurs before the two years end. If the infant is suckled only after two years of age, then no Tahrim will be established. At-Tirmidhi under Chapter: 'Suckling establishes Tahrim within the first two years,' reported that Umm Salamah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاَعِ إِلَّا مَا فَتَقَّ الأَمْعَاءَ فِي النُّذْرِ وَكَانَ قَبْلُ الفَطْمَانِ»
(Suckling establishes Tahrim if it is on the breast and before Fitam (before weaning, i.e., before the end of the first two years).)

At-Tirmidhi said, "This Hadith is Hasan Sahih. The majority of the people of knowledge among the Companions of Allah's Messenger and others acted upon this, that is that suckling establishes Tahrim (prohibition in marriage) before the end of the two years and that whatever occurs after that does not establish Tahrim". At-Tirmidhi is alone in recording this Hadith and the narrators in its chain meet the criteria of the Sahihayn. The Prophet's statement:

«إِلَّا مَا كَانَ فِي الْبَدْرِ»

(On the breast) refers to the organ of suckling before the two years. Imam Ahmad reported a Hadith in which Al-Bara' bin 'Azib narrated, "When Ibrahim, the Prophet's son, died, the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ ابْنِي مَاتَ فِي الْبَدْرِ، إِنَّ لَهُ مُرْضِعًا فِي الجَنَّةِ»

(My son has died on the breast and he has someone to suckle him in Paradise.)

Furthermore, Ad-Daraqutni related that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحْرَمُ مِنَ الرَّضَايِ إِلَّا مَا كَانَ فِي الْحَوْلِينَ»

(Suckling establishes Tahrim only within the (first) two years.)

Imam Malik reported this Hadith from Thawr bin Zayd who narrated that Ibn `Abbas related it to the Prophet. Ad-Darawardi reported this Hadith from Thawr who narrated it from `Ikrimah who narrated it from Ibn `Abbas. In this narration, which is more authentic, he added:

«وَمَا كَانَ بَعْدَ الْحَوْلِينَ قَلِيسَ بِشَاهِثٍ»

(Whatever occurs after the two years is not considered.)

**Suckling beyond the Two Years**

It is reported in the Sahih that `A'ishah thought that if a woman gives her milk to an older person (meaning beyond the age of two years) then this will establish Tahrim. This is also the opinion of `Ata' bin Abu Rabah and Layth bin Sa'd. Hence, `A'ishah thought that it is permissible to suckle the man whom the woman needs to be allowed in her house. She used as evidence the Hadith of Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, where the Prophet ordered Abu Hudhayfah's wife to give some of her milk to Salim, although he was a man, and ever since
then, he used to enter her house freely. However, the rest of the Prophet's wives did not agree with this opinion and thought that this was only a special case. This is also the opinion of the majority of the scholars.

**Suckling for Monetary Compensation**

Allah said:

(وَعَلَى الْمَولِدِ لَهُ رَزْقُهُ وَكَسْوَتِهِنَّ

بالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(...but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis.) meaning, the father of the baby is obliged to provide for the expenses of the mother and to buy her clothes, in reasonable amounts usually used by similar women in that area, without extravagance or stinginess. The father spends within his means in this case. Allah said in another Ayah:

(لِينفِقْ دُو سَعَةٍ مَنْ سَعَتْهُ وَمَنْ قَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رَزْقُهُ

فَلِينفِقْ مِمَّا عَانِثَتُ اللَّهُ لَا يُكَلَّفِ اللَّهُ نَفَسًا إِلَّا مَا ءَاتِيَاهَا سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا)

(Let the rich man spend according to his means; and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. Allah will grant after hardship, ease.) (65:7)

Ad-Dahhak commented, "If the husband divorces his wife, with whom he had a child, and she suckles that child, he is required to provide for the mother's expenses and clothes within reason."

**No Darar (Harm) or Dirar (Revenge)**

Allah said:

(لا تَضَرَّ مَدِيَّةً بُلْدَةً بُلْدَةَهَا)

(No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child,) meaning, the mother should not decline to rear her child to harm its father. The mother does not have the right to refrain from suckling the child after giving birth, unless she suckles him/her the milk that is necessary for
his' her survival. Later on, she is allowed to give up custody of the child as long as she does not
do that intending to harm the father. In addition, the father is not allowed to take the child
from his mother to harm the mother. This is why Allah said:

(ولا مولود له بولدٍ)

(...nor father on account of his child.) meaning, by taking the child from its mother intending
to harm the mother. This is the Tafsir of Mujahid, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, As-Suddi,
Ath-Thawri and Ibn Zayd, and others on this Ayah.

Allah then said:

(و على الوارث مثل ذلك)

(And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father).) meaning, by refraining from harming the relative (of the father, i.e., his infant), as Mujahid,
Ash-Sha bi and Ad-Dahhak stated. It was also reported that (the Ayah requires) the inheritor
(of the father) to spend on the mother of the child, just as the father was spending, and to
preserve her rights and refrain from harming her, according to the Tafsir of the majority of the
scholars. We should state that Ibn Jarir has explained this subject in detail in his Tafsir and
that he also stated that suckling the child after the second year might harm the child's body
and mind. Sufyan Ath-Thawri narrated that `Alqamah asked a woman who was suckling her
child after the second year ended, not to do that.

Fitam (weaning) occurs by Mutual Consent

Allah said:

(فإن أرادا فصالا عن تراضا منهما وتشاور فلا
جناح عليهم)

(If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin
on them.)

This Ayah indicates that if the father and the mother decide on the Fitam (weaning) before the
two years (of suckling) end, and for a benefit that they duly discuss and agree upon, then there
is no sin in this case. So, the Ayah indicates that one parent is not allowed to make this kind of
decision without duly consulting the other parent, as stated by Ath-Thawri. The method of
mutual consultation protects the child's interests. It is also a mercy from Allah to His servants,
for He has legislated the best method for parents to rear their children, and His legislation
guides and directs the parents and the children to success. Similarly, Allah said in Surat At-
Talaq (chapter 65 in the Qur'an):
(Then if they give suck to the children for you, give them their due payment, and let each of you accept the advice of the other in a just way. But if you make difficulties for one another, then some other woman may give suck for him (the father of the child).) (65:6)

Allah then said:

(And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis.) meaning, if the mother and the father both agree that the father assumes custody of the child due to a circumstance that compels her or allows him to do so, then there is no sin in this case. Hence, the mother is allowed to give up the child and the father is allowed to assume custody of the child. The father should kindly give the mother her expenses for the previous period (during which she reared and suckled the child), and he should seek other women to suckle his child for monetary compensation. Thereafter, Allah said:

(And fear Allah) meaning, in all of your affairs,

(And know that Allah is All-Seer of what you do.) meaning, none of your affairs or speech escapes His perfect Watch.

(And those who wait for you in order to lead you astray or repel you in a wrong way, four months' duration among you. If you have already given them their due, then set their wages as a gift. It is better for you that you should free yourselves of a great evil. If you do not give the ransom, then take them and crucify them as Allah has commanded, and let the unbelievers know that Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.)
(234. And those of you who die and leave wives behind them, they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days, then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a (just and) honorable manner (i.e., they can marry). And Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.)

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) of the Widow

This Ayah contains a command from Allah to the wives whose husbands die, that they should observe a period of `Iddah of four months and ten nights, including the cases where the marriage was consummated or otherwise, according to the consensus (of the scholars).

The proof that this ruling includes the case where the marriage was not consummated is included in the general meaning of the Ayah. In a narration recorded by Imam Ahmad and the compilers of the Sunan, which Al-Tirmidhi graded Sahih, Ibn Mas`ud was asked about a man who married a woman, but he died before consummating the marriage. He also did not appoint a Mahr (dowry) for her. They kept asking Ibn Mas`ud about this subject until he said, "I shall give you my own opinion, and if it is correct then it is from Allah, while if it is wrong it is because of my error and because of (the evil efforts of) Satan. In this case, Allah and His Messenger are innocent of my opinion. She has her full Mahr." In another narration, Ibn Mas`ud said, "She has a similar Mahr to that of the women of her status, without stinginess or extravagance." He then continued, "She has to spend the `Iddah and has a right to the inheritance." Ma`qil bin Yasar Ashjai then stood up and said, "I heard Allah's Messenger issue a similar judgment for the benefit of Barwa bint Washiq." `Abdullah bin Mas`ud became very delighted upon hearing this statement. In another narration, several men from Ashjai (tribe) stood up and said, "We testify that Allah's Messenger issued a similar ruling for the benefit of Barwa bint Washiq."

As for the case of the widow whose husband dies while she is pregnant, her term of `Iddah ends when she gives birth, even if it occurs an instant (after her husband dies). This ruling is taken from Allah's statement:

(وَأَوْلَتُ الأَحْمَالِ أَجْلَهُنَّ أَنْ يُضَعَّنَ حَمَلُهُنَّ)

(And for those who are pregnant, their `Iddah is until they lay down their burden.) (65:4)

There is also a Hadith from Subay'ah Al-Aslamiyah in the Two Sahihs, through various chains of narration. Her husband, Sa'd bin Khawlah, died while she was pregnant and she gave birth only a few nights after his death. When she finished her Nifas (postnatal period), she beautified herself for those who might seek to engage her (for marriage). Then, Abu Sa'ilib bin Bakkak came to her and said, "Why do I see you beautified yourself, do you wish to marry By Allah! You will not marry until the four months and ten nights have passed." Subay'ah said, "When he said that to me, I collected my garments when night fell and went to Allah's Messenger and asked him about this matter. He said that my `Iddah had finished when I gave birth and allowed me to get married if I wished."
The Wisdom behind legislating the `Iddah

Sa`id bin Musayyib and Abu Al-`Aliyah stated that the wisdom behind making the `Iddah of the widow four months and ten nights is that the womb might contain a fetus. When the woman waits for this period, it will become evident if she is pregnant. Similarly, there is a Hadith in the Two Sahihs narrated by Ibn Mas`ud stating:

«إنّ خلق أحدكم يجمع في بطْن أمّه أربعين يوماً نطفة، ثمّ يّكون علقة مثل ذلك، ثمّ يّكون مضغة مثل ذلك، ثمّ يّبعث إليه الملك فينفخ فيه الروح»

((The creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of his mother in forty days in the form of a seed, and next he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and next a morsel of flesh for a similar period. Then, Allah sends an angel who is ordered to breathe life unto the fetus.)

So, these are four months and ten more days to be sure, as some months are less (than thirty days), and the fetus will then start to show signs of life after the soul has been breathed into it. Allah knows best.

The `Iddah of the Slave Mother whose Master dies

We should state here that the `Iddah of the slave mother is the same in the case of death, as the `Iddah of the free woman. Imam Ahmad reported that `Amr bin Al-`As said, "Do not confuse the Sunnah of our Prophet for us. The `Iddah of the mother, who is also a servant, when her master dies, is four months and ten nights."

Mourning is required during the `Iddah of Death

Allah said:

(فإِذَا بَلَغُنَّ أَجْلَهُنَّ فَلا جَنَّا حَيَّةً عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أنفُسِهَانَّ بِالْمَعَارِضِ وَاللَّهُ يَمْحَلُ عَلَيْكُمْ خَيْرٌ)
(...then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a (just and) honorable manner (i.e., they can marry). And Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.)

This Ayah indicates that mourning for the dead husband is required until the `Iddah is finished. It is also reported in the Two Sahihs that Umm Habibah and Zaynab bint Jahsh narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحْلُ لِأمْرَأَةٍ تُوْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَاليَوْمِ الآخِرِ أَن يُحْتَدَّ عَلَى مَيْتٍ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثِ، إِلَّا عَلَى زَوْجٍ أَرْبَعَةٌ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشَرَةً»

(It is not lawful for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to mourn for more than three days for any dead person except her husband, for whom she mourns for four months and ten days.)

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Umm Salamah said that a woman said, “O Messenger of Allah! My daughter's husband died and she is complaining about her eye, should we administer kohl in her eye” He said, "No," several times upon repeating this question. He then said:

«إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَرْبَعَةٌ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشَرَةٌ، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ إِحْدَاءُكُنَّ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ تَمَكِّنْتُ بِسَنَةٍ»

(It is four months and ten (nights)! During the Jahiliyyah, one of you would mourn for an entire year.)

Zaiynab the daughter of Umm Salamah said (about the pre-Islamic era of ignorance), "When the woman's husband died, she would go into seclusion and would wear the worst clothes she has. She would refrain from wearing perfume or any adornments until a year passed. She would then come out of seclusion and would be given dung that she would throw. Then an animal would be brought out, a donkey, a sheep, or a bird. Then some blood would be drained from it, usually resulting in its death."

In short, the mourning required from a wife whose husband dies, includes not using beautification aids, such as wearing perfume and the clothes and jewelry that encourage the men to seek marriage from the woman. All widows must observe this period of mourning whether they are young, old, free, servant, Muslim or disbeliever, as the general meaning of the Ayah indicates.

Allah also said:
(...then when they have fulfilled their term) meaning, when the `Iddah finishes, according to Ad-Dahhak and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

(فِيْمَا فَعَلَّنَّ أَنْفُسَهُنَّ)

(there is no sin on you) Az-Zuhri said, "Meaning her Wali (guardian)."

(فِيْمَا فَعَلَّنَّ)

(if they (the wives) dispose) meaning, the women whose `Iddah has finished. Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, "If the woman is divorced or if her husband dies and then her `Iddah term ends, there is no sin that she beautifies herself, so that she becomes ready for marriage proposals. This is the way `that is just and honorable'." It was reported that Muqatil bin Hayyan gave the same explanation. Ibn Jurayj related that Mujahid said:

(فِيْمَا فَعَلَّنَّ أَنْفُسَهُنَّ)

(...there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a just and honorable manner.) "refers to allowed and pure (honorable) marriage." It was also reported that Al-Hasan, Az-Zuhri and As-Suddi said the same.

(وَلَا يَنْتَيْحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا عَرَضَتْهُ مِنْ خَطْبَةِ النَّسَاءَ أَوْ أَكْتَنُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَلَمَ اللَّهُ أَنْكُمْ سَتَنْتَكَرُونَهُنَّ وَلَكِنَّ لَا نَوَاعِدُهُنَّ سَيرًا إِلَّا أَنْ تَقْتُلُوا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوقًا وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عَقْدًا النُّكَاحِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجْلَهُ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا)
(235. And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal or conceal it in yourself, Allah knows that you will remember them, but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret except that you speak an honorable saying. And do not be determined on the marriage bond until the term prescribed is fulfilled. And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so fear Him. And know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.)

**Mentioning Marriage indirectly during the `Iddah**

Allah said:

وَلَا جَنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ

(And there is no sin on you) meaning, to indirectly mention marriage to the widow during the term of `Iddah for her deceased husband. Ath-Thawri, Shu`bah and Jarir stated that Ibn `Abbas said:

وَلَا جَنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا عَرَضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خَطْبَةٍ النَّسَاءَ

(And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal) "means saying, 'I want to marry and I am looking for a woman whose qualities are such and such,' thus talking to her in general terms in a way that is better." In another narration (by Ibn `Abbas), "Saying, 'I wish that Allah endows me with a wife,' but he should not make a direct marriage proposal." Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah:

وَلَا جَنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا عَرَضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خَطْبَةٍ النَّسَاءَ

(And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal) means, "The man could say, 'I wish to marry,' 'I desire a wife,' or, 'I wish I could find a good wife.'" Mujahid, Tawus, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Az-Zuhri, Yazid bin Qusayt, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Al-Qasim bin Muhammad and several others among the Salaf and the Imams said that one is allowed to mention marriage indirectly to the woman whose husband died. It is also allowed to indirectly mention marriage to a woman who had gone through final, irrevocable divorce. The Prophet ordered Fatimah bint Qays to remain
house of Ibn Umm Maktum for 'Iddah when her husband Abu 'Amr bin Hafs divorced her for the third time. He said to her:

» فإذا خلت قاذنيني

(Inform me when your 'Iddah term ends.)

When she finished the 'Iddah, Usamah bin Zayd, the Prophet's freed slave asked to marry her, and the Prophet married her to him. As for the divorced wife (not irrevocably divorced), there is no disagreement that it is not allowed for other than her husband to mention marriage proposals to her directly or indirectly (before the 'Iddah finishes). Allah knows best.

Allah said:

(او أكنتم في أنفسكم)

(...or conceal it in yourself,) meaning, if you hide the intention of seeking marriage with them. Similarly, Allah said:

(وربيك يعلم ما تكن صدورهم وما يعللون)

(And your Lord knows what their breasts conceal, and what they reveal) (28:69) and:

( ана أعلم بما أخفينكم وما أعلنتم)

(...while I am All-Aware of what you conceal and what you reveal.) (60: 1) So, Allah said here:

(علم الله أنتم ستذكرنون)

(Allah knows that you will remember them) meaning, in your hearts, so He made it easy for you. Allah then said:

(ولكن لان تواعدهن سير)

(...but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret)

`Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said that
(but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret) means do not say to her, "I am in love (with you)," or, "Promise me you will not marry someone else (after the `Iddah finishes)," and so forth. Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ash-Sha`bi, `Ikrimah, Abu Ad-Duha, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, Mujahid and Ath-Thawri said that it (meaning of the Ayah) means taking the woman's promise not to marry someone else.

Afterwards, Allah said:

(...except that you speak an honorable saying.)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ibn Zayd said that the Ayah means to indirectly refer to marriage, such as saying, "I desire someone like you." Muhammad bin Sirin said: I asked `Ubaydah about the meaning of Allah's statement:

(...except that you speak an honorable saying.) He said, "He says to her Wali, `Do not give her away (in marriage) until you inform me first'." This statement was narrated by Ibn Abu Hatim.

Allah then said:

(And do not be determined on the marriage bond until the term prescribed is fulfilled.) meaning, do not make marriage contracts before the `Iddah finishes. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Abu Malik, Zayd bin Aslam, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Az-Zuhri, `Ata` Al-Khurasani, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ad-Dahhak said that:

(untill the term prescribed is fulfilled.) means, `Do not consummate the marriage before the `Iddah term finishes.' The scholars agree that marriage contracts during the `Iddah are invalid.

Allah then said:
(And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so fear Him.) warning the men against the ideas they conceal in their hearts about women, directing them to think good about them rather than the evil, and Allah would not let them despair of His mercy, as He said:

(And know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.)

(236. There is no sin on you, if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, nor appointed for them their due (dowry). But give them a Mut`ah (a suitable gift, the rich according to his means, and the poor according to his means, a gift of reasonable amount is a duty on the doers of good.)

Divorce before consummating the Marriage

Allah allowed divorce after the marriage contract and before consummating the marriage. Ibn `Abbas, Tawus, Ibrahim and Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that `touched' (mentioned in the Ayah) means sexual intercourse. The husband is allowed to divorce his wife before consummating the marriage or giving the dowry if it was deferred.

The Mut`ah (Gift) at the time of Divorce

Allah commands the husband to give the wife (whom he divorces before consummating the marriage) a gift of a reasonable amount, the rich according to his means and the poor according to his means, to compensate her for her loss. Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih that Sahl bin Sa’d and Abu Usayd said that Allah's Messenger married Umaymah bint Sharahil. When she was brought to the Prophet he extended his hand to her, but she did not like that. The Prophet then ordered Abu Usayd to provide provisions for her along with a gift of two garments.
(237. And if you divorce them before you have touched (had a sexual relation with) them, and you have appointed for them their due (dowry), then pay half of that, unless they (the women) agree to remit it, or he (the husband), in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to remit it. And to remit is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness). And do not forget liberality between yourselves. Truly, Allah is All-Seer of what you do.)

The Wife gets half of Her Mahr if She is divorced before the Marriage is consummated

This honorable Ayah is not a continuation of the Mut`ah (gift) that was mentioned in the previous Ayah (i.e., divorce before the marriage is consummated). This Ayah (2:237) requires the husband to relinquish half of the appointed Mahr if he divorces his wife before the marriage is consummated. If it was discussing any other type of gift, then it would have been mentioned that way, especially when this Ayah follows the previous Ayah related to this subject. Allah knows best. Giving away half of the bridal-money in this case is the agreed practice according to the scholars. So, the husband pays half of the appointed Mahr if he divorces his wife before consummating the marriage.

Allah then said:

(إِلَّا أَن يَعْفَوُنَّ)

(unless they (the women) agree to remit it,) meaning, the wife forfeits the dowry and relieves the husband from further financial responsibility. As-Suddi said that Abu Salih mentioned that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement:

(إِلَّا أَن يَعْفَوُنَّ)

(unless they (the women) agree to remit it,) "Unless the wife forfeits her right."Furthermore, Imam Abu Muhammad bin Abu Hatim said that it was reported that Shurayh, Sa`id bin
Musayyib, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Ash-Sha'bi, Al-Hasan, Nafi`, Qatadah, Jabir bin Zayd, `Ata` Al-Khurasani, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ibn Sirin, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and As-Suddi said similarly.

Allah then said:

وَأَوْنَ يَعُفُّوا الَّذِى بِيَدِهِ عِقْدَةُ النَّكَاحِ

(...or he (the husband), in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to remit it.)

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that `Amr bin Shu`ayb said that his grandfather narrated that the Prophet said:

وُلِيٌّ عِقْدَةُ النَّكَاحِ الزُّوَجِ

(The husband is he who has the marriage tie.)

Ibn Marduwyah also reported this Hadith, and it is the view chosen by Ibn Jarir. The Hadith states that the husband is the person who really holds the marriage tie in his hand, as it is up to him to go on with the marriage or end it. On the other hand, the Wali of the wife is not allowed to give away any of her rightful dues without her permission, especially the dowry.

Allah then stated:

وَأَنَّ تَعْفُوَا أَقْرَبُ لِلْتَقْوَى

(And to remit it is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).)

Ibn Jarir said, "Some scholars said that this statement is directed at both men and women." Ibn `Abbas said:

وَأَنَّ تَعْفُوَا أَقْرَبُ لِلْتَقْوَى

(And to remit it is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).) indicates that the one who forgives, is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety)." A similar statement was made by Ash-Sha`bi and several other scholars.

Mujahid, An-Nakha`i, Ad-Dahhak, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Thawri stated that 'liberality' mentioned in the Ayah refers to the woman giving away her half Mahr, or the man giving away the full Mahr. This is why Allah said here:

وَلَا تَنْسَوْا الْفَضْلُ بَيْنَكُمْ
(And do not forget liberality between yourselves.) meaning, kindness (or generosity), as Sa`id has stated. Allah said:

 وإنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

(Truly, Allah is All-Seer of what you do.) meaning, none of your affairs ever escapes His perfect Watch, and He will reward each according to his deeds.

 حَفَظُوا عَلَى الصَّلُوَاتِ وَالصَّلَوَاتِ الوُسْطِيَّةِ

وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِطِينَ

(If you fear an enemy, either on foot or riding. And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray) in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not before.)

(238. Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawat (the prayers) especially the Middle Salah. And stand before Allah with obedience.) (239. And if you fear (an enemy), (perform Salah) on foot or riding. And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray) in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not before.)

Allah commands that the prayer should be performed properly and on time. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Ibn Mas`ud said, "I asked the Prophet, `Which deed is the dearest (to Allah)` He replied:

 الصَّلَّاهُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا

(To offer the prayers at their fixed times.) I asked, `What is the next (in goodness)` He replied:

الجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

(To participate in Jihad (religious fighting) in Allah's cause.) I again asked, `What is the next (in goodness)` He replied:

بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ

(To be good and dutiful to your parents.) `Abdullah then added, "The Prophet told me these words, and had I asked more, the Prophet would have told me more."
The Middle Prayer

Furthermore, Allah has specifically mentioned the Middle prayer, which is the `Asr prayer according to the majority of the scholars among the Companions, as At-Tirmidhi and Al-Baghawi have stated. Al-Qadi Al-Mawardi added that the majority of the scholars of the Tabi` in also held this view. Al-Hafiz Abu `Umar bin `Abdul-Barr said that this is also the opinion of the majority of the scholars of the Tabi`in (i.e., the Hadith and the statements of the Salaf). In addition, Abu Muhammad bin `Atiyah said that this is the Tafsir (of the Middle prayer) of the majority of scholars. Al-Hafiz Abu Muhammad `Abdul-Mu`min bin Khalaf Ad-Dumyati stated in his book on the Middle prayer that it is the `Asr prayer and mentioned that this is the Tafsir of `Umar, `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Ayyub, `Abdullah bin `Amr, Samurah bin Jundub, Abu Hurayrah, Abu Sa`id, Hafsa, Umm Habibah, Umm Salamah, Ibn `Abbas and `A`ishah. This is also the Tafsir of `Ubaydah, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Razin, Zirr bin Hubaysh, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ibn Srin, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Kalbi, Muqatil, `Ubayd bin Abu Maryam, and others.

The Proof that the `Asr Prayer is the Middle Prayer

Imam Ahmad reported that `Ali narrated that Allah's Messenger said during the battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates):

«شَغَطُونَا عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى، صَلَّاهُ الْعَصْرِ، مِلَأَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَبَيْوَاتَهُمْ نَارًا»

(They (the disbelievers) busied us from performing the Middle prayer, the `Ar prayer, may Allah fill their hearts and houses with fire.)

He performed the `Asr prayer between Maghrib and `Isha'. Muslim and An-Nasa'i recorded this Hadith. In addition, the Two Shaykhs, Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi An-Nasa'i and several other collectors of the Sunan recorded this Hadith using different chains of narrators to `Ali. The Hadith about the battle of Al-Ahzab, when the Mushriks prevented Allah's Messenger and his Companions from performing the `Asr prayer, has been narrated by several other Companions. We only mentioned the narrations that stated that the Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer. Furthermore, Muslim reported similar wordings for this Hadith from Ibn Mas`ud and Al-Bara` bin `Azib.

In addition, Imam Ahmad reported that Samurah bin Jundub said that Allah's Messenger said:

«صلَّاهُ الْوُسْطَى صَلَّاهُ الْعَصْرِ»

(The Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer.)

In another narration, Allah's Messenger mentioned:
(Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawat (the prayers) especially the Middle Salah) and stated that it is the `Asr prayer. In another narration, Allah's Messenger said:

»

(It is the `Asr prayer.) and Ibn Ja`far mentioned that the Prophet was then being asked about the Middle prayer. At-Tirmidhi reported this Hadith and said, "Hasan, Sahih." In addition, Abu Hatim bin Hibban reported in his Sahih that `Abdullah said that Allah's Messenger said:

»

(The Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer.)

At-Tirmidhi reported that Ibn Mas`ud narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

»

(The `Asr prayer is the Middle prayer.)

At-Tirmidhi then stated that this Hadith is of a Hasan, Sahih type. Muslim reported the Hadith in his Sahih and his wordings are:

»

(They (disbelievers) busied us from performing the Middle prayer, the `Asr prayer.)

These texts emphasize the fact (that the `Asr prayer is the Middle prayer). What further proves this fact is that, in an authentic Hadith, Allah's Messenger emphasized the necessity of preserving the `Asr prayer, when he said, as Ibn `Umar narrated:

»

(Whoever misses the `Asr prayer will be like who has lost his family and money.)

It is reported in the Sahih that Buraydah bin Al-Husayb said that the Prophet said:
(On a cloudy day, perform the (`Asr) prayer early, for whoever misses the `Asr prayer, will have his (good) deeds annulled.)

The Prohibition of speaking during the Prayer

Allah said:

(وَقُولُوا لِلَّهِ قَبْضَتَينَ)

(And stand before Allah with obedience.) meaning, with humbleness and humility before Him (i.e., during the prayer). This command indicates that it is not allowed to speak during the prayer, as speaking contradicts the nature of the prayer. This is why the Prophet refused to answer Ibn Mas`ud when he greeted him while he was praying and said afterwards:

«إنَّ في الصَّلَاةِ لِشُعُعَانَا»

(The prayer makes one sufficiently busy.) (i.e., by the various actions of the body, tongue and heart involved during the prayer.)

Muslim reported that the Prophet said to Mu`awiyah bin Hakam As-Sulami when he spoke during the prayer:

«إنَّ هذِهِ الصَّلَاةُ لَا يَصِلَّحُ فِيهَا شَيْءٌ مِّنْ كُلَّامِ النَّاسِ، إنَّمَا هِيَ الْتَسْبِيحُ وَالْتَكْبِيرُ وَذَكْرُ اللَّهِ»

(The ordinary speech people indulge in is not appropriate during the prayer. The prayer involves only Tasbih (praising Allah), Takbir (saying Allahu Akbar, i.e., Allah is the Most Great) and remembering Allah.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Zayd bin Arqam said, “One used to address his friend about various affairs during the prayer. Then when this Ayah was revealed:
(And stand before Allah with obedience,) we were ordered to refrain from speaking." The Group (i. e., the Hadith collections), except Ibn Majah, reported this Hadith.

The Fear Prayer

Allah said:

(قُلْ إِنَّ خَفْتُمْ فَرِجَالاً أَوْ رُكْبَانَا فَإِذًا أَمِنْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوا الْلَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(And if you fear (an enemy), (perform Salah) on foot or riding. And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray) in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not (before).)

After Allah commanded His servants to perform the prayer perfectly and emphasized this commandment, He mentioned the situation where the person might not be able to perform the prayer perfectly, during battle and combat. Allah said:

(قُلْ إِنَّ خَفْتُمْ فَرِجَالاً أَوْ رُكْبَانَا)

(And if you fear (an enemy), perform Salah on foot or riding.) meaning, pray in the appropriate manner under these circumstances, whether on foot or riding and whether facing the Qiblah or otherwise. Imam Malik reported that Nafi` related that Ibn `Umar used to describe the Fear prayer when he was asked about it and would then add, "If there is intense fear, pray on foot, riding, facing the Qiblah and otherwise." Nafi` commented, "I think that he related that to the Prophet ." Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported the Hadith.

Muslim, Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah has ordained the prayer by the words of your Prophet : four (Rak`ah) while residing, two Rak`ah while traveling and one Rak`ah during times of fear." This is also the view of Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, and others.

In addition, Al-Bukhari has entitled a Chapter: `Prayer while confronting the Forts and facing the Enemy'. Al-Awza`i said, "If the victory seems near and the Muslims are unable to perform the prayer (in the normal manner), they should pray by nodding each by himself. If they are unable to nod, they should delay the prayer until fighting is finished. When they feel safe, they should pray two Rak`ah. If they are unable, they should then pray one Rak`ah that includes two prostrations. If they are unable, then Takbir alone does not suffice, so they should delay the prayer until they are safe." This is the same view that Makhul held. Anas bin Malik said, "I participated in the attack on the fort of Tastar, when the light of dawn started to become clear. Suddenly, the fighting raged and the Muslims were unable to pray until the light of day spread. We then prayed (the Dawn prayer) with Abu Musa and we became victorious. I would not have been pleased if I were to gain in the life of this world and whatever is in it instead of that prayer." This is the wording of Al-Bukhari.
Prayer during the Times of Peace is performed normally

Allah said:

فَإِذَا أَمَنْتُمْ فَادْكُروْا اللَّهَ

(And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray)) meaning, `Perform the prayer as I have commanded you by completing its bowing, prostration, standing, sitting, and with the required attention (in the heart) and supplication.' Allah said:

كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ

(in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not (before).) meaning, just as He has endowed you, guided you and taught you about what benefits you in this life and the Hereafter, so thank and remember Him. Similarly, Allah said after He mentioned the prayer of Fear,

فَإِذَا اطْمَأَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوَةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَوَةَ كَانَتْ

على المؤمنين كتبًا مَّوقِعًا

(...but when you are free from danger, perform As-Salah. Verily, As-Salah (the prayer) is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.) (4:103)

We will mention the Hadiths about the prayer of Fear and its description in Surat An-Nisa' while mentioning Allah's statement:

وَإِذَا كُنتُ فِيهِمْ فَأَقِمْتَ لَهُمْ الصَّلَوَةَ

(When you (O Messenger Muhammad) are among them, and lead them in As-Salah (the prayer.)) (4:102)

والذين يَتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُّونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ لِإِخْرَاجِ فَإِنَّ خَرَجَنَ فَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلُّنَّ فِي أَنفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ - وَلَمْ تُطَلَّبْتُنَّ
(240. And those of you who die and leave behind wives should bequeath for their wives a year's maintenance (and residence) without turning them out, but if they (wives) leave, there is no sin on you for that which they do of themselves, provided it is honorable (e.g., lawful marriage). And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.) (241. And for divorced women, maintenance (should be provided) on reasonable (scale). This is a duty on Al-Muttaqin (the pious).) (242. Thus Allah makes clear His Ayat (Laws) to you, in order that you may understand.)

Ayah (2:240) was abrogated

The majority of the scholars said that this Ayah (2:240) was abrogated by the Ayah (2:234), what Allah said:

(يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةٌ أَشْهُرٌ وَعَشَرَةُ) ((...they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days.)

(2:234)

For instance, Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn Az-Zubayr said: I said to ` Uthman bin ` Affan:

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيُدْرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا) (And those of you who die and leave wives behind them) was abrogated by the other Ayah (2:234). Therefore, why did you collect it (meaning, in the Qur'an)'' He said, "O my nephew! I shall not change any part of the Qur'an from its place.''

The question that Ibn Az-Zubayr asked ` Uthman means: `If the ruling of the Ayah (2:240) was abrogated to four months (the ` Iddah of the widow, and refer to 2:234), then what is the wisdom behind including it in the Qur'an, although its ruling has been abrogated If the Ayah (2:240) remains (in the Qur'an) after the Ayah that abrogated it (2:234), this might imply that its ruling is still valid.' ` Uthman, the Leader of the faithful, answered him by stating that this is a matter of the revelation, which mentioned these Ayat in this order. `Therefore, I shall leave the Ayah where I found it in the Qur'an.'

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn ` Abbas said about what Allah said:
(And those of you who die and leave behind wives should bequeath for their wives a year's maintenance (and residence) without turning them out.) "The widow used to reside, and have her provisions provided for her for a year, in her deceased husband's house. Later, the Ayah that specified the inheritance (4:12) abrogated this Ayah (2:240), and thus the widow inherits one-fourth or one-eighth of what her (deceased) husband leaves behind."

Ibn Abu Hatim also related that `Ali bin Abu Talhah stated that Ibn `Abbas said, "When a man died and left behind a widow, she used to remain in his house for a year for her 'Iddah, all the while receiving her provisions during this time. Thereafter, Allah revealed this Ayah:

(And those of you who die and leave behind wives, they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days.) (2:234)

So, this is the 'Iddah of the widow, unless she was pregnant, for her 'Iddah then ends when she gives birth. Allah also said:

(In that which you leave, their (your wives') share is a fourth if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they get an eighth of that which you leave.) (4:12)

So Allah specified the share of the widow in the inheritance and there was no need for the will or the Nafaqah (maintenance) which were mentioned in (2:240)."

Ibn Abu Hatim stated that Mujahid, Al-Hasan, `Ikrimah, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that the Ayah (2:240) was abrogated by:

(four months and ten days.) (2:234)

Al-Bukhari reported that Mujahid said that:
(And those of you who die and leave behind wives should bequeath for their wives a year's maintenance (and residence) without turning them out, but if they (wives) leave, there is no sin on you for that which they do of themselves, provided it is honorable (e.g., lawful marriage).)

So, Allah made the rest of the year, which is seven months and twenty days, as a will and testament for her. Consequently, if she wants, she could use her right in this will and remain in the residence (for the rest of the year). Or, if she wants, she could leave the (deceased husband's) house after the four months and ten days have passed. This is the meaning of what Allah said:

(...without turning them out, but if they (wives) leave, there is no sin on you.)

Therefore, the required term of `Iddah is still unchanged (refer to 2:234).

`Ata' quoted Ibn `Abbas, "This Ayah (2:240) has abrogated (the requirement that) the widow spends the `Iddah with his (i.e., her deceased husband's) family. So, she spends her `Iddah wherever she wants. This is the meaning of what Allah said:

(without turning them out.)."

`Ata' also said: "If she wants, she spends the `Iddah with his family and resides there according to the will (meaning the rest of the year). If she wants, she is allowed to leave, for Allah said:
(there is no sin on you for that which they do of themselves.)."

`Ata' then said: "Then (the Ayah on) the inheritance (refer to 4:12) came and abrogated the residence. Hence, the widow spends her Iddah wherever she wants and does not have the right to residence any more."

The statement of `Ata' and those who held the view that the Ayah (2:240) was abrogated by the Ayah on the inheritance (4:12), is only valid for more than the four months and ten days (required in 2:234). However, if they mean that the four months and ten days are not required from the deceased husband's estate, then this opinion is the subject of disagreement among the scholars. As proof, they said that the widow is required to remain in her (deceased) husband's house (for four months and ten days) according to what Malik reported from Zaynab bint Ka'b bin `Ujrah. She said that Fari'ah bint Malik bin Snan, the sister of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri, told her that she came to Allah's Messenger asking him to return to her family's residence with Banu Khudrah. Her husband had pursued some of his servants who ran away, but when he reached the area of Al-Qadum, they killed him. She said, "So I asked Allah's Messenger if I should stay with my family in Banu Khudrah, for my (deceased) husband did not leave me a residence that he owns or Nafaqah (maintenance). Allah's Messenger answered in the positive. While I was in the room, Allah's Messenger summoned me or had someone summon me and said:

(What did you say) I repeated the story to him about my (deceased) husband. He said:

(Stay at your home until the term reaches its end.) So I remained through the Iddah term for four months and ten days in my (deceased husband's) house. Thereafter, `Uthman bin `Affan sent for me during his reign and asked me about this matter and I told him what happened. He made a judgment to the same effect." This Hadith was also collected by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah. At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih".

The Necessity of the Mut'ah (Gift) at the Time of Divorce

Allah said:

(And for divorced women, maintenance (should be provided) on reasonable (scale). This is a duty on Al-Muttaqin (the pious).)

`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said that when Allah's statement:

(عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ)
(...a gift of reasonable amount is a duty on the doers of good) (2:236) was revealed, a man said, "If I want, I will be excellent and if I do not, I will not." Thereafter, Allah revealed this Ayah:

(وَلَمُتْلَقِتْ مَتَعٌ بِالمَغْرُوضِ حَقًا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(And for divorced women, maintenance (should be provided) on reasonable (scale). This is a duty on Al-Muttaqin (the pious).)

The scholars who ruled that the Mut`ah (reasonable gift) at the time of divorce is required for every divorced woman, whether she had a bridal-money appointed for her or not, and whether the marriage was consummated or not, relied on this Ayah (2:241) when they issued their ruling. This is the view taken on this subject by Sa`id bin Jubayr and several others among the Salaf and also Ibn Jarir. Hence, Allah's statement:

(لَا جَنَاحٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن طَلَقْتُمُ النَّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسَوْهَا أَوْ تَقْرَضْوَا لَهُنَّ فَرَيضَةً وَمَتَعَوْهَا عَلَى الْمُوسِعٍ قَدْرَهُ وَعَلَى الْمَتَّقِرِ قَدْرَهُ مَتَعٌ بِالمَغْرُوضِ حَقًا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(There is no sin on you, if you divorce women while yet you have not touched (had sexual relation with) them, nor appointed for them their due (dowry). But bestow on them (a suitable gift), the rich according to his means, and the poor according to his means, a gift of reasonable amount is a duty on the doers of good.) (2:236) only mentions some specifics of this general ruling.

Allah then said:

(كَذَلِكَ يُبيِّنٌ اللَّهُ أَيْتَاهُ)

(Thus Allah makes clear His Ayat (Laws) to you,) meaning, what He allows, forbids, requires, His set limits, His commandments and His prohibitions are all explained and made plain and clear for you. He did not leave any matter in general terms if you needed the specifics.
243. Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in the thousands, fearing death Allah said to them, "Die". And then He restored them to life. Truly, Allah is full of bounty to mankind, but most men thank not.) (244. And fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (245. Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan so that He may multiply it to him many times And it is Allah that decreases or increases (your provisions), and unto Him you shall return.)

The Story of the Dead People

Ibn Abu Hatim related that Ibn `Abbas said that these people mentioned herein, were the residents of a village called Dawardan. `Ali bin `Asim said that they were from Dawardan, a village several miles away from Wasit (in Iraq).

In his Tafsir, Waki’ bin Jarrah said that Ibn `Abbas commented,

(243. Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in the thousands, fearing death Allah said to them, "Die". And then He restored them to life. Truly, Allah is full of bounty to mankind, but most men thank not.) (244. And fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (245. Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan so that He may multiply it to him many times And it is Allah that decreases or increases (your provisions), and unto Him you shall return.)
("Die.") and they all died. Afterwards, one of the Prophets passed by them and supplicated to Allah to resurrect them and Allah brought them back to life. So, Allah stated:

(ألَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِن دِيَرِهِمْ وَهُمْ أَلْوَفُ
حَذْرَ الْمَوْتِ)

r(Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in the thousands, fearing death)

Furthermore, several scholars among the Salaf said that these people were the residents of a city during the time of the Children of Israel. The weather in their land did not suit them and an epidemic broke out. They fled their land fearing death and took refuge in the wilderness. They later arrived at a fertile valley and they filled what is between its two sides. Then Allah sent two angels to them, one from the lower side and the other from the upper side of the valley. The angels screamed once and all the people died instantly, just as the death of one man. They were later moved to a different place, where walls and graves were built around them. They all perished, and their bodies rotted and disintegrated. Long afterwards, one of the Prophets of the Children of Israel, whose name was Hizqil (Ezekiel), passed by them and asked Allah to bring them back to life by his hand. Allah accepted his supplication and commanded him to say, "O rotted bones, Allah commands you to come together." The bones of every body were brought together. Allah then commanded him to say, "O bones, Allah commands you to be covered with flesh, nerves and skin." That also happened while Hizqil was watching. Allah then commanded him to say, "O souls, Allah commands you to return, each to the body that it used to inhabit." They all came back to life, looked around and proclaimed, "All praise is due to You (O Allah!) and there is no deity worthy of worship except You." Allah brought them back to life after they had perished long ago.

We should state that bringing these people back to life is a clear proof that physical resurrection shall occur on the Day of Resurrection. This is why Allah said:

(إنَّ اللَّهَ لَدُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ)

(Truly, Allah is full of bounty to mankind,) meaning, in that He shows them His great signs, sound proofs and clear evidences. Yet,

(وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لاَ يَشْكُرُونَ)

(but most men thank not,) as they do not thank Allah for what He has given them with in their worldly life and religious affairs.

The story of the dead people (2:244 above) also indicates that no caution can ever avert destiny and that there is no refuge from Allah, but to Allah Himself. These people departed from their land fleeing the epidemic and seeking to enjoy a long life. What they earned was the opposite of what they sought, as death came quickly and instantaneously and seized them all.
There is an authentic Hadith that Imam Ahmad reported that `Abdullah bin `Abbas said that `Umar bin Al-Khattab once went to Ash-Sham (Syria). When he reached the area of Sargh, he was met by the commanders of the army: Abu `Ubaydah bin Jarrah and his companions. They told him that the plague had broken out in Ash-Sham. The Hadith then mentioned that `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf, who was away attending to some of his affairs, came and said, "I have knowledge regarding this matter. I heard Allah's Messenger say:

"إذا كان يَأَرَضَ وَأَنتُمْ بِهَا قَلْ تَخْرُجُوا فِرَارًا مِّنْهُ، وإِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِهِ يَأَرَضٍ قَلْ فَلا تَقْدَمُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ"

(If it (the plague) breaks out in a land that you are in, do not leave that land to escape from it. If you hear about it in a land, do not enter it.)

`Umar then thanked Allah and went back. This Hadith is also reported in the Sahihayn.

**Abandoning Jihad does not alter Destiny**

Allah said:

(وَقِنَّوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَآمَنُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(And fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

This Ayah indicates that just as caution does not alter destiny, abandoning Jihad will neither bring the appointed term closer nor delay it. Rather, destiny and the appointed provisions are fixed and shall never be changed or altered, neither by addition nor deletion. Similarly, Allah said:

(الَّذِينَ قَالَوْا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قَتَلُوا قَلْ قَادَرُوْا عَنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ المَوْتَ إِنْ كَنْتُمْ صَدِيقِينَ)

("They are the ones who said about their killed brethren while they themselves sat (at home): "If only they had listened to us, they would not have been killed." Say: "Avert death from your own selves, if you speak the truth.") (3:168)
Allah said:

(They say: "Our Lord! Why have you ordained for us fighting Would that you had granted us respite for a short period" Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is (far) better for him who fears Allah, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to the Fatila (a scalish thread in the long slit of a date stone). Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!") (4:77, 78)

Abu Sulayman, Khalid bin Al-Walid, the commander of the Muslim armies, the veteran among Muslim soldiers, the protector of Islam and the Sword of Allah that was raised above His enemies, said while dying, "I have participated in so-and-so number of battles. There is not a part of my body, but suffered a shot (of an arrow), a stab (of a spear) or a strike (of a sword). Yet, here I am, I die on my bed just as the camel dies! May the eyes of the cowards never taste sleep." He, may Allah be pleased with him, was sorry and in pain because he did not die as martyr in battle. He was sad that he had to die on his bed!

The Good Loan and its Reward

Allah said:

(Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan so that He may multiply it to him many times)

In this Ayah, Allah encourages His servants to spend in His cause. Allah mentioned this same Ayah in several other parts of His Glorious Qur'an. The Hadith that mentions that Allah descends (every night down on the nearest heaven to us when the last third of the night remains) states that Allah says:

(Who would give a loan to He Who is neither poor nor unjust.)
Allah's statement:

(قَيْضَاءَعِفْهُ لَهُ أُضْعَافًا كَثِيرًا)

(He may multiply it to him many times), is similar to His statement:

(مَتَّلُ الْذِّينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمُولَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَتَّلِ حُبَّةٍ أَنبِتَتْ سَبَعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سَنَابِلٍ مَّائَةٌ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضِعِفُ لَمَن يَشَآءُ)

(The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn): it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills.) (2:261)

We will mention this Ayah later on. Allah then said:

(وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ)

(And it is Allah that decreases or increases (your provisions), ) meaning, `Spent (in Allah's cause) and do not be anxious.' Certainly, Allah is the Sustainer Who increases or decreases the provisions to whomever He wills among His servants. Allah's wisdom is perfect, and,

(وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ)

(and unto Him you shall return.) on the Day of Resurrection.
The Story of the Jews Who sought a King to be appointed over Them

Mujahid said that the Prophet (mentioned in the Ayah 2:246 above) is Shamwil (Samuel). Wahb bin Munabbih said: The Children of Israel remained on the straight path for a period of time after Moses. They then innovated in the religion and some of them even worshipped the idols. Yet, there were always Prophets sent among them who would command them to work righteous deeds, refrain from doing evil and who would rule them according to the commands of the Torah. When they (Israelites) committed the evil that they committed, Allah caused their enemies to overwhelm them, and many fatalities fell among them as a consequence. Their enemies also captured a great number of them, and took over large areas of their land. Earlier, anyone who would fight the Israelites would lose, because they had the Torah and the Tabut, which they inherited generation after generation ever since the time of Moses, who spoke to Allah directly. Yet, the Israelites kept indulging in misguidance until some king took the Tabut from them during a battle. That king also took possession of the Torah, and only a few of the Israelites who memorized it remained. The prophethood halted among their various tribes and only a pregnant woman remained of the offspring of Lavi (Levi), in whom the prophethood still appeared. The woman also kept invoking Allah to grant her a boy. Allah heard her pleas and gave her a boy whom she called `Shamwil' meaning `Allah has heard my pleas.' Some people said that the boy's name was Sham'un (Simeon), which also has a similar meaning.

As that boy grew, Allah raised him to be a righteous person. When he reached the age of prophethood, Allah revealed to him and commanded him to call (his people) to Him and to His Tawhid (Oneness). Shamwil called the Children of Israel (to Allah) and they asked him to appoint a king over them so that they could fight their enemies under his command. The kingship had also ended among them. Their Prophet said to them, "What if Allah appoints a king over you, would you fulfill your vow to fight under his command"

They said, "If Allah appoints a king over us, we will fight in Allah's way."

He said, "Would you then refrain from fighting, if fighting was prescribed for you?"

They said, "Why should we not fight in Allah's way while we have been driven out of our homes and our children (families have been taken as captives)?"

But when fighting was ordered for them, they turned away, all except a few of them. And Allah is All-Aware of the wrongdoers.)
(They said, "Why should we not fight in Allah's way while we have been driven out of our homes and our children") meaning, 'After our land had been confiscated and our children had been taken from us' Allah said:

(قَلَمَا كَتَبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تُوْلِّوْا إِلاًّ قَليلاً مِّنْهُمْ
وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّلَمِينَ)

(But when fighting was ordered for them, they turned away, all except a few of them. And Allah is All-Aware of the wrongdoers) meaning, only a few of them kept their promise, but the majority abandoned Jihad and Allah has full knowledge of them.

(وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيَّهُمْ إِنَّ اللّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالِوتَ مَلِكًا قَالُوا أَنَّى يُكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحْقُقُ بالمَلِكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتِ سَعَةً مِّنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللّهَ أَصْطَفَى عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بِسَبْطَةٍ فِي الْعَلْمِ وَالجِسَمِ وَاللّهُ يُؤْتِى مُلْكَهُ مِنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللّهُ وَسُعُّ عَلِيمٌ)

(247. And their Prophet said to them, "Indeed Allah has appointed Talut (Saul) as a king over you." They said, "How can he be a king over us when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth." He said: "Verily, Allah has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.")

When the Israelites asked their Prophet to appoint a king over them, he appointed Talut (Saul), who was then a soldier. But, Talut was not a descendant of the house of kings among them, which was exclusively in the offspring of Yahudha (Judah). This is why they said:

(أَنَّى يُكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا)

(How can he be a king over us) meaning, how can he be the king for us,

(وَنَحْنُ أَحْقُقُ بالمَلِكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتِ سَعَةً مِّنَ المال)

(And their Prophet said to them, "Indeed Allah has appointed Talut (Saul) as a king over you." They said, "How can he be a king over us when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth." He said: "Verily, Allah has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.")

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(when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth) They said that Talut was also poor and did not have the wealth that justifies him being king. Some people stated that Talut used to bring water to the people, while others stated that his profession was dyeing skins. The Jews, thus, disputed with their Prophet while they were supposed to obey him and to say good words to him.

Their Prophet answered them:

(Verily, Allah has chosen him above you) meaning, `Allah chose Talut from amongst you while having better knowledge about him.' Their Prophet stated, "I did not choose Talut to be your king on my own. Rather, Allah has commanded that upon your request." Further:

(...and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature.) meaning, `Talut is more knowledgeable and honorable than you, and stronger and more patient during combat, and has more knowledge of warfare. In short, he has more knowledge and is stronger than you are. The king should have sufficient knowledge, be fair looking and should have a strong soul and body.' He then said:

(And Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills.) meaning, Allah Alone is the Supreme Authority Who does what He wills and no one can ask Him about His actions, while they will be asked (about their actions by Him). This is because Allah has perfect knowledge, wisdom and kindness with His creation. Allah said:

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.) meaning, His favor is encompassing and He grants His mercy to whom He wills. He also knows those who deserve to be kings and those who do not deserve it.

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(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.) meaning, His favor is encompassing and He grants His mercy to whom He wills. He also knows those who deserve to be kings and those who do not deserve it.
b(248. And their Prophet said to them: "Verily! The sign of His kingdom is that there shall come to you At-Tabut, wherein is Sakinah (peace and reassurance) from your Lord and a remnant of that which Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) left behind, carried by the angels. Verily, in this is a sign for you if you are indeed believers.)

Their Prophet then proclaimed, "The sign of the blessings of Talut's kingship over you is that Allah will give you back the Tabut (wooden box) that has been taken from you." Allah said:

(فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ)

(wherein is Sakinah from your Lord) meaning, peace (or grace) and reassurance. `Abdur-Razzaq stated that Qatadah said:

(فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ)

(wherein is Sakinah) means grace. In addition, Ar-Rabi` said that Sakinah means mercy. This is also the meaning given by Ibn `Abbas, as Al-`Awfi narrated.

Allah then said:

(وَبَقِيَتْ مَمَّا تَرَكَ عَالُ مُوسَى وَعَالُ هَرُوْنَ)

(...and a remnant of that which Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) left behind,)

Ibn Jarir related that Ibn `Abbas said about this Ayah:

(وَبَقِيَتْ مَمَّا تَرَكَ عَالُ مُوسَى وَعَالُ هَرُوْنَ)

(...and a remnant of that which Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) left behind, ) Meaning, Moses' staff and the remnants of the Tablets. This is the same Tafsir of Qatadah, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and `Ikrimah, who added, "And also the Torah." `Abdur-Razzaq said that he asked Ath-Thawri about the meaning of,
Ath-Thawri said, "Some said that it contained a pot of manna and the remnants of the Tablets, while some others said that it contained (Moses') staff and two shoes (and refer to 20:12)."

Allah then said:

(...carried by the angels.)

Ibn Jurayj stated that Ibn `Abbas said, "The angels came down while carrying the Tabut between the sky and the earth, until they placed it before Talut while the people were watching." As-Suddi said, "The Tabut was brought to Talut's house, so the people believed in the prophethood of Sham`un (Simeon) and obeyed Talut"

The Prophet then said:

(Verily, in this is a sign for you) testifying to my truth in what I was sent with, my prophethood, and my command to you to obey Talut,

(if you are indeed believers.) in Allah and the Hereafter."
(249. Then when Talut set out with the army, he said: "Verily, Allah will try you by a river. So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me; and whoever tastes it not, he is of me, except him who takes (thereof) in the hollow of his hand." Yet, they drank thereof, all, except a few of them. So when he had crossed it (the river), he and those who believed with him, they said: "We have no power this day against Jalut (Goliath) and his hosts." But those who knew with certainty that they were going to meet Allah, said: "How often has a small group overcome a mighty host by Allah's leave" And Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient).)

Allah states that Talut, the king of the Children of Israel, marched forth with his soldiers and the Israelites who obeyed him. His army was of eighty thousand then, according to As-Suddi, but Allah knows best. Talut said:

(إنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيَّكُمْ)

(Verily, Allah will try you) meaning, He will test you with a river, which flowed between Jordan and Palestine, i.e., the Shari`ah river, according to Ibn `Abbas and others. He continued,

(فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ قَلِيسًا مَّنِيٌّ)

(So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me;) meaning, shall not accompany me today,

(لَمْ يَطْعُمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ اعْتَرَفَ عَرْقَةً بَيْدَهُ)

(and whoever tastes it not, he is of me, except him who takes (thereof) in the hollow of his hand.) meaning, there is no harm in this case. Allah then said:

(فَشَرِبُواْ مِنْهُ إِلَّاَ قَلِيْلاً مَّنْهُمُّ)

(Yet, they drank thereof, all, except a few of them.)

Ibn Jurayj stated that Ibn `Abbas commented, "Whoever took some of it (the river's water) in the hollow of his hand, quenched his thirst; as for those who drank freely from it, their thirst was not quenched."

Ibn Jarir reported that Al-Bara' bin `Azib said, "We used to say that the Companions of Muhammad who accompanied him on the battle of Badr were more than three hundred and ten, just as many as the soldiers who crossed the river with Talut. Only those who believed crossed the river with him." Al-Bukhari also reported this.
This is why Allah said:

(لَمَّا جَاءَهُ حُوَّةَ وَالَّذِينَ عَامِلُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقتَة لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ)

(And when he had crossed it (the river), he and those who believed with him, they said: "We have no power this day against Jalut (Goliath) and his hosts.")

This Ayah indicates that the Israelites (who remained with Saul) thought that they were few in the face of their enemy who were many then. So, their knowledgeable scholars strengthened their resolve by stating that Allah's promise is true and that triumph comes from Allah Alone, not from the large numbers or the adequacy of the supplies. They said to them:

(كم من فَنَّةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبتْ فَنَّةٍ كَثِيرَةَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّبِيرِينَ)

("How often has a small group overcome a mighty host by Allah's leave" And Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient).

(وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرُحْ عَلَيْنَا صَبِيرًا وَتَبَتْ أُقْدَامُنَا وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكُفَّارِينَ فَهُزِّمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتِلْ دَاوُودُ جَالُوتَ وَآتِهُ اللَّهُ الْمَلِكَةَ وَالحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلا دَفَعَ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بَعْضًا لَفَسَدُّ الْأَرْضَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ دُوَّارُ قَضِيلٍ عَلَى الْعَلَمِينَ يَلِّكِ آيَتُ اللَّهِ نَثْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّكَ لَمَنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

(250. And when they advanced to meet Jalut (Goliath) and his forces, they invoked: "Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience, and set firm our feet and make us victorious over the disbelieving
people.”) (251. So they routed them by Allah's leave and Dawud (David) killed Jalut (Goliath), and Allah gave him (Dawud) the kingdom after the death of Talut and Samuel and Al-Hikmah (prophethood), and taught him of that which He willed. And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the 'Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists).) (252. These are the verses of Allah, We recite them to you (O Muhammad) in truth, and surely, you are one of the Messengers (of Allah.)

When the faithful party, who were few under the command of Talut, faced their enemy, who were many under the command of Jalut,

(قالوا رَبَّنَا أَفرِغْ عَلَينَا صَبْرًا)

(they invoked: "Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience...") meaning, send down patience on us from You.

(وَتَبَيَّنَتْ أُقْدَامَانَا)

(and set firm our feet) meaning, against the enemy and save us from running away and from feebleness,

(وَانصْرَنَا عَلَى الْقُوْمِ الْكَفَّارِينَ)

(and make us victorious over the disbelieving people.)

Allah said:

(فَهَزَّ مُوْهُم بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(So they routed them by Allah's leave) meaning, they defeated and overwhelmed them by Allah's aid and support. Then,

(وقَتِلَ دَاوُودُ جَالُوتَ)

(and Dawud killed Jalut)

Israelite accounts claimed that (Prophet) David killed Goliath with a slingshot that he had, which he launched at Goliath causing his death.

Talut promised that whoever killed Jalut, would marry his daughter and would share his kingship and authority. He kept his promise. Later, the kingship was transferred to Prophet Dawud in addition to being granted Prophethood by Allah. So, Allah said:
(...and Allah gave him (Dawud) the kingdom) that Talut had and,

(وَالحِكْمَةِ)

(and Al-Hikmah) that comes with the prophethood, meaning, after Shamwil. Allah then said:

(وَعَلِيمَةٌ مِمَّا يَشَأَّنُ)

(and taught him of that which He willed.) meaning, what He willed of the knowledge that He bestowed on (Prophet) Dawud.

Next, Allah said:

(وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ الْنَّاسَ بَغْضَهُمْ بَغْضَ لِفَسَّدَتِ)

(And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief.)

This Ayah indicates that if it were not for the fact that Allah checks one set of people with another, such as when Talut and the bravery of Dawud helped the Children of Israel (against Goliath), then people would have perished. Similarly, Allah said:

(وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ الْنَّاسَ بَغْضَهُمْ بَغْضَ لِهِدْمَتِ الصَّوْمَةِ وَبِيعَ وَصُلُوتَ وَمَسْجِدٌ يَذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيراً)

(For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and Masjids, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much, would surely, have been pulled down.) (22:40)

Allah then said:
(But Allah is full of bounty to the `Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists)) meaning, by His mercy and favor He fixes some of them by some others. Surely, Allah has the wisdom, the supreme authority and the clear proof against His creation in all of His actions and statements.

Allah said:

(These are the verses of Allah, We recite them to you (O Muhammad) in truth, and surely, you are one of the Messengers (of Allah).)

This Ayah states, `These Ayat (verses) of Allah that We have narrated for you in truth conform to the exact manner that these stories have occurred and to the truth that still remain in the (Divine) Books that the scholars of the Children of Israel have and know. Allah said: O Muhammad,

(you are)

(one of the Messengers (of Allah)) emphatically stating the truth of his prophethood
Those Messengers! We preferred some of them to others; to some of them Allah spoke (directly); others He raised to degrees (of honor); and to `Isa, the son of Maryam, We gave clear proofs and evidences, and supported him with Ruh-il-Qudus Jibril. If Allah had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought against each other, after clear Verses of Allah had come to them, but they differed some of them believed and others disbelieved. If Allah had willed, they would not have fought against one another, but Allah does what He wills.

**Allah Honored Some Prophets Above Others**

Allah states that He has honored some Prophets to others. For instance, Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ فَضَلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيَّينَ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا)

(And indeed, We have preferred some of the Prophets above others, and to Dawud We gave the Zabur (Psalms) 17:55).

In the Ayah above, Allah said,

(ذَلِكَ الرَّسُلُ فَضَلْنَا بَعْضَ نَسْٰلَءَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضِهِمْ مِنْهُمْ)

(Those Messengers! We preferred some of them to others; to some of them Allah spoke (directly)) meaning, Musa and Muhammad, and also Adam according to a Hadith recorded in Sahih Ibn Hibban from Abu Dharr.

(وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دِرَجَتِ)
the Muslim man raised his hand and slapped the Jew on his face and said, `Over Muhammad too, O evil one!' The Jew went to the Prophet and complained to him and the Prophet said,

"لَا تُفْضَلُونَا عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ يَصَعَفُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَأَكُونُ أَوْلُ مِنْ يُفْقِيْنَ، فَأَجْدُ مُوسَى بَاطِشًا بِقَائِمَةِ الْعَرْشِ، فَلَا أَذْرَى أَفَاقَ قَبْلِي أَمْ جُوُزِيَ بِصِعْقَةِ الْطُورِ؟ فَلا تُفْضَلُونَا عَلَى الأَنْبِيَاءِ"

(Don't give me superiority above the Prophets, for the people will become unconscious on the Day of Resurrection, and I will be the first to be resurrected to see Musa holding on to the pillar of Allah's Throne. I will not know whether the unconsciousness Musa suffered on the Day of the Trumpet sufficed for him, or if he got up before me. So, do not give me superiority above the Prophets.) In another narration, the Prophet said, (Do not give superiority to some Prophets above others.)

The answer to this question is that this Hadith prohibits preferring some Prophets above others in cases of dispute and argument, such as the incident mentioned in the Hadith. The Hadith indicates that it is not up to creation to decide which Prophet is better, for this is Allah's decision. The creation is only required to submit to, obey and believe in Allah's decision.

Allah's statement,

(وَعَاثَنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيْنَـتَ)

(And We gave `Isa, the son of Maryam, clear signs) refers to the proofs and unequivocal evidences that testify to the truth that `Isa delivered to the Children of Israel, thus testifying that he was Allah's servant and His Messenger to them.

(وَأَيَدَّنَـهُ بَرُوحَ الْقُدُسِ)

(And supported him with Ruh-il-Qudus) meaning Allah aided `Isa with Jibil, peace be upon him. Allah then said,
(If Allah had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought against each other, after clear Verses of Allah had come to them, but they differed some of them believed and others disbelieved. If Allah had willed, they would not have fought against one another.) meaning all this happened by Allah's decree, and this is why He said next,

(ولكن الله يفعل ما يريد)

(But Allah does what He wills.)

(لأتيها الذين أمنوا أنفقوا مما رزقنكُم من قبل أن يأتيِ يوم لَا بيع فيه ولا خلَة ولا شقعة و الكفِرُون هم الظُلمُون)

(254. O you who believe! Spend of that with which We have provided for you, before a Day comes when there will be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession. And it is the disbelievers who are the wrongdoers.)

Allah commands His servants to spend for His sake, in the path of righteousness, from what He has granted them, so that they acquire and keep the reward of this righteous deed with their Lord and King. Let them rush to perform this deed in this life,

(من قبل أن يأتيِ يوم)

(before a Day comes) meaning, the Day of Resurrection,

(لا بيع فيه ولا خلَة ولا شقعة)

(when there will be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession.)
This Ayah indicates that on that Day, no one will be able to bargain on behalf of himself or ransom himself with any amount, even if it was the earth's fill of gold; nor will his friendship or relation to anyone benefit him. Similarly, Allah said,

(Qaada na'uf in a Nashar ful ansab biyinumun yomminid walayinsa'uloon)

(Then, when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another) 23:101.

(Or Shafu'a) (Nor intercession) meaning, they will not benefit by the intercession of anyone.

Allah's statement,

(allakufuroon hum ulumun)

(and it is the disbelievers who are the wrongdoers) indicates that no injustice is worse than meeting Allah on that Day while a disbeliever. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Ata bin Dinar said, "All thanks are due to Allah Who said,

(allakufuroon hum ulumun)

(and it is the disbelievers who are the wrongdoers) but did not say, `And it is the wrongdoers who are the disbelievers.'"

(lillaha la ilaha ilaa hulai qiyooma la ta'ikhuu saenee wa la sawma la ma fa asemaat wa ma fa aird maa da alladi yashquu anidaa laa yaqdisu ma aqdisu maa bayyiniyin)
(255. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission He knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter. And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.)

The Virtue of Ayat Al-Kursi

This is Ayat Al-Kursi and tremendous virtues have been associated with it, for the authentic Hadith describes it as 'the greatest Ayah in the Book of Allah.' Imam Ahmad recorded that `Ubayy bin Ka'b said that the Prophet asked him about the greatest Ayah in the Book of Allah, and `Ubayy answered, "Allah and His Messenger know better." When the Prophet repeated his question several times, `Ubayy said, "Ayat Al-Kursi." The Prophet commented,

"لَيْهِنَّكَ العِلْمُ أُبَا المَنْذَرُ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بَيْدَهُ، إِنَّ لَهَا لِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ، ثُقِّدَسُ المَلِكِ عِندَ سَاقِ العَرْشِ"

(Congratulations for having knowledge, O Abu Al-Mundhir! By He in Whose Hand is my soul! This Ayah has a tongue and two lips with which she praises the King (Allah) next to the leg of the Throne.)

This Hadith was also collected by Muslim, but he did not include the part that starts with, "By He in Whose Hand..."

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Ayyub said that he had some dates and a Ghoul used to take some, and he complained to the Prophet. The Prophet said to him, "When you see her, say, 'In the Name of Allah, answer to the Messenger of Allah.'" Abu Ayyub said that when she came again, he said these words and he was able to grab her. She begged, "I will not come again," so Abu Ayyub released her. Abu Ayyub went to the Prophet and the Prophet asked him, "What did your prisoner do" Abu Ayyub said, "I grabbed her and she said twice, 'I will not come again,' and I released her." The Prophet said, "She will come back." Abu Ayyub said, "So I grabbed her twice or three times, yet each time I would release her when she vowed not to come back. I would go to the Prophet who would ask me, 'What is the news of your prisoner' I would say, 'I grabbed her, then released her when she said that she would not return.' The Prophet would say that she would return. Once, I grabbed her and she said, 'Release me and I will teach you something to recite so that no harm touches you, that is, Ayat Al-Kursi.' Abu Ayyub went to the Prophet and told him, and the Prophet said, "She is liar, but she told the truth." At-Tirmidhi
recorded this Hadith in the chapter of the virtues of the Qur'an and said, "Hasan Gharib." In Arabic, 'Ghoul' refers to the Jinn when they appear at night.

Al-Bukhari recorded a similar story in his Sahih from Abu Hurayrah, in the chapters on the virtues of the Qur'an and the description of Shaytan. In this narration, Abu Hurayrah said,

"Allah's Messenger assigned me to keep watch over the Sadaqah (charity) of Ramadan. A person snuck in and started taking handfuls of foodstuff. I caught him and said, 'By Allah, I will take you to Allah's Messenger.' He said, 'Release me, for I am meek and have many dependents and am in great need.' I released him, and in the morning Allah's Messenger asked me, 'What did your prisoner do yesterday, O Abu Hurayrah?' I said, 'O Allah's Messenger! He complained of being needy and of having many dependents, so I pitied him and let him go.' Allah's Messenger said, 'Indeed, he told you a lie and will be coming again.' I believed that he would show up again, for Allah's Messenger had told me that he would return. So, I watched for him. When he (showed up and) started stealing handfuls of foodstuff, I caught hold of him again and said, 'I will definitely take you to Allah's Messenger.' He said, 'Leave me, for I am very needy and have many dependents. I promise I will not come back again.' I pitied him and let him go. In the morning Allah's Messenger asked me, 'What did your prisoner do last night, O Abu Hurayrah!' I replied, 'O Allah's Messenger! He complained of his great need and of too many dependents, so I took pity on him and set him free.' Allah's Messenger said, 'Verily, he told you a lie; he will return.' I waited for him attentively for the third time, and when he (came and) started stealing handfuls of the foodstuff, I caught hold of him and said, 'I will surely take you to Allah's Messenger as it is the third time you promised not to return, yet you returned.' He said, 'Let me teach you some words which Allah will give you benefit from.' I asked, 'What are they?' He replied, 'Whenever you go to bed, recite Ayat Al-Kursi- Allahu la ilaha illa Huwal-Hayyuul-Qayyum, till you finish the whole verse. (If you do so), Allah will appoint a guard for you who will stay with you, and no Shaytan will come near you until morning.' So, I released him. In the morning, Allah's Messenger asked me, 'What did your prisoner do yesterday?' I replied, 'O Allah's Messenger! He claimed that he would teach me some words by which Allah will grant me some benefit, so I let him go.' Allah's Messenger asked, 'What are they?' I replied, 'He said to me: Whenever you go to bed, recite Ayat Al-Kursi from the beginning to the end, Allahu la ilaha illa Huwal-Hayyuul-Qayyum. He further said to me: (If you do so), Allah will appoint a guard for you who will stay with you, and no Shaytan will come near you until morning.' (One of the narrators) then commented that they (the Companions) were very keen to do good deeds. The Prophet said, 'He spoke the truth, although he is a liar. Do you know whom you were talking to, these three nights, O Abu Hurayrah!' Abu Hurayrah said, 'No.' He said, 'It was Shaytan.'" An-Nasai also recorded this Hadith in Al-Yawm wa Al-Laylah.

Allah's Greatest Name is in Ayat Al-Kursi

Imam Ahmad recorded that Asma' bint Yazid bin As-Sakan said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say about these two Ayat,

(اللهُ لا إلَهَ إلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُومُ)

(Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 2:255, and,

(المَ - ذَلِكَ الْكُتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدَى لِلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Then - this is the Book, there is no doubt in it, a guidance for the upright)
(Alif-Lam-Mim. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 3:1-2,

"إنَّ فيهمَا اسمَ اللهِ الأَعْظَمُ"

(They contain Allah's Greatest Name.)

This is also the narration collected by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih".

Further, Ibn Marduwyah recorded that Abu Umamah reported that the Prophet said,

"اسمُ اللهِ الأَعْظَمُ، الَّذِي إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ أَجَابَ، فِي ثَلَاثٍ: سُورَةُ البَقْرَةِ وَآلِ عِمْرَانِ وَطَهَّر"

(Allah's Greatest Name, if He was supplicated with it, He answers the supplication, is in three Surahs - Al-Baqarah, Al `Imran and Ta-Ha.)

Hisham bin `Ammar, the Khatib (orator) of Damascus (one of the narrators in the above narration), said, "As for Al-Baqarah, it is in,

"اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الَّذى حيٌّ الْقَيْمَ مُ"

(Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 2:255; in Al `Imran, it is in,

"المَ - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدَىٰ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ"

(Alif-Lam-Mim. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 3:1-2; while in Ta-Ha, it is in,

"وَعَنَتِ الْوُجُوهُ لِلحَيٍّ الْقَيْمَ مْ"

(And (all) faces shall be humbled before (Allah), the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 20:111."

Ayat Al-Kursi has Ten Complete Arabic Sentences 1. Allah's statement,
(Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He) mentions that Allah is the One and Only Lord of all creation. 2. Allah's statement, (الحَيُّ الْقَيِّمُ) (Al-Hayyul-Qayyum) testifies that Allah is the Ever Living, Who never dies, Who sustains everyone and everything. All creation stands in need of Allah and totally relies on Him, while He is the Most Rich, Who stands in need of nothing created. Similarly, Allah said, (وَمَنْ عَلَىٰهُ أَنْ تَقْوَى السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِ) (And among His signs is that the heaven and the earth stand by His command) 30:25. 3. Allah's statement, (لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ) (Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him) means, no shortcoming, unawareness or ignorance ever touches Allah. Rather, He is aware of, and controls what every soul earns, has perfect watch over everything, nothing escapes His knowledge, and no secret matter is secret to Him. Among His perfect attributes, is the fact that He is never effected by slumber or sleep. Therefore, Allah's statement, (لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ) (Neither slumber overtakes Him) indicates that no unawareness due to slumber ever overtakes Allah. Allah said afterwards, (وَلَا نَوْمٌ) (nor sleep), which is stronger than slumber. It is recorded in the Sahih that Abu Musa said, "The Messenger of Allah delivered a speech regarding four words:"
فَبِلْ عَمَلِ اللَّيْلِ، وَعَمَلِ اللَّيْلِ قَبْلَ عَمَلِ النَّهَارِ،
حَجَابَةُ النُّورِ أَوِ النَّارِ لَوْ كَشَفَتُ لَأَحْرَقَتْ سُبُحَاتٌ
وَجَهِهٍ مَا اتَّنَى إِلَيْهِ بَصَرَهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ

(Allah does not sleep, and it does not befit His majesty that He sleeps. He lowers the scales and raises them. The deeds of the day are resurrected in front of Him before the deeds of the night, and the deeds of the night before the deeds of the day. His Veil is light, or fire, and if He removes it, the rays from His Face would burn whatever His sight reaches of His creation.)

4. Allah's statement,

(اللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ)

(To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth) indicates that everyone is a servant for Allah, a part of His kingdom and under His power and authority. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنْ كُلُّ مَنِ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّآ أَتِى الرَّحْمَنَ عَبْدًا - لَنَقْدُ أَحْصَىَهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدَّاً - وَكَلُّهُمْ عَاتِيَهُ يُوْمَ الْقِيَّمَةِ فَرْدًا)

(There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Gracious (Allah) as a servant. Verily, He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting. And everyone of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection (without any helper, or protector or defender))  19:93-95  5. Allah's statement,

(مَنْ ذَا الْذِّي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّآ بَادِئُهُ)

(Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission) is similar to His statements,
(And there are many angels in the heavens, whose intercession will avail nothing except after Allah has given leave for whom He wills and is pleased with) 53:26, and,

(They cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased) 21:28.

These Ayat assert Allah's greatness, pride, and grace, and that no one dares to intercede with Him on behalf of anyone else, except by His permission. Indeed, the Hadith about the intercession, states that the Prophet said,

»أَتَىَ نَحْنَ قَلْنَا لَكَ الْعَرْشَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَفْقَرُ مِنْكَ وَمَا خَلْقُكُمْ

(I will stand under the Throne and fall in prostration, and Allah will allow me to remain in that position as much as He wills. I will thereafter be told, "Raise your head, speak and you will be heard, intercede and your intercession will be accepted". The Prophet then said, "He will allow me a proportion whom I will enter into Paradise.")

6. Allah's statement,

(He knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter) this refers to His perfect knowledge of all creation; its past, present and future. Similarly, Allah said that the angels proclaimed;
(And we (angels) descend not except by the command of your Lord (O Muhammad). To Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us, and what is between those two; and your Lord is never forgetful) 19:64. 7. Allah's statement,

(وَلاَ يُحيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عُلْمِهِ إِلَّاً بِما شَآءُ)

(And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills), asserts the fact that no one attains any part of Allah's knowledge except what Allah conveys and allows. This part of the Ayah indicates that no one ever acquires knowledge of Allah and in His Attributes, except what He conveys to them. For instance, Allah said,

(وَلاَ يُحيطُونَ بِهِ عِلْمًا)

(But they will never compass anything of His knowledge) 20: 110. 8. Allah said,

(وَسَعَ كُرْسِيَّةُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth.)

Waki narrated in his Tafsir that Ibn `Abbas said, "Kursi is the footstool, and no one is able to give due consideration to Allah's Throne." Al-Hakim recorded this Hadith in his Mustadrak from Ibn `Abbas, who did not relate it to the Prophet. Al-Hakim said, "It is Sahih according to the criteria of the Two Sahih, and they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." In addition, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "If the seven heavens and the seven earths were flattened and laid side by side, they would add up to the size of a ring in a desert, compared to the Kursi." 9. Allah said,

(وَلَا يُؤْوَدُهُ حَفْظُهُمَا)

(And He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them) meaning, it does not burden or cause Him fatigue to protect the heavens and earth and all that is in between them. Rather, this is an easy matter for Him. Further, Allah sustains everything, has perfect watch over everything, nothing ever escapes His knowledge and no matter is ever a secret to Him. All matters are insignificant, modest and humble before Him. He is the Most Rich, worthy of all praise. He does what He wills, and no one can ask Him about what He does, while they will be asked. He has supreme power over all things and perfect alertness concerning everything. He is the Most High, the Greatest, there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, and no Lord other than Him.
10. Allah’s statement,

(وَهُوَ الْعَلَّٰمُ الْعَظِيمُ)

(And He is the Most High, the Most Great) is similar to His statement,

(الْكَبِيرُ المُتَعَالٌ)

(the Most Great, the Most High) 13:9.

These and similar Ayat and authentic Hadiths about Allah's Attributes must be treated the way the Salaf (righteous ancestors) treated them by accepting their apparent meanings without equating them with the attributes of the creation or altering their apparent meanings.

(لا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الْدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالْطَّغْوَتِ وَيَوْمُ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بالعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقِيَّةِ لا انفِصَامٌ لَّهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعُ عَلِيمُ)

(256. There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

**No Compulsion in Religion**

Allah said,

(لا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الْدِّينِ)

(There is no compulsion in religion), meaning, "Do not force anyone to become Muslim, for Islam is plain and clear, and its proofs and evidence are plain and clear. Therefore, there is no need to force anyone to embrace Islam. Rather, whoever Allah directs to Islam, opens his heart for it and enlightens his mind, will embrace Islam with certainty. Whoever Allah blinds his heart and seals his hearing and sight, then he will not benefit from being forced to embrace Islam."
It was reported that the Ansar were the reason behind revealing this Ayah, although its indication is general in meaning. Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that before Islam, "When (an Ansar) woman would not bear children who would live, she would vow that if she gives birth to a child who remains alive, she would raise him as a Jew. When Banu An-Nadir (the Jewish tribe) were evacuated from Al-Madinah, some of the children of the Ansar were being raised among them, and the Ansar said, 'We will not abandon our children.' Allah revealed,

(لا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الْدِينِ ۚ وَلَا تَبِينَ الرُّسُلُ ۗ مِنَ الْغَيْبِ)

(There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path.)"

Abu Dawud and An-Nasa`i also recorded this Hadith. As for the Hadith that Imam Ahmad recorded, in which Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said to a man,

«أسْلَمْ»

قال: إِنِّي أَجْذِني كَارَهَا قَالَ

وَإِنْ ۖ كَتَنَتْ كَارَهَا»

("Embrace Islam." The man said, "I dislike it." The Prophet said, "Even if you dislike it.")

First, this is an authentic Hadith, with only three narrators between Imam Ahmad and the Prophet. However, it is not relevant to the subject under discussion, for the Prophet did not force that man to become Muslim. The Prophet merely invited this man to become Muslim, and he replied that he does not find himself eager to become Muslim. The Prophet said to the man that even though he dislikes embracing Islam, he should still embrace it, `for Allah will grant you sincerity and true intent.'

Tawhid is the Most Trustworthy Handhold

Allah's statement,

فَمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالْطَّغْوَتِ وَيُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ ۖ فَقَدْ اسْتَمَسَّكَ بالعُروْةِ الْوُئْقَى لَا افْتَصَّـِمَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعُ عَلِيمٌ)

(Whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower) is in reference to,
"Whoever shuns the rivals of Allah, the idols, and those that Shaytan calls to be worshipped besides Allah, whoever believes in Allah's Oneness, worships Him alone and testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, then

(فَقَدْ أَسْتَمَسَكَ بِالْعُروْةَ الْوُثْقِىَ)

(then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold.)

Therefore, this person will have acquired firmness in the religion and proceeded on the correct way and the straight path. Abu Al-Qasim Al-Baghawi recorded that `Umar said, "Jibt means magic, and Taghut means Shaytan. Verily, courage and cowardice are two instincts that appear in men, the courageous fights for those whom he does not know and the coward runs away from defending his own mother. Man's honor resides with his religion and his status is based upon his character, even if he was Persian or Nabatian." `Umar's statement that Taghut is Shaytan is very sound, for this meaning includes every type of evil that the ignorant people of Jahiliyyah (pre Islamic era of ignorance) fell into, such as worshipping idols, referring to them for judgement, and invoking them for victory.

Allah's statement,

(فَقَدْ أَسْتَمَسَكَ بِالْعُروْةَ الْوُثْقِىَ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا)

(then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break) means, "He will have hold of the true religion with the strongest grasp." Allah equated this adherence to the firm handhold that never breaks because it is built solid and because its handle is firmly connected. This is why Allah said here,

(فَقَدْ أَسْتَمَسَكَ بِالْعُروْةَ الْوُثْقِىَ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا)

(then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break.)

Mujahid said, "The most trustworthy handhold is Iman (faith)." As-Suddî said that it refers to Islam. Imam Ahmad recorded that Qays bin `Abbad said, "I was in the Masjid when a man whose face showed signs of humbleness came and prayed two Rak`ahs that were modest in length. The people said, 'This is a man from among the people of Paradise.' When he left, I followed him until he entered his house, and I entered it after him and spoke with him. When he felt at ease, I said to him, 'When you entered the Masjid, the people said such and such things.' He said, 'All praise is due to Allah! No one should say what he has no knowledge of. I will tell you why they said that. I saw a vision during the time of the Messenger of Allah, and I narrated it to him. I saw that I was in a green garden, and he described the garden's plants and spaciousness, and there was an iron pole in the middle of the garden affixed in the earth and its tip reached the sky. On its tip, there was a handle, and I was told to ascend the pole. I said, 'I cannot.' Then a helper came and raised my robe from behind and said to me, 'Ascend.' I ascended until I grasped the handle and he said to me, 'Hold on to the handle.' I awoke from that dream with the handle in my hand. I went to the Messenger of Allah and told him about the vision and he said,
As for the garden, it represents Islam; as for the pole, it represents the pillar of Islam; and the handle represents the most trustworthy handhold. You shall remain Muslim until you die.

This Companion was `Abdullah bin Salam.”

This Hadith was also collected in the Two Sahihs; and Al-Bukhari also recorded it with another chain of narration.

Allah stated that whoever follows what pleases Him, He will guide him to the paths of peace, that is Islam, or Paradise. Verily, Allah delivers His believing servants from the darkness of disbelief, doubt and hesitation, to the light of the plain, clear, explained, easy and unequivocal truth. He also stated that Shaytan is the supporter of the disbelievers who beautifies the paths of ignorance and misguidance that they follow, thus causing them to deviate from the true path into disbelief and wickedness.

Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever.

This is why Allah mentioned the light in the singular while mentioned the darkness in the plural, because truth is one, while disbelief comes as several types, all of which are false. Similarly, Allah said,
(And verily, this is my straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His path. This He has ordained for you that you may have Taqwa)

6:153

(And originated the darknesses and the light) 6:1, and,

(وزَعَ الظُّلْمَاتَ وَالنُّورَ)

(to the right and to the lefts) 16: 48 .

There are many other Ayat on the subject that mention the truth in the singular and falsehood in the plural, because of falsehood's many divisions and branches.

(وَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنَّ آٓهَ اللَّهُ الْمُلُكُ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّي الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أَحْيِى وأَمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ قَاتِباً بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِى كَفَّرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى الْقُوْمَ الظَّلُّمِينَ)

(258. Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord (Allah), because Allah had given him the kingdom When Ibrahim said (to him): "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death." He said, "I give life and cause death." Ibrahim said, "Verily, Allah brings the sun from the east; then bring it you from the west." So the disbeliever was utterly defeated. And Allah guides not the people, who are wrongdoers.)

The Debate Between Ibrahim Al-Khalil and King Nimrod
The king who disputed with Ibrahim was King Nimrod, son of Canaan, son of Kush, son of Sam, son of Noah, as Mujahid stated. It was also said that he was Nimrod, son of Falikh, son of `Abir, son of Shalikh, son of Arfakhshand, son of Sam, son of Noah. Mujahid said, "The kings who ruled the eastern and western parts of the world are four, two believers and two disbelievers. As for the two believing kings, they were Sulayman bin Dawud and Dhul-Qarnayn. As for the two disbelieving kings, they were Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar." Allah knows best.

Allah said,

(_have you not looked) meaning, "With your heart, O Muhammad!"

(پذیرفته کنید که خدا را دنبال می‌کنی؟)

(at him who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord) meaning, about the existence of Allah. Nimrod denied the existence of a god other than himself, as he claimed, just as Fir`awn said later to his people,

(I know not that you have a god other than me) 28:38.

What made Nimrod commit this transgression, utter disbelief and arrant rebellion was his tyranny and the fact that he ruled for a long time. This is why the Ayah continued,

(بیان کنید که من به خداوند می‌خواهم)

(Because Allah had given him the kingdom.)

It appears that Nimrod asked Ibrahim to produce proof that Allah exists. Ibrahim replied,

(My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death) meaning, "The proof of Allah's existence is the creations that exist after they were nothing and perish after they had existed. This only proves the existence of the Creator, Who does what He wills, for these things could not have occurred on their own without a Creator who created them, and He is the Lord that I call to for worship, Alone without a partner."

This is when Nimrod said,
Qatadah, Muhammad bin Ishaq and As-Suddi said that he meant, "Two men who deserved execution were to be brought before me, and I would command that one of them be killed, and he would be killed. I would command that the second man be pardoned, and he would be pardoned. This is how I bring life and death." However, it appears that since Nimrod did not deny the existence of a Creator, his statement did not mean what Qatadah said it meant. This explanation does not provide an answer to what Ibrahim said. Nimrod arrogantly and defiantly claimed that he was the creator and pretended that it was he who brings life and death. Later on, Firawn imitated him and announced,

(I know not that you have a god other than me) 28: 38.

This is why Ibrahim said to Nimrod,

(Verily, Allah brings the sun from the east; then bring it you from the west.)

This Ayah means, "You claim that it is you who brings life and death. He who brings life and death controls the existence and creates whatever is in it, including controlling its planets and their movements. For instance, the sun rises everyday from the east. Therefore, if you were god, as you claimed, bringing life and death, then bring the sun from the west." Since the king was aware of his weakness, inadequacy and that he was not able to reply to Ibrahim's request, he was idle, silent and unable to comment. Therefore, the proof was established against him. Allah said,

(And Allah guides not the people, who are wrongdoers) meaning, Allah deprives the unjust people of any valid proof or argument. Furthermore, their false proof and arguments are annulled by their Lord, and they have earned His anger and will suffer severe torment.

The meaning that we provided is better than the meaning that some philosophers offered, claiming that Ibrahim used the second argument because it was clearer than the first one. Rather, our explanation asserts that Ibrahim refuted both claims of Nimrod, all praise is due to Allah.
As-Suddi stated that the debate between Ibrahim and Nimrod occurred after Ibrahim was thrown in the fire, for Ibrahim did not meet the king before that day.

(أو كَالْذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهَيْ خَاَوِيَةٍ عَلَى غُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحَيِّي هَذِهِ الْلَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ الْلَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَنَّهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يُوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانْظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامَكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يُبْسَتْهُ وَانظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ وَلْتَجْعَلْكَ عَائِةً لِلْمَآمِذَ وَانظُرْ إِلَى العَظَمَ كَيْفَ نَنْشِرُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لِحَمَّا قَلْمَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

(259. Or like the one who passed by a town in ruin up to its roofs. He said: "How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up (again). He said: "How long did you remain (dead)?" He (the man) said: "(Perhaps) I remained (dead) a day or part of a day." He said: "Nay, you have remained (dead) for a hundred years, look at your food and your drink, they show no change; and look at your donkey! And thus We have made of you a sign for the people. Look at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh." When this was clearly shown to him, he said, "I know (now) that Allah is able to do all things.

The Story of `Uzayr

Allah's statement,

(فَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَيْهِ حَاجًا إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ

(Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord) means, "Have you seen anyone like the person who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord" Then, Allah connected the Ayah,
(Or like the one who passed by a town in ruin up to its roofs) to the Ayah above by using `or'.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Ali bin Abi Talib said that the Ayah 2:259 meant `Uzayr. Ibn Jarir also reported it, and this explanation was also reported by Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim from Ibn `Abbas, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Su’di and Sulayman bin Buraydah.

Mujahid bin Jabr said that the Ayah refers to a man from the Children of Israel, and the village was Jerusalem, after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it and killed its people.

(وَهَيَّٰهَا حَاوِيَةٌ) (in ruin) means, it became empty of people. Allah's statement,

(عَلَى عُروْشِهَا) (up to its roofs) indicates that the roofs and walls (of the village) fell to the ground. `Uzayr stood contemplating about what had happened to that city, after a great civilization used to inhabit it. He said,

(أَلَّآ يَحْيَى هَذِهِ الْلَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا) (Oh! How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death) because of the utter destruction he saw and the implausibility of its returning to what it used to be. Allah said,

(فَأَمَاتَهُ الْلَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَنَّهُ) (So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up (again).)

The city was rebuilt seventy years after the man (`Uzayr) died, and its inhabitants increased and the Children of Israel moved back to it. When Allah resurrected `Uzayr after he died, the first organ that He resurrected were his eyes, so that he could witness what Allah does with him, how He brings life back to his body. When his resurrection was complete, Allah said to him, meaning through the angel,

(كَمْ لَبِئْتَ قَالَ لِبَيْتٍ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضِ يَوْمٍ)
("How long did you remain (dead)" He (the man) said: "(Perhaps) I remained (dead) a day or part of a day.")

The scholars said that since the man died in the early part of the day and Allah resurrected him in the latter part of the day, when he saw that the sun was still apparent, he thought that it was the sun of that very day. He said,

("Or part of a day. " He said: "Nay, you have remained (dead) for a hundred years, look at your food and your drink, they show no change.")

He had grapes, figs and juice, and he found them as he left them; neither did the juice spoil nor the figs become bitter nor the grapes rot.

(وَانظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ)

(And look at your donkey!), "How Allah brings it back to life while you are watching."

(وَلَنَجْعَلَكَ عَارِيَةً لِلنَّاسِ)

(And thus We have made of you a sign for the people) that Resurrection occurs.

(وَانظُرْ إِلَى العَظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنْشِرُهَا)

(Look at the bones, how We Nunshizuha) meaning, collect them and put them back together. In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim, recorded that Kharijah bin Zayd bin Thabit said that his father said that the Messenger of Allah read this Ayah,

(كَيْفَ نُنْشِرُهَا)

(how We Nunshizuha.) Al-Hakim said; "Its chain is Sahih and they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." The Ayah was also read,

("Nunshiruha" meaning, bring them back to life, as Mujahid stated.)
As-Suddi said, "Uzayr observed the bones of his donkey, which were scattered all around him to his right and left, and Allah sent a wind that collected the bones from all over the area. Allah then brought every bone to its place, until they formed a full donkey made of fleshless bones. Allah then covered these bones with flesh, nerves, veins and skin. Allah sent an angel who blew life in the donkeys' nostrils, and the donkey started to bray by Allah's leave."

All this occurred while Uzayr was watching, and this is when he proclaimed,

(He said, "I know (now) that Allah is able to do all things," ) meaning, "I know that, and I did witness it with my own eyes. Therefore, I am the most knowledgeable in this matter among the people of my time."

(260. And (remember) when Ibrahim said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead."
He (Allah) said: "Do you not believe" He (Ibrahim) said: "Yes (I believe), but to be stronger in faith."
He said: "Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you (then slaughter them, cut them into pieces), and then put a portion of them on every hill, and call them, they will come to you in haste. And know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.")

The Khalil Supplicates to Allah to Show Him How He Resurrects the Dead

The scholars said that there are reasons behind this request by Ibrahim. For instance, when Ibrahim said to Nimrod,
e(My Lord (Allah) is He Who gives life and causes death,) he wanted to solidify his knowledge about resurrection by actually witnessing it with his eyes. Prophet Ibrahim said,

ربِ أَرْنِي كِيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى قَالَ أَوْلَمْ تُؤْمِنَ

("My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." He (Allah) said: "Do you not believe" He (Ibrahim) said: "Yes (I believe), but to be stronger in faith.")

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

نَحْنُ أَحْقُ بِالشَّكِّ مِنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِذْ قَالَ

(We are more liable to be in doubt than Ibrahim when he said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." Allah said, "Don't you believe" Ibrahim said, "Yes (I believe), but (I ask) in order to be stronger in faith.")

The Prophet's statement in the Hadith means, "We are more liable to seek certainty."

The Answer to Al-Khalil's Request

Allah said,

قَالَ فَخْدِ أَرْبَعَةَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَةِ فَقَصُّرْهُ هُنَّ إِلَيْكَ

(He said: "Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you.")

Scholars of Tafsir disagreed over the type of birds mentioned here, although this matter in not relevant due to the fact that the Qur'an did not mention it. Allah's statement,

قُصُرْهُ هُنَّ إِلَيْكَ

(cause them to incline towards you) means, cut them to pieces. This is the explanation of Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Malik, Abu Al-Aswad Ad-Dili, Wahb bin Munabbih, Al-Hasan and As-Suddi. Therefore, Ibrahim caught four birds, slaughtered them, removed the
feathers, tore the birds to pieces and mixed the pieces together. He then placed parts of these mixed pieces on four or seven hills. Ibn ` Abbas said, "Ibrahim kept the heads of these birds in his hand. Next, Allah commanded Ibrahim to call the birds to him, and he did as Allah commanded him. Ibrahim witnessed the feathers, blood and flesh of these birds fly to each other, and the parts flew each to their bodies, until every bird came back to life and came walking at a fast pace towards Ibrahim, so that the example that Ibrahim was witnessing would become more impressive. Each bird came to collect its head from Ibrahim's hand, and if he gave the bird another head the bird refused to accept it. When Ibrahim gave each bird its own head, the head was placed on its body by Allah's leave and power. " This is why Allah said,

(واعلم ان الله عزيز حكيم)

(And know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise) and no one can overwhelm or resist Him. Whatever Allah wills, occurs without hindrance, because He is the All-Mighty, Supreme above all things, and He is Wise in His statements, actions, legislation and decrees.

`Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Ma`mar said that Ayyub said that Ibn ` Abbas commented on what Ibrahim said,

(ولكن ليطمئن قلبي)

(but to be stronger in Faith), "To me, there is no Ayah in the Qur'an that brings more hope than this Ayah." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir said that `Abdullah bin ` Abbas met `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Al-`As and said to him, "Which Ayah in the Qur'an carries more hope for you" Ibn `Amr said,

(قل يعبادي الذين أسروها على أنفسهم لا تقنطوا)

(Say: "O `Ibadi (My servants) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not.") 39:53.

Ibn `Abbas said, "But I say that it is Allah's statement,

(وإذ قال إبراهيم ربي أرني كيف نحي الموتى قال أولم تؤمن قال بلى)

(And (remember) when Ibrahim said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." He (Allah) said: "Do you not believe" He (Ibrahim) said: "Yes (I believe)..."
Allah accepted Ibrahim's affirmation when he merely said, 'Yes.' This Ayah refers to the doubts that attack the heart and the thoughts that Shaytan inspires." Al-Hakim also recorded this in Al-Mustadrak and said; "Its chain is Sahih but they did not record it."

 Rewards of Spending in Allah's Cause

This is a parable that Allah made of the multiplication of rewards for those who spend in His cause, seeking His pleasure. Allah multiplies the good deed ten to seven hundred times. Allah said,

(ِمَثَلُ الْذِّينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ كَمَثَلِ حُبَّةٍ أَنبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سَنَابِلٍ مَّائَةَ حَبَّةٍ وَاللّهُ يُضَعِّفُ لَمَن يَشَاءُ وَاللّهُ وَسِعُ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(261. The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah, is that of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.)

Sa`id bin Jubayr commented, "Meaning spending in Allah's obedience." Makhul said that the Ayah means, "Spending on Jihad, on horse stalls, weapons and so forth." The parable in the Ayah is more impressive on the heart than merely mentioning the number seven hundred. This Ayah indicates that Allah `grows' the good deeds for its doers, just as He grows the plant for whoever sows it in fertile land. The Sunnah also mentions that the deeds are multiplied up to seven hundred folds. For instance, Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Mas`ud said that a man once gave away a camel, with its bridle on, in the cause of Allah and the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَتَأْتِيْنَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِسَبْعَعِمَانَةِ نَاقَةٍ مَّخْطَوْمَةٍ»

(On the Day of Resurrection, you will have seven hundred camels with their bridles.)

Muslim and An-Nasa`i also recorded this Hadith, and Muslim's narration reads, "A man brought a camel with its bridle on and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! This is in the sake of Allah.' The Messenger said,
(You will earn seven hundred camels as reward for it on the Day of Resurrection.)

Another Hadith: Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

»كل عمل ابن آدم يضاعف، الحسنة عشرًا، وأعمالها إلى سبعمائة ضعف، إلى ما شاء الله، يقول الله: إنا الصوام فإن له لي، وأنا أجزي به، يدغ طعامه وشهوته من أجله، وللصائم فرحان: فرحة عند فطره وفرحه عند لقاء ربي، وخلوف فهم الصائم أطيب عند الله من ريح المسك، الصوام جنة، الصوام جنة.

(Every good deed that the son of Adam performs will be multiplied ten folds, to seven hundred folds, to many other folds, to as much as Allah wills. Allah said, “Except the fast, for it is for Me and I will reward for it. One abandons his food and desire in My sake.” The fasting person has two times of happiness: when he breaks his fast and when he meets his Lord. Verily, the odor that comes from the mouth of whoever fasts is more pure to Allah than the scent of musk. Fasting is a shield (against sinning), fasting is a shield.) Muslim recorded this Hadith.

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ)

(Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills) is according to the person's sincerity in his deeds.

(وَاللَّهُ وَسَيْعُ عَلَيمُ)

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower) meaning. His Favor is so wide that it encompasses much more than His creation, and He has full knowledge in whoever deserves it, or does not deserve it. All the praise and thanks are due to Allah.
(262. Those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah, and do not follow up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury, their reward is with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.) (263. Kind words and forgiving of faults are better than Sadaqah (charity) followed by injury. And Allah is Rich (free of all needs) and He is Most Forbearing.) (264. O you who believe! Do not render in vain your Sadaqah (charity) by reminders of your generosity or by injury, like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men, and he does not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day. His likeness is the likeness of a smooth rock on which is a little dust; on it falls heavy rain which leaves it bare. They are not able to do anything with what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.)

To Remind About Charity Given is Forbidden

Allah praises those who spend from their money in His cause, and then refrain from reminding those who received the charity of that fact, whether these hints take the form of words or actions.

Allah's statement,
(or with injury), indicates that they do not cause harm to those whom they gave the charity to, for this harm will only annul the charity. Allah next promised them the best rewards for this good deed,

(لهم أجْرُهم عند رَبِّهم)

(their reward is with their Lord), indicating that Allah Himself will reward them for these righteous actions. Further,

(ولا خوْفٌ علَيْهم)

(On them shall be no fear) regarding the horrors of the Day of Resurrection,

(ولا هم يُحِزُّونَ)

(nor shall they grieve) regarding the offspring that they leave behind and the adornment and delights of this world. They will not feel sorry for this, because they will acquire what is far better for them.

Allah then said,

(قُولُ مَعْرُوفٍ)

(Kind words) meaning, compassionate words and a supplication for Muslims,

(وَمَعْفَرَةٌ)

(and forgiving) meaning, forgiving an injustice that took the form of actions or words,

(خيرٌ مِن صدقةٍ يَبْعِها أَدَى)

(are better than Sadaqah (charity) followed by injury.)

(وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ)

(And Allah is Rich) not needing His creation,
(Most Forbearing) forgives, releases and pardons them.

There are several Hadiths that prohibit reminding people of acts of charity. For instance, Muslim recorded that Abu Dharr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

»ثلاثة لا يكلّمهم الله يوم القيامة، ولا ينظر إليهم، ولا يزكيهم، ولا يعذب عذاب أليم: المنفّق سلعته بالحليف الكاذب

(Three persons whom Allah shall neither speak to on the Day of Resurrection nor look at nor purify, and they shall receive a painful torment: he who reminds (the people) of what he gives away, he who lengthens his clothes below the ankles and he who swears an oath while lying, to sell his merchandise.)

This is why Allah said,

(يأتيها الذين عامنوا لا تبطلوا صدقتكم بالمن والاذى)

(O you who believe! Do not render in vain your Sadaqah (charity) by reminders of your generosity or by injury) stating that the charity will be rendered in vain if it is followed by harm or reminders. In this case, the reward of giving away charity is not sufficient enough to nullify the harm and reminders. Allah then said,

(كالذي ينفق ماله رئيّة الناس)

(like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men) meaning, "Do not nullify your acts of charity by following them with reminders and harm, just like the charity of those who give it to show off to people." The boasting person pretends to give away charity for Allah's sake, but in reality seeks to gain people's praise and the reputation of being kind or generous, or other material gains of this life. All the while, he does not think about Allah or gaining His pleasure and generous rewards, and this is why Allah said,
(and he does not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day.)

Allah next set the example of whoever gives charity to show off. Ad-Dahhak commented that the example fits one who follows his acts of charity with reminders or harm. Allah said,

(فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانِ)

(His likeness is the likeness of Safwan) where Safwan, from Safwanah, meaning `the smooth rocks,'

(عَلَيْهِ تُرَابَ فَأَصَابَهُ وَأَبْلَ)

(on which is little dust; on it falls a Wabil) meaning, heavy rain,

(فَتَرَكَهُ صَلاَدًا)

(which leaves it bare.) This Ayah means that heavy rain left the Safwan completely barren of dust. Such is the case with Allah's action regarding the work of those who show off, as their deeds are bound to vanish and disappear, even though people think that these deeds are as plentiful as specks of dust. So Allah said,

(لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مَّمَّا كَسَبَّوْا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقُوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُّ

(They are not able to do anything with what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.)

(وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يَنفُقُونَ أَمُوْلَهُمْ ابْتَغَاءَ مَرْضَاتَ اللَّهِ وَتَنَبِيبًا مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَلَّةٍ بَرْبُوةٍ أَصْبَبَهَا وَأَبْلٍ فَأَتَتْ أَكْلَهَا ضَعْفَيْنِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يُصَبِّهَا وَأَبْلٍ فَقْتَلَ وَاللَّهُ يَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا)
(265. And the parable of those who spend their wealth seeking Allah's pleasure while they in their own selves are sure and certain that Allah will reward them (for their spending in His cause), is that of a garden on a height; heavy rain falls on it and it doubles its yield of harvest. And if it does not receive heavy rain, light rain suffices it. And Allah is All-Seer (knows well) of what you do.) This is the example of the believers who give away charity seeking only Allah's pleasure,

(وَتَثْبِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ)

(while they in their own selves are sure and certain) meaning, they are certain that Allah shall reward them for these righteous acts with the best rewards. Similarly, in a Hadith collected by Al-Bukhari and Muslim, the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا»

(Whoever fasts Ramadan with faith and expectation...) meaning, believing that Allah commanded the fast, all the while awaiting His reward for fasting it.

Allah's statement,

(كَمَثَلَ جَنَّةٍ بَرَبُّوَةٍ)

(is that of a garden on a Rabwah) means, the example of a garden on `a height above the ground', as the majority of scholars have stated. Ibn `Abbas and Ad-Dahhak added that it also has flowing rivers.

Allah's statement,

(أَصَابَّهَا وَأَبَلٌ)

(Wabil falls on it) means, heavy rain as we stated, So it produces its,

(أَكْلُهَا)

(yield of harvest) meaning, fruits or produce,

(ضِعْقَفَةٌ)

(doubles), as compared to other gardens.
(And if it does not receive Wabil, a Tall suffices it.)

Ad-Dahhak said that the `Tall' is light rain. The Ayah indicates that the garden on the Rabwah is always fertile, for if heavy rain does not fall on it, light rain will suffice for it. Such is the case regarding the believer's good deeds, for they never become barren. Rather, Allah accepts the believer's righteous deeds and increases them, each according to his deeds. This is why Allah said next,

(And Allah is All-Searer of what you do) meaning, none of His servants' deeds ever escapes His perfect watch.

(266. Would any of you wish to have a garden with date palms and vines, with rivers flowing underneath, and all kinds of fruits for him therein, while he is stricken with old age, and his children are weak (not able to look after themselves), then it is struck with a fiery whirlwind, so that it is burnt Thus does Allah make clear His Ayat to you that you may give thought.)

The Example of Evil Deeds Nullifying Good Deeds

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas and `Ubayd bin `Umayr said that `Umar bin Al-Khattab asked the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, "According to your opinion, about whom was this Ayah revealed,

(And if you do not have enough rain, a Tall suffices.)

(And Allah is All-Semitic)
(Would any of you wish to have a garden with date palms and vines...)."

They said, "Allah knows best." Umar became angry and said, "Say we know or we do not know." Ibn `Abbas said, "O Leader of the Faithful! I have an opinion about it." Umar said, "O my nephew! Say your opinion and do not belittle yourself." Ibn `Abbas said, "For a wealthy man who works in Allah's pleasure and then Allah sends Shaytan to him, and he works in disobedience, until he annuls his good works."

This Hadith suffices as an explanation for the Ayah, for it explains the example it sets by a person who does good first and then follows it with evil, may Allah save us from this end. So, this man annulled his previous good works with his latter evil works. When he desperately needed the deeds of the former type, there were none. This is why Allah said,

(وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبْرَ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضَعْفَاءٌ فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٍ)

(while he is striken with old age, and his children are weak (not able to look after themselves), then it is struck with a whirlwind) with heavy wind,

(فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ)

(that is fiery, so that it is burnt) meaning, its fruits were burnt and its trees were destroyed. Therefore, what will his condition be like

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah has set a good parable, and all His parables are good. He said,

(أَيُّودُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَبَةٌ مَنْ تَخْيِلَ وَأَعْتَابٌ تَجْرُى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الأنْهَرُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ النَّمَرَتِ)

(Would any of you wish to have a garden with date palms and vines, with rivers flowing underneath, and all kinds of fruits for him therein.)

But he lost all this in his old age,
(while he is stricken with old age) while his offspring and children are weak just before the end of his life. Then a lightning storm came and destroyed his garden. Then he did not have the strength to grow another garden, nor did his offspring offer enough help. This is the condition of the disbeliever on the Day of Resurrection when he returns to Allah, for he will not have any good deeds to provide an excuse - or refuge - for him, just as the man in the parable had no strength to replant the garden. The disbeliever will not find anything to resort to for help, just as the offspring of the man in the parable did not provide him with help. So he will be deprived of his reward when he most needs it, just as the man in the parable was deprived of Allah's garden when he most needed it, when he became old and his offspring weak."

In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim recorded that the Messenger of Allah used to say in his supplication,

«اللَّهُمَّ اجعلْ أوسَعَ رزْقِكَ عَلَىٰ عَيْنِي كُبْرَ سِنِّي وَانْقِضَاءَ عُمْرِي»

(O Allah! Make Your biggest provision for me when I am old in age and at the time my life ends.)

This is why Allah said,

(كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الآياتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ)

(Thus Allah makes clear to you His Laws in order that you may give thought) meaning, comprehend and understand the parables and their intended implications. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَتَلَكَ الْأَمْتَالُ نَضْرَبْهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلاَّ الْعَالِمُونَ)

(And these similitudes We put forward for mankind; but none will understand them except those who have knowledge (of Allah and His signs) 29:43)

(يَايُهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنفُقُوا مِن طَيِّبَتِ مَا كَسبْتُمْ وَمَمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تَنفَقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ يَأْخَذُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَعَمِّضُوا فِيهِ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ)
The Encouragement to Spend Honest Money for Allah's Sake

Allah commands His believing servants to spend in charity, as Ibn `Abbas stated, from the pure, honest money that they earned and from the fruits and vegetables that He has grown for them in the land. Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah commanded them to spend from the purest, finest and best types of their money and prohibited spending from evil and dishonest money, because Allah is pure and good and only accepts that which is pure and good." This is why Allah said,

(267. O you who believe! Spend of the good things which you have (legally) earned, and of that which We have produced from the earth for you, and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it, (though) you would not accept it save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein. And know that Allah is Rich (free of all needs), and worthy of all praise.) (268. Shaytan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fāhshā' (evil deeds) whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and bounty, and Allah is Al-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.) (269. He grants Hikmah to whom He wills, and he, to whom Hikmah is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding.)

(وَلَا تَتَّمِمُوا الْخَبيثَ (Miṣnūn wa-l-ṣanūm bə-ʾakhḍīyēh)  
(to spend from it, (though) you would not accept it) meaning, "If you were given this type, you would not take it, except if you tolerate the deficiency in it. Verily, Allah is far Richer than you, He is in no need of this money, so do not give, for His sake, what you would dislike for yourselves." It was reported that,

وَلَا تَتَّمِمُوا الْخَبيثَ (Miṣnūn wa-l-ṣanūm bə-ʾakhḍīyēh)  
(and do not aim at that which is bad) meaning, filthy (impure) money,
Ibn Jarir recorded that Al-Bara bin `Azzib commented on Allah's statement,

(O you who believe! Spend of the good things which you have (legally) earned, and of that which We have produced from the earth for you, and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it,) that it was revealed about the Ansar. When the season for harvesting date-trees would start, the Ansar would collect ripe-date branches from their gardens and hang them on a rope erected between two pillars in the Masjid of the Messenger of Allah. The poor emigrant Companions would eat from these dates. However, some of them (Ansar) would also add lesser type of dates in between ripe-date branches, thinking they are allowed to do so. Allah revealed this Ayah about those who did this,

(and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it.)

`Ali bin Abi Talha said that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(you would not accept it save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein) means, "If you had a right on someone who would pay you less than what you gave them, you would not agree until you require more from them to make up the difference. This is why Allah said,

(save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein) meaning, `How do you agree for Me what you do not agree for yourselves, while I have a right to the best and most precious of your possessions' Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir recorded this Hadith and Ibn Jarir added, "And this is the meaning of Allah's statement,
(By no means shall you attain Al-Birr, unless you spend of that which you love)" 4:92

Allah said next,

(وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ)

(And know that Allah is Rich (free of all needs), and worthy of all praise) meaning, "Although Allah commanded you to give away the purest of your money in charity, He is far Richer from needing your charity, but the purpose is that the distance between the rich and the poor becomes less." Similarly, Allah said,

(لَن يَتَالَ اللَّهُ لِحُومُهُمَا وَلَا دَمَّؤُهَا وَلَكِن يَتَالَهُ
الْبَقِىَةَ مِنْكُمْ)

(It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is piety from you that reaches Him) 22:37.

Allah is Rich and free of needing anything from any of His creatures, while all of His creatures stand in need of Him. Allah's bounty encompassing, and what He has never ends. Therefore, whoever gives away good and pure things in charity, let him know that Allah is the Most Rich, His favor is enormous and He is Most Generous, Most Compassionate; and He shall reward him for his charity and multiply it many times. So who would lend to He Who is neither poor nor unjust, Who is worthy of all praise in all His actions, statements, and decisions, of Whom there is neither a deity worthy of worship except Him, nor a Lord other than Him

**Shaytanic Doubts Concerning Spending in Charity**

Allah said,

(الشَّيْطَانُ يَعْدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَا، وَاللَّهُ
يَعْدُكُمْ مَعْفُورَةً مَنَةً وَقَضَائِلًا وَاللَّهُ وَسْعُ عَلِيمٍ)

(Shaytan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fahsha; whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and bounty, and Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,
The Prophet then recited,

«إنّ لِلشّيْطانِ لَمَّا بَانَ آدَمَ، وَلِلملِكِ لَمَّا، فَأَمَّا لِلشّيْطانِ فَإِيعَادَّ بِالشَّرّ، وَتَكْذِيبٌ بِالحَقّ، وَأَمّا لِلملِكِ فَإِيعَادَّ بِالخَيْرِ، وَتَصْدِيقٌ بِالحَقّ، فَمَنْ وَجَدَ ذلِكَ فَلْيَعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ مِنَ اللّهِ، فَلْيَحْمِدَ اللّهَ، وَمَنْ وَجَدَ الآخَرَى فَلْيَتَعَوَّدَ مِنِّ الشّيْطانِ»

(Shaytan has an effect on the son of Adam, and the angel also has an effect. As for the effect of Shaytan, it is by his threatening with evil repercussions and rejecting the truth. As for the effect of the angel, it is by his promise of a good end and believing in the truth. Whoever finds the latter, let him know that it is coming from Allah and let him thank Allah for it. Whoever finds the former, let him seek refuge - with Allah - from Shaytan.)

(Shaytan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fahsha'; whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and bounty)

This is the narration that At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i collected in the book of Tafsir in their Sunan collections. Allah said,

«الشّيْطانُ يُعْدِّكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللّهُ يُعْدِّكُمَ مَعْفُورَةً مَّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا»

(Shaytan threatens you with poverty), so that you hold on to whatever you have and refrain from spending it in Allah's pleasure.

(And orders you to commit Fahsha'), meaning, "Shaytan forbids you from spending in charity because of the false fear of becoming poor, and he encourages evil deeds, sins, indulging in what is prohibited, and immoral conduct." Allah said,
(Whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself) instead of the evil that Shaytan enjoin on you,

(And Bounty) as opposed to the poverty that Shaytan frightens you with,

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.)

The Meaning of Al-Hikmah

Allah said,

(He grants Hikmah to whom He wills.)

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, “That is knowledge of the Qur'an. For instance, the abrogating and the abrogated, what is plain and clear and what is not as plain and clear, what it allows, and what it does not allow, and its parables.” Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn Mas'ud said that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«لا حَسَدَ إِلَّا فِي اثْنَيْنِ: رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللهُ مَالًا فَسُلَطَهُ عَلَى هَلْكَتِهِ فِي الْحَقِّ، وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللهُ حِكْمَةَ فَهُوَ يَقْضِي بِهَا وَيَعْلَمُهَا»

(There is no envy except in two instances: a person whom Allah has endowed with wealth and he spends it righteousness, and a person whom Allah has given Hikmah and he judges by it and teaches it to others.)

This was also collected by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, An-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah.
Allah's statement,

(وَمَا يَذَكَّرُ إِلاَّ أُولُوِّ الْأَلْبَابِ)

(But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding.) means, "Those who will benefit from the advice are those who have sound minds and good comprehension with which they understand the words (of advice and reminder) and their implications."

(وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ ثَقْفَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذَرَاتِكُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ وَمَا لِلْظَّلَمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ - إِنْ نُبْدِعْنَا الْصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعَمَّا هُيَّ وَإِنْ نُخْفِيْنَاهَا وَنَؤْنَوْهَا الْقَرْأَانَ فَهُوَ خَيْرُ لَكُمْ وَيَكْفِرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّبَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ حَبِيرٌ)

(270. And whatever you spend for spendings (e.g., in Sadaqah) or whatever vow you make, be sure Allah knows it all. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.) (271. If you disclose your Sadaqat (almsgiving), it is well; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, that is better for you. (Allah) will expiate you some of your sins. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.)

Allah states that He has perfect knowledge of the good deeds performed by all of His creation, such as charity and various vows, and He rewards tremendously for these deeds, provided they are performed seeking His Face and His promise. Allah also warns those who do not work in his obedience, but instead disobey His command, reject His revelation and worship others besides Him:

(وَمَا لِلْظَّلَمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ)

(And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.) meaning, who will save them from Allah's anger and torment on the Day of Resurrection.

The Virtue of Disclosing or Concealing Charity

Allah said,

(إِنْ نُبْدِعْنَا الْصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعَمَّا هُيَّ)
(If you disclose your Sadaqat, it is well) meaning, "It is well if you make known the charity that you give away."

Allah's statement,

وَإِنْ نُحْفِؤُهَا وَنُؤْتُوهَا الفَقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

(But if you conceal them and give them to the poor, that is better for you.) this indicates that concealing charity is better than disclosing it, because it protects one from showing off and boasting. However, if there is an apparent wisdom behind disclosing the charity, such as the people imitating this righteous act, then disclosing it becomes better than concealing it. The Messenger of Allah said,

الَّذِينَ يَأْتِهمُ الْقُرْآنُ كَالْجَاهِرِ بِالْصَّدَقَةِ، وَالْمُسِيرُ

(He who utters aloud Qur'anic recitation is just like he who discloses charity acts. He who conceals Qur'anic recitation is just like he who conceals charity acts.)

The Ayah indicates that it is better that acts of charity be concealed, as reiterated by the Hadith that the Two Sahihs recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said,
(Allah will give shade to seven on the Day when there will be no shade but His. (They are:) a just ruler, a youth who has been brought up in the worship of Allah, two persons who love each other only for Allah's sake who meet and part in Allah's cause only, a man whose heart is attached to the Masjids from the time he departs the Masjid until he returns to it, a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes are then flooded with tears, a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for illicit intercourse with her and says, 'I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds', and a man who gives charitable gifts so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given.)

Allah's statement,

(وَيُكَفْرُ عَنْكُمْ مَنْ سَيْبَاتِكُمْ)

((Allah) will expiate you some of your sins) means, in return for giving away charity, especially if it was concealed. Therefore, you will gain goodness by your rank being raised, and your sins being forgiven.

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ يَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do) means, "No good deed that you perform escapes His knowledge, and He shall reward for it."
(272. Not upon you (Muhammad) is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves, when you spend not except seeking Allah's Face. And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.) (273. (Charity is) for Fuqara' (the poor), who in Allah's cause are restricted (from travel), and cannot move about in the land (for trade or work). The one who knows them not, thinks that they are rich because of their modesty. You may know them by their mark, they do not beg of people at all. And whatever you spend in good, surely Allah knows it well.) (274. Those who spend their wealth (in Allah's cause) by night and day, in secret and in public, they shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

Giving Charity to Polytheists

Abu ` Abdur-Rahman An-Nasa'i recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said that they, "Disliked giving charity to their polytheist relatives, but were later on allowed to give it to them when they inquired about this matter, and this Ayah was revealed,

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا هُدُوٍّ وَلَكَنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِى مَن يُشَاءُ وَمَا تَنفَّذُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَانَفْسُكُمْ وَمَا تَنفَّذُونَ إِلَّا إِبْتِغَاءَ وَجَهْهُ اللَّهَ وَمَا تَنفَّذُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَوْفَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْثَمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ)

(Not upon you (Muhammad) is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves, when you spend not except seeking Allah's Face. And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.)

Allah's statement,
(And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves) is similar to His other statement,

(مَنْ عَمِلَ صَلِحاً فَلَنْ تَفَسَّدِهِ)

(Whosoever does righteous good deed, it is for (the benefit of) his ownself.)

There are many other similar Ayat in the Qur’an.

Allah said next,

(وَمَا تُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ)

(When you spend not except seeking Allah's Face.)

Al-Hasan Al-Basri commented, “Whenever the believer spends, including what he spends on himself, he seeks Allah's Face with it.” Ata' Al-Khurasani said that the Ayah means, “You give away charity for the sake of Allah. Therefore, you will not be asked about the deeds or wickedness of those who receive it.” This is a sound meaning indicating that when one spends in charity for Allah's sake, then his reward will be with Allah. He will not be asked if the charity unintentionally reached righteous, evil, deserving or undeserving persons, for he will be rewarded for his good intention. The proof to this statement is the Ayah,

(وَمَا تُنفِقُونَ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَوْفَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا نُظَلَّمُونَ)

(And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.)

The Two Sahihs recorded a Hadith by Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said,

«قال رجل: لأتصدّقن الليلة بصدقة، فخرج بصدقته فوضعها في يده زانية، فأصبح الناس يتحدثون: تصدّق على زانية، قال: اللهم لك الحمد على زانية، لأتصدّقن الليلة بصدقة، فخرج بصدقته فوضعها في يده غني، فأصبحوا...»
A man said, "Tonight, I shall give charity." He went out with his charity and (unknowingly) gave it to an adulteress. The next morning the people said that alms were given to an adulteress. The man said, "O Allah! All the praises are for You. (I gave my alms) to an adulteress. Tonight, I shall give alms again." He went out with his charity and (unknowingly) gave it to a rich person. The next morning (the people) said, "Last night, a wealthy person was given alms." He said, "O Allah! All the praises are for You. (I gave alms) to a wealthy man. Tonight, I shall again give charity." So he went out with his charity and (unknowingly) gave it to a thief. The next morning (the people) said, "Last night, a thief was given alms." He said, "O Allah! All the praises are for You. (I have given alms) to an adulteress, a wealthy man and a thief." Then, someone came to him and said, "The alms that you gave away were accepted. As for the adulteress, the alms might make her abstain from adultery. As for the wealthy man, it might make him take a lesson and spend his wealth that Allah has given him. As for the thief, it might make him abstain from stealing.")

Who Deserves Charity

Allah said,

((Charity is) for the poor, who in Allah's cause are restricted (from travel)) meaning, the migrants who migrated to Allah and His Messenger, resided in Al-Madinah and did not have resources that sufficiently provided them with their needs,
(And cannot Darban (move about) in the land) meaning, "They cannot travel in the land to seek means of livelihood." Allah said in other instances using a variation of the word Darban

(وإذا ضرَبْتَمُ في الأرض قلَمَ عَلَيْكُمْ جَنَاحٌ أَن تَقْصُروَا مِن الصَّلَوَةِ)

(And when you (Muslims) travel in the land, there is no sin on you if you shorten the Salah (the prayer)) 4:101, and,

(أنَّ سَيَّكُونُ مَنْكُمْ مَرَضِيْئَ وَعَائِخُوْنَ ضَرِبُونَ في الأرض يَبْتَغُونَ من فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَعَائِخُوْنَ يَقْتَلُونَ في سبيل الله فأَقْرَءُوا)

(He knows that there will be some among you sick, others traveling through the land, seeking of Allah's bounty, yet others fighting in Allah's cause) 73:20.

Allah then said,

(يَحْسَبُهُمُ الجَاهِلُ أُعْنِيَاءَ مِنَ النَّعْفِ)

(The one who knows them not, thinks that they are rich because of their modesty) meaning, those who do not know their situation think that they are well-off, because they are modest in their clothes and speech. There is a Hadith with this meaning that the Two Sahihs recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said,
The Miskin (needy) is not he who wanders about and whose need is sufficed by a date or two, a bite or two or a meal or two. Rather, the Miskin is he who neither has enough resources to sustain him, all the while people are unaware of his need so they do not give to him, nor does he ask people for anything.

Imam Ahmad also recorded this Hadith from Ibn Mas`ud.

Allah's statement,

(You may know them by their mark) means, "Those who have good minds discover their situation," just as Allah said in other instances,

(The mark of them (i.e. of their faith) is on their faces) 48:29, and,

(But surely, you will know them by the tone of their speech!) 47:30. Allah's statement,

(they do not beg of people at all) means, they do not beg and, thus, do not require people to provide them with more than what they actually need. Indeed, those who ask people for help, while having what suffices for their needs, have begged.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Sa`id said, "My mother sent me to the Messenger of Allah to ask him for help, but when I came by him I sat down. The Prophet faced me and said to me,
(Whoever felt satisfied, then Allah will enrich him. Whoever is modest, Allah will make him decent. Whoever is content, then Allah will suffice for him. Whoever asks people, while having a small amount, he will have begged the people.)

Abu Sa`id said, “I said to myself, ‘I have a camel, Al-Yaqutah, and indeed, it is worth more than a small amount.’ And I went back without asking the Prophet for anything.” This is the same wording for this Hadith collected by Abu Dawud and An-Nasa`i.

Allah's statement,

(وَمَا نَنفَقْنَا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعَلِيَّمٍ)

(And whatever you spend in good, surely Allah knows it well) indicates that no charity escapes Him, and He will reward it fully and perfectly on the Day of Resurrection, when it is most desperately needed.

Praise for those who Spend in Charity

Allah said,

(الَّذِينَ يَنفَقُونَ أَمُولَهُمْ بَالِيْلِ وَالْيَتِمَّ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْرَنَّونَ)

(Those who spend their wealth (in Allah's cause) by night and day, in secret and in public, they shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

This Ayah praises those who spend in charity for Allah's sake, seeking His pleasure, day and night, publicly and in secret, including what one spends on his family. The Two Sahih recorded that the Messenger of Allah said to Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas:
You will not spend charity with which you seek Allah's Face, but you will ascend a higher degree and status because of it, including what you put in your wife's mouth.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Mas'ud said that the Prophet said,

«إنَّ المُسْلِمِ إِذَا أَنْفَقَ عَلَى أَهْلِهِ نَفَقةٍ يَحْتَسِبُهَا، كَانَتْ لَهُ صَدَقَةٌ»

(When the Muslim spends on his family while awaiting the reward for it from Allah, it will be written as charity for him.)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim also recorded this Hadith.

Allah said,

(قلِهِمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ)  

(shall have their reward with their Lord), on the Day of Resurrection, as reward for what they spent in acts of obedience. We previously explained the Ayah,

(فَلا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هَمٌّ يَخْرَجُونَ)  

(there shall be no fear on them nor shall they grieve.)

(الذِّينَ يَأَكُلُونَ الرِّبْوَةَ لَا يَقْوُمُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقْوُمُ الْذِّي يُتَخَبَّطُهُ السَّيْطَنُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ ذَلِكَ بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَوُا إِنِّمَا الْبِيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبْوَةِ وَأَحْلَ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ)
The Punishment for Dealing with Riba (Interest and Usury)

After Allah mentioned the righteous believers who give charity, pay Zakah and spend on their relatives and families at various times and conditions, He then mentioned those who deal in usury and illegally acquire people's money, using various evil methods and wicked ways. Allah describes the condition of these people when they are resurrected from their graves and brought back to life on the Day of Resurrection:

(Those who eat Riba will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like the standing of a person beaten by Shaytan leading him to insanity.)

This Ayah means, on the Day of Resurrection, these people will get up from their graves just as the person afflicted by insanity or possessed by a demon would. Ibn `Abbas said, "On the Day of Resurrection, those who consume Riba will be resurrected while insane and suffering from seizures." Ibn Abi Hatim also recorded this and then commented, "This Tafsir was reported from `Awf bin Malik, Sa`id bin Jubayr, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and Muqatil bin Hayyan." Al-Bukhari recorded that Samurah bin Jundub said in the long Hadith about the dream that the Prophet had,

(275. Those who eat Riba will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like the standing of a person beaten by Shaytan leading him to insanity. That is because they say: "Trading is only like Riba," whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba. So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Riba, shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allah (to judge); but whoever returns (to Riba), such are the dwellers of the Fire they will Abide therein.)
We reached a river -the narrator said, "I thought he said that the river was as red as blood"- and found that a man was swimming in the river, and on its bank there was another man standing with a large collection of stones next to him. The man in the river would swim, then come to the man who had collected the stones and open his mouth, and the other man would throw a stone in his mouth.

The explanation of this dream was that the person in the river was one who consumed Riba.

Allah's statement,

(We reached a river -the narrator said, "I thought he said that the river was as red as blood"- and found that a man was swimming in the river, and on its bank there was another man standing with a large collection of stones next to him. The man in the river would swim, then come to the man who had collected the stones and open his mouth, and the other man would throw a stone in his mouth.)

The explanation of this dream was that the person in the river was one who consumed Riba.

Allah's statement, 

(That is because they say: "Trading is only like Riba," whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba) indicates that the disbelievers claimed that Riba was allowed due to the fact that they rejected Allah's commandments, not that they equated Riba with regular trade. The disbelievers did not recognize that Allah allowed trade in the Qur'an, for if they did, they would have said, "Riba is trade." Rather, they said,

(Trading is only like Riba) meaning, they are similar, so why did Allah allow this, but did not allow that, they asked in defiance of Allah's commandments.

Allah's statement, 

(Whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba) might be a continuation of the answer to the disbelievers' claim, who uttered it, although they knew that Allah decided that ruling on trade is different from that of Riba. Indeed, Allah is the Most Knowledgeable, Most Wise, Whose decision is never resisted. Allah is never asked about what He does, while they will be asked. He is knowledgeable of the true reality of all things and the benefits they carry. He knows what benefits His servants, so He allows it for them, and what harms them, so He forbids them from it. He is more merciful with them than the mother with her own infant.)
Thereafter, Allah said,

(فَمَنْ جَاءَ مَوْعِظَةً مَنْ رَبَّهُ فَانْتَهَى فَلَّهُ مَا سَلَفَ
وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ)

(So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Riba, shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allah (to judge),) meaning, those who have knowledge that Allah made usury unlawful, and refrain from indulging in it as soon as they acquire this knowledge, then Allah will forgive their previous dealings in Riba,

(عَفَّا اللَّهُ عَمَّابَا سَلَفَ)

(Allah has forgiven what is past.)

On the day Makkah was conquered the Prophet said,

(وَكَلُّ رَبَّا فِي الجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَوْضُوعٌ تَحْتَ قَدْمَيْهَا
هَاتِينَ، وَأَوْلُ رَبَّا أَضْعَعُ، رَبَّا العَبَّاسِ)

(All cases of Riba during the time of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic period of ignorance) is annulled and under my feet, and the first Riba I annul is the Riba of Al-‘Abbas (the Prophet’s uncle).)

We should mention that the Prophet did not require the return of the interest that they gained on their Riba during the time of Jahiliyyah. Rather, he pardoned the cases of Riba that occurred in the past, just as Allah said,

(قَلْهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ)

(shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allah (to judge).)

Sa`id bin Jubayr and As-Suddi said that,

(قَلْهُ مَا سَلَفَ)

(shall not be punished for the past) refers to the Riba one consumed before it was prohibited. Allah then said,
(But whoever returns) meaning, deals in Riba after gaining knowledge that Allah prohibited it, then that warrants punishment, and in this case, the proof will have been established against such person. This is why Allah said,

(قَالَوْلَنَّكَ أَصْحَبُ النَّارِ هَمُّ فِيهَا خَلِدُونَ)

(such are the dwellers of the Fire they will abide therein forever.)

Abu Dawud recorded that Jabir said, "When

(الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرَّبْوَةَ لَا يَقْوَمُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقْوُمُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ مِنَ النَّاسِ)

(Those who eat Riba will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like a person beaten by Shaytan leading him to insanity) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ لَمْ يَذَرْ المُخَاَبَرَةُ فَلْيَؤْذِنَ بِحَرَبٍ مِنَ اللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ»

(Whoever does not refrain from Mukhabarah, then let him receive a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.)"

Al-Hakim also recorded this in his Mustadrak, and he said, "It is Sahih according to the criteria of Muslim, and he did not record it." Mukhabarah (sharecropping), farming land in return for some of its produce, was prohibited. Muzabanah, trading fresh dates still on trees with dried dates already on the ground, was prohibited. Muhaqalah, which refers to trading produce not yet harvested, with crops already harvested, was also prohibited. These were prohibited to eradicate the possibility that Riba might be involved, for the quality and equity of such items are only known after they become dry.

The subject of Riba is a difficult subject for many scholars. We should mention that the Leader of the Faithful, `Umar bin Al-Khattab, said, "I wished that the Messenger of Allah had made three matters clearer for us, so that we could refer to his decision: the grandfather (regarding inheriting from his grandchildren), the Kalalah (those who leave neither descendants nor ascendants as heirs) and some types of Riba." `Umar was referring to the types of transactions where it is not clear whether they involve Riba or not. The Shari`ah supports the rule that for any matter that is unlawful, then the means to it are also unlawful, because whatever results in the unlawful is unlawful, in the same way that whenever an obligation will not be complete except with something, then that something is itself an obligation.
The Two Sahihs recorded that An-Nu`man bin Bashir said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«إنَّ الحَلَالَ بَيْنٌ وَإِنَّ الحَرَامَ بَيْنَهُ، وَبَيْنَ ذِلْكَ أُمُورٌ مُّشَتَّبَهَاتٌ، فَمَنْ أتَقَى الشَّبَهَاتِ اسْتَبْرَأُ لَدَيْنِهِ وَعَرَضَهُ، وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشَّبَهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي الْحَرَامِ، كَالرَّاعِي يَرْعَى حَوْلَ الْحَمَى يُوَشَّكُ أَنْ يَرْتَعِفِيهِ»

(Both lawful and unlawful things are evident, but in between them there are matters that are not clear. So whoever saves himself from these unclear matters, he saves his religion and his honor. And whoever indulges in these unclear matters, he will have fallen into the prohibitions, just like a shepherd who grazes (his animals) near a private pasture, at any moment he is liable to enter it.)

The Sunan records that Al-Hasan bin `Ali said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«دَعُ مَا يَرْبِّيُكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يَرْبِّيُكَ»

(Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt.)

Ahmad recorded that Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that `Umar said, "The Ayah about Riba was one of the last Ayat to be revealed, and the Messenger of Allah died before he explained it to us. So leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt."

Ibn Majah recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الرَّبَّا سَبْعَانَ حُوْبًا، أَيْسَرُّهَا أَنْ يَنْكُحَ الرَّجُلُ أَمَّهَ»

(Riba is seventy types, the least of which is equal to one having sexual intercourse with his mother.)

Continuing on the subject of prohibiting the means that lead to the unlawful, there is a Hadith that Ahmad recorded in which `Aishah said, "When the Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah about Riba were revealed, the Messenger of Allah went out to the Masjid and recited them and also
prohibited trading in alcohol." The Six collections recorded this Hadith, with the exception of At-Tirmidhi. The Two Sahihs recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْيَهُودَ حُرْمَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّحَوَمُ فَجَمَّلُوهَا فَبَاعُوهَا وَأَكْلُوا أَنْثَمَانَهَا»

(May Allah curse the Jews! Allah forbade them to eat animal fat, but they melted it and sold it, eating its price.)

`Ali and Ibn Mas`ud narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ أَكْلَ الْرِّبَا وَمَوْكِلَةُ وَشَاهِدَيْهِ وَكَاتِبِهْ»

(May Allah curse whoever consumes Riba, whoever pays Riba, the two who are witnesses to it, and the scribe who records it.)

They say they only have witnesses and a scribe to write the Riba contract when they want it to appear to be a legitimate agreement, but it is still invalid because the ruling is applied to the agreement itself, not the form that it appears in. Verily, deeds are judged by their intentions.

(276. Allah will destroy Riba and will give increase for Sadaqat. And Allah likes not the disbelievers, sinners.) (277. Truly, those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, and perform the Salah and give Zakah, they will have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

Allah Does Not Bless Riba

Allah states that He destroys Riba, either by removing this money from those who eat it, or by depriving them of the blessing, and thus the benefit of their money. Because of their Riba,
Allah will torment them in this life and punish them for it on the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

قَلْ لَا يُسَتَّوِى الْخَبِيثُ وَالْطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجِبْكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ

(Say: "Not equal are Al-Khabith (evil things) and At-Tayyib (good things), even though the abundance of Al-Khabith may please you") 5:100

وَيَجْعَلَ الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُ عَلَى بَعْضِ قَيْرَكُمْ جَمِيعًا فِي جَهَنَّمَ

(And put the wicked (disbelievers and doers of evil deeds) one over another, heap them together and cast them into Hell) 8:37 , and,

وَمَا عَاتِيَتُم مِن رَبّا لِيُرْبِبُوا فِي أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلاَ يُرْبِبُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

(And that which you give in gift (to others), in order that it may increase (your wealth by expecting to get a better one in return) from other people's property, has no increase with Allah) 30:39 .

Ibn Jarir said that Allah's statement,

يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرَّبَّوَا

(Allah will destroy Riba) is similar to the statement reported of `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, "Riba will end up with less, even if it was substantial." Imam Ahmad recorded a similar statement in Al-Musnad.

Allah Increases Charity, Just as One Raises His Animal

Allah's statement,

وَيُرْبِبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ
(And will give increase for Sadaqat) means, Allah makes charity grow, or He increases it. Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«من تصدق بعال تعمر من كسب طيب، ولا يقبل الله إلا الطيب، فإن الله يتقبلها بيمينه، ثم يربيها لصاحبه، كما يربي أحدكم قلوه حتى تكون مثل الجبل»

(Whoever gives in charity what equals a date from honest resources, and Allah only accepts that which is good and pure, then Allah accepts it with His right (Hand) and raises it for its giver, just as one of you raises his animal, until it becomes as big as a mountain.)

This was recorded in the book of Zakah.

Allah Does not Like the Disbelieving Sinners

Allah's statement,

(وَلله لا يحب كله كفار أهيم)

(And Allah likes not the disbelievers, sinners) indicates that Allah does not like he who has a disbelieving heart, who is a sinner in tongue and action. There is a connection between the beginning of the Ayah on Riba and what Allah ended it with. Those who consume Riba are not satisfied with the permissible and pure resources that Allah provided them. Instead, they try to illegally acquire people's money by relying on evil methods. This demonstrates their lack of appreciation for the bounty that Allah provides.

Praising Those Who Thank Allah

Allah praised those who believe in His Lordship, obey His commands, thank Him and appreciate Him. They are those who are kind to His creation, establish prayer and give charity due on their money. Allah informed them of the honor that He has prepared for them and that they will be safe from the repercussions of the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

(إن الذين عاملو الصلاحت وأقاموا الصلوات واتوا الزكوة لهم أجرهم عند ربكهم ولا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون)
(O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah) meaning, fear Him and remember that He is watching all that you do.
(And give up what remains of Riba) meaning, abandon the Riba that people still owe you upon hearing this warning,

(إن كُنتُم مُؤمِّنينَ)

(if you indeed have been believers) believing in the trade that He allowed you and the prohibition of Riba. Zayd bin Aslam, Ibn Jurayj, Muqatil bin Hayyan and As-Suddi said that this Ayah was revealed about Bani `Amr bin `Umayr, a sub-tribe of Thaqif, and Bani Al-Mughirah, from the tribe of Bani Makhzum, between whom were outstanding transactions of Riba leftover from time of Jahiliyyah. When Islam came and both tribes became Muslims, Thaqif required Bani Al-Mughirah to pay the Riba of that transaction, but Bani Al-Mughirah said, "We do not pay Riba in Islam." `Attab bin Usayd, the Prophet’s deputy on Makkah, wrote to the Messenger of Allah about this matter. This Ayah was then revealed and the Messenger of Allah conveyed it to `Attab,

(يأتيّهَا الَّذينَ عَامِنُوا اثْقَوَ الله وَذَرُوْا مَا بَقِىَ مِنَ الرَّبَّوَا إن كُنتُم مُؤمِّنينَ)

(فَإِنَّ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا قَادَنَّوا بِحَرَبٍ مَنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ)

(O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from Riba (from now onward), if you are (really) believers. And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.)

They said, "We repent to Allah and abandon whatever is left of our Riba", and they all abandoned it This Ayah serves as a stern threat to those who continue to deal in Riba after Allah revealed this warning.

Riba Constitutes War Against Allah and His Messenger

Ibn Jurayj said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(فَأَدَنَّوْا بِحَرَبٍ)

(then take a notice of war) means, "Be sure of a war from Allah and His Messenger." He also said, "On the Day of Resurrection, those who eat Riba will be told, `take up arms for war.'" He then recited,
(And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.)

`Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said:

(And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.)

Whoever kept dealing with Riba and did not refrain from it, then the Muslim Leader should require him to repent. If he still did not refrain from Riba, the Muslim Leader should cut off his head.

Allah then said:

(But if you repent, you shall have your capital sums. Deal not unjustly) by taking the Riba,

(And you shall not be dealt with unjustly) meaning, your original capital will not diminish.

Rather, you will receive only what you lent without increase or decrease. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Amr bin Al-Ahwas said, "The Messenger of Allah gave a speech during the Farewell Hajj saying;

«إِنَّ كُلَّ رَبَّ في الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، مَوْضُوعٌ عَنْ خَلْقِ كُلِّهِ، لَكُمْ رُؤْوَسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا نَظَلَمُونَ وَلَا نَظَلَمُونَ، وَأَوَلُ رَبَّ مَوْضُوعٍ، رَبًا العَبَّاسُ بَنِ عَبْدِ الْمُتَّلِّبِ مَوْضُوعٌ كُلِّهِ»

(Verily, every case of Riba from the Jahiliyyah is completely annulled. You will only take back your capital, without increase or decrease. The first Riba that I annul is the Riba of Al-`Abbas bin `Abdul-Muttalib, all of it is annulled.)

**Being Kind to Debtors Who Face Financial Difficulties**

Allah said,
(And if the debtor is having a hard time, then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay; but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know.) Allah commands creditors to be patient with debtors who are having a hard time financially,

(And if the debtor is having a hard time (has no money), then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay.)

During the time of Jahiliyyah, when the debt came to term, the creditor would say to the debtor, "Either pay now or interest will be added to the debt."

Allah encouraged creditors to give debtors respite regarding their debts and promised all that is good, and a great reward from Him for this righteous deed,

(But if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know) meaning, if you forfeit your debts and cancel them completely.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Sulayman bin Buraydah said that his father said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say,

(Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will gain charity of equal proportions for each day he gives.)

I also heard the Prophet say,

(Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will earn charity multiplied two times for each day he gives.) I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! I heard you say, 'Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will gain charity of equal proportions for each day he gives.' I also heard you say, 'Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will earn charity multiplied by two times for each day he gives.' He said,
(He will earn charity of equal proportions for each day (he gives time) before the term of the debt comes to an end, and when the term comes to an end, he will again acquire charity multiplied by two times for each day if he gives more time.)

Ahmad recorded that Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi said that Abu Qatadah had a debt on a man, who used to hide from Abu Qatadah when he looked for him to pay what he owed him. One day, Abu Qatadah came looking for the debtor and a young boy came out, and he asked him about the debtor and found out that he was in the house eating. Abu Qatadah said in a loud voice, "O Fellow! Come out, for I was told that you are in the house." The man came out and Abu Qatadah asked him, "Why are you hiding from me?" The man said, "I am having a hard time financially, and I do not have any money." Abu Qatadah said, "By Allah, are you truly facing a hard time?" He said, "Yes." Abu Qatadah cried and said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«من نقص عن غريمه أو محا عنه، كان في ظل
العرش يوم القيامة»

(Whoever gives time to his debtor, or forgives the debt, will be in the shade of the Throne (of Allah) on the Day of Resurrection.)"

Muslim also recorded this Hadith in his Sahih.

Al-Hafiz Abu Ya`la Al-Mawsili recorded that Hudhayfah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أتي الله يعبد من عبديه يوم القيامة قال: ماداً عملت لي في الدنيا قال: ما عملت لك يا رب
مثقال دره في الدنيا أرجوك بها قالها ثلاث مرات قال العبدي عند أخرى يا رب إنك كنت
أعطيتني فضل مال وكنت رجل أبايع الناس»
(On the Day of Resurrection, one of Allah's servants will be summoned before Him and He will ask him, "What deeds did you perform for Me in your life?" He will say, "O Lord! In my life, I have not performed a deed for Your sake that equals an atom," three times. The third time, the servant will add, "O Lord! You granted me wealth and I used to be a merchant. I used to be lenient, giving easy terms to those well-off and giving time to the debtors who faced hard times." Allah will say, "I Am the Most Worthy of giving easy terms. Therefore, enter Paradise.")

Al-Bukhari, Muslim and Ibn Majah also recorded this Hadith from Hudhayfah, and Muslim recorded a similar wording from `Uqbah bin `Amir and Abu Mas`ud Al-Badri. Allah further advised His servants, by reminding them that this life will soon end and all the wealth in it will vanish. He also reminded them that the Hereafter will surely come, when the Return to Him will occur, and that He will hold His creation accountable for what they did, rewarding them or punishing them accordingly. Allah also warned them against His torment,

(And have Taqwa for the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.)

It was reported that this was the last Ayah revealed from the Glorious Qur'an. An-Nasa'i recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "The last Ayah to be revealed from the Qur'an was,

(And have Taqwa for the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.")

This is the same narration reported by Ad-Dahhak and Al-'Awfi from Ibn `Abbas.
O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down. Let a scribe write it down in justice between you. Let him (the debtor) who incurs the liability dictate, and he must have Taqwa of Allah, his Lord, and diminish not anything of what he owes. But if the debtor is
of poor understanding, or weak, or is unable to dictate for himself, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her. And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called (for evidence). You should not become weary to write it (your contract), whether it be small or big, for its fixed term, that is more just with Allah; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves, save when it is a present trade which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, then there is no sin on you if you do not write it down. But take witnesses whenever you make a commercial contract. Let neither scribe nor witness suffer any harm, but if you do (such harm), it would be wickedness in you. So have Taqwa of Allah; and Allah teaches you. And Allah is the All-Knower of everything.)

The Necessity of Writing Transactions That Take Effect Later on

This Ayah is the longest in the Glorious Qur'an. Imam Abu Ja`far bin Jarir recorded that Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that he was told that the Ayah most recently revealed from above the Throne -- the last Ayah to be revealed in the Qur'an -- was the Ayah about debts.

Allah's statement,

(ياْيَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنُتمْ بَدَينٍ إِلَى أَجْلٍ (مُسَمَّى فَاْكْتَبُوهُ)

(O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down) directs Allah's believing servants to record their business transactions when their term is delayed, to preserve the terms and timing of these transactions, and the memory of witnesses, as mentioned at the end of the Ayah,

(ذَلِكَ أَقْسَطٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُقْوَمٌ لِّلشَّهَدَةِ وَأَدْنَى أَلَّا تُرَتَّابُوا

(that is more just with Allah; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves.)

The Two Sahihs recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah's Messenger came to Al-Madinah, while the people were in the habit of paying in advance for fruits to be delivered within one or two years. The Messenger of Allah said,

»مَنْ أَسْلَفَ، قَلْبِهِ أَسْلَفُ فِي كَيْلِ مَعْلُومٍ، وَوَزْنَ مَعْلُومٍ، إِلَى أَجْلٍ مَعْلُومٍ
(Whoever pays money in advance (for dates to be delivered later) should pay it for known specified measure and weight (of the dates) for a specified date.)

Allah's statement,

(فاکْتُبُوهُ)

(write it down) is a command from Him to record such transactions to endorse and preserve their terms. Ibn Jurayj said, "Whoever borrowed should write the terms, and whoever bought should have witnesses." Abu Sa`id, Ash-Sha`bi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Al-Hasan, Ibn Jurayj and Ibn Zayd said that recording such transactions was necessary before, but was then abrogated by Allah's statement,

(فَإِنْ أَمْنَ أَنْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضَاً فَلْيُؤْدِ الَّذِى أُؤْمِنَ
أَمَّنَتَهُ)

(Then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust faithfully.)

Allah's statement,

(ولِيْكْتَبُ بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبًا بَالْعِدَّلِ)

(Let a scribe write it down in justice between you) and in truth. Therefore, the scribe is not allowed to cheat any party of the contract and is to only record what the parties of the contract agreed to, without addition or deletion. Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبُ)

(Let not the scribe refuse to write, as Allah has taught him, so let him write) means, "Those who know how to write should not refrain from writing transaction contracts when asked to do so." Further, let writing such contracts be a type of charity from the scribe for those who are not lettered, just as Allah taught him what he knew not. Therefore, let him write, just as the Hadith stated,

(إِنْ مِنَ الصَّدَقَةِ أَنْ تَعْيِنَ صَانِعًا، أَوْ تَصْنَعَ
لَآَخْرَقً)

(It is a type of charity to help a worker and to do something for a feeble person.)
In another Hadith, the Prophet said,

«مَنْ كَتَمَ عِلْمًا يَعْلُمُهُ، أَلْحَمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِلَجَامٍ مِنْ نَارٍ»

(Whoever kept knowledge to himself will be restrained by a bridle made of fire on the Day of Resurrection.) Mujahid and 'Ata' said that if asked to do so, "The scribe is required to record."

Allah's statement,

وَلَيَمْلِقَ النَّفْسُ عَلَيْهِ الْحَقَّ وَلِيَتْقَ اللَّهُ رَبَّهُ

(Let him (the debtor) who incurs the liability dictate, and he must have Taqwa of Allah, his Lord) indicates that the debtor should dictate to the scribe what he owes, so let him fear Allah,

وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا

(And diminish not anything of what he owes,) meaning, not hide any portion of what he owes.

فَإِنَّ كَانَ النَّفْسُ عَلَيْهِ الْحَقَّ سَمِئًا

(But if the debtor is of poor understanding) and is not allowed to decide on such matters, because he used to waste money, for instance,

أوْ ضَعِيفًا

(Or weak), such as being too young or insane,

أوْ لاَ يُسَتَّطِيعُ أَنْ يُمِلَّ هُوَ

(Or is unable to dictate for himself) because of a disease, or ignorance about such matters,

قلِ يَمِلَّ وَلِيَتْقَ الْعَدَّلُ

(then let his guardian dictate in justice.)
Witnesses Should Attend the Dictation of Contracts

Allah said,

(وَاسْتَشْهَدُوا شَهْيَدَيْنِ مِن رَجَالِكُمْ)

(And get two witnesses out of your own men) requiring witnesses to attend the dictation of contracts to further preserve the contents,

(فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَأَمْرَأَتَانِ)

(And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women) this requirement is only for contracts that directly or indirectly involve money. Allah requires that two women take the place of one man as witness, because of the woman's shortcomings, as the Prophet described. Muslim recorded in his Sahih that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«يَا مَعْشَرُ الْنَّسَاءِ تَصْدَقْنَ أَوْكَثَرْنَ الْاستِغْفَارَ»

«فَإِنَّى رَأَيْتَنَّ أَكْثَرَ أَهْلِ الْنَّارِ»

(O women! Give away charity and ask for forgiveness, for I saw that you comprise the majority of the people of the Fire.)

One eloquent woman said, "O Messenger of Allah! Why do we comprise the majority of the people of the Fire?" He said,

«تَكْثِرُنَّ اللَّعْنَ، وَتَكْفِرُنَّ العَشْرِ، وَمَا رَأَيْتُ مِنْ نَاقِصَاتِ عَقْلٍ وَذِينٍ، أَغْلَبُ لَذٍّ لَّيْذِ لِبَيْبَ مَنْكَنَ»

(You curse a lot and you do not appreciate your mate. I have never seen those who have shortcoming in mind and religion controlling those who have sound minds, other than you.) She said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is this shortcoming in mind and religion?" He said,

«أَمَّا نُقْصَانُ عَقْلِهَا، فَشَهَأَدَةُ امْرَأَتِيْنَ تَعْدِلُ شَهَأَةَ رَجُلٍ، فَهَذَا نُقْصَانُ العَقْلِ، وَتَمْكِثُ الْلِّيَالِيَّ»
(As for the shortcoming in her mind, the testimony of two women equals the testimony of one man, and this is the shortcoming in the mind. As for the shortcoming in the religion, woman remains for nights at a time when she does not pray and breaks the fast in Ramadan)

Allah's statement,

(مِمَّن ترَضأْن مِنَ الشُّهَدَآءِ)

(such as you agree for witnesses) requires competency in the witnesses. Further, Allah's statement,

(آن تَضَلِّل إِحْدَاهُمَا)

(so that if one of them errs) refers to the two women witnesses; whenever one of them forgets a part of the testimony,

(فَنَذِكْرُ إِحْدَاهُمَا الأَخْرَى)

(the other can remind her) meaning, the other woman's testimony mends the shortcoming of forgetfulness in the first woman.

Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَأْبَى الشُّهَدَآءُ إِذا مَا دَعُوا)

(And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called) means, when people are called to be witnesses, they should agree, as Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas stated. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَن يَكْتَبْ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فِي كَتَبِهِ)

(Let not the scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him,
(As for the shortcoming in her mind, the testimony of two women equals the testimony of one man, and this is the shortcoming in the mind. As for the shortcoming in the religion, woman remains for nights at a time when she does not pray and breaks the fast in Ramadan)

Allah's statement,

(مَمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشَّهَادَةِ

(such as you agree for witnesses) requires competency in the witnesses. Further, Allah's statement,

(إِنْ تَضَلَّلْ إِحْدَاهُمَا

(so that if one of them errs) refers to the two women witnesses; whenever one of them forgets a part of the testimony,

(فَتَدْكِرْ إِحْدَاهُمَا الأَخْرَى

(the other can remind her) meaning, the other woman's testimony mends the shortcoming of forgetfulness in the first woman.

Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَأْبَبَ الشَّهَادَةُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا

(And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called) means, when people are called to be witnesses, they should agree, as Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas stated. Similarly, Allah said,
(Let not the scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him, so let him write.)

Some say that this Ayah indicates that agreeing to become a witness is Fard Kifayah (required on at least a part of the Muslim Ummah). However, the majority of the scholars say that the Ayah,

(ولَا يَأْبَيْثَ الشِّهَدَةُ إِذَا مَا دُعِواَ)

(And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called) is referring to testifying to what the witnesses actually witnessed, thus befitting their description of being ‘witnesses’. Therefore, when the witness is called to testify to what he witnessed, he is required to give testimony, unless this obligation was already fulfilled, in which case such testimony becomes Fard Kifayah. Mujahid and Abu Mijraz said, “If you are called to be a witness, then you have the choice to agree. If you witnessed and were called to testify, then come forward.” It was reported that Ibn `Abbas and Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that the obligation includes both cases, agreeing to be a witness and testifying to what one witnessed.

Allah's statement,

(ولَا تَسْمَوْا أَنتُمْ صَغِيرًا أوٌّ كَبِيرًا إِلَى أَجْلِهِ)

(You should not become weary to write it (your contract), whether it be small or large, for its fixed term) perfects this direction from Allah by commanding that the debt be written, whether the amount is large or small. Allah said,

(ولَا تَسْمَوْا)

(You should not become weary) meaning, do not be discouraged against writing transactions and their terms, whether the amount involved is large or small. Allah's statement,

(ذَلِكْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقُومُ لِلْشِّهَدَةِ وَأَدْنَى أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا)

(that is more just with Allah; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves) means, writing transactions that will be fulfilled at a later date is more just with Allah meaning better and more convenient in order to preserve the terms of the contract. Therefore, recording such agreements helps the witnesses, when they see their handwriting - or signatures - later on and thus remember what they witnessed, for it is possible that the witnesses might forget what they witnessed.
(And more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves) meaning, this helps repel any doubt. Since if you need to refer to the contract that you wrote and the doubt will end.

Allah's statement,

(إِلاَّ أَن تَكُونَ تَجْرِيَةٌ حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بِيْنَكُمْ قَلِيسٌ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَا تَكْتَبُوهَا)

(save when it is a present trade which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, then there is no sin on you if you do not write it down) indicates that if the transaction will be fulfilled immediately, then there is no harm if it is not recorded.

As for requiring witnesses to be present in trading transactions, Allah said,

(وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَابِيعَتُمْ)

(But take witnesses whenever you make a commercial contract.)

However, this command was abrogated by,

(فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا قَلِيْوَدْ الَّذِي أُوْثَمَ أَمَنَّتُهُ)

(Then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust faithfully.)

Or, it could be that having witnesses in such cases is only recommended and not obligatory, as evident from the Hadith that Khuzaymah bin Thabit Al-Ansari narrated which Imam Ahmad collected. `Umarah bin Khuzaymah Al-Ansari said that his uncle, who was among the Prophet's Companions, told him that the Prophet was making a deal for a horse with a bedouin man. The Prophet asked the bedouin to follow him so that he could pay him the price of the horse. The Prophet went ahead of the bedouin. The bedouin met several men who tried to buy his horse, not knowing if the Prophet was actually determined to buy it. Some people offered more money for the horse than the Prophet had. The bedouin man said to the Prophet, "If you want to buy this horse, then buy it or I will sell it to someone else." When he heard the bedouin man's words, the Prophet stood up and said, "Have I not bought that horse from you?" The bedouin said, "By Allah! I have not sold it to you." The Prophet said, "Rather, I did buy it from you." The people gathered around the Prophet and the Bedouin while they were disputing, and the bedouin said, "Bring forth a witness who testifies that I sold you the horse." Meanwhile, the
Muslims who came said to the bedouin, "Woe to you! The Prophet only says the truth." When
Khuzaymah bin Thabit came and heard the dispute between the Prophet and the bedouin who
was saying, "Bring forth a witness who testifies that I sold you the horse," Khuzaymah said, "I
bear witness that you sold him the horse." The Prophet said to Khuzaymah, "What is the basis
of your testimony" Khuzaymah said, "That I entrusted you, O Messenger of Allah!" Therefore,
the Messenger made Khuzaymah's testimony equal to the testimony of two men. This was also
recorded by Abu Dawud and An-Nasa®299. Allah's statement,

وَلا يُضـَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلا شَهِيدٌ

(Let neither scribe nor witness suffer (or cause) any harm) also indicates that the scribe and
the witness must not cause any harm, such as, when the scribe writes other than what he is
being dictated, or the witness testifies to other than what he heard or conceals his testimony.
This is the explanation of Al-Hasan and Qatadah."

Allah's statement,

وَإِن تَفَعَّلُوا فَإِنَّهُ فَسُوقُ يَكُمْ

(But if you do (such harm), it would be wickedness in you) means, "If you defy what you were
commanded and commit what you were prohibited, then it is because of the sin that resides
and remains with you; sin that you never release or rid yourselves from."

Allah's statement,

وَاتَقُوا اللّهَ

(So have Taqwa of Allah) means, fear Him, remember His watch over you, implement His
command and avoid what He prohibited,

وَيَعْلَمُكُمْ اللّهُ

(And Allah teaches you.) Similarly, Allah said,

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ نَزَّلَتْ اللّهُ يَجْعَلُ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا

(O you who believe! If you have Taqwa of Allah, He will grant you Furqan (a criterion to judge
between right and wrong)) 8:29, and,
(O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah, and believe in His Messenger, He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and He will give you a light by which you shall walk (straight)) 57:28.

Allah said;

(And Allah is the All-Knower of everything) stating that Allah has perfect knowledge in all matters and in their benefits or repercussions, and nothing escapes His perfect watch, for His knowledge encompasses everything in existence.

(283. And if you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe, then let there be a pledge taken (mortgaging), then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust, and let him have Taqwa of Allah, his Lord. And conceal not the evidence, for he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do.)

What is the `Mortgaging' Mentioned in the Ayah

Allah said,
(And if you are on a journey) meaning, traveling and some of you borrowed some money to be paid at a later date,

(وَلَمْ تَحْدُوْاِ كَاتِبًا)

(and cannot find a scribe) who would record the debt for you. Ibn `Abbas said, "And even if they find a scribe, but did not find paper, ink or pen." Then,

(فَرَهَنَ مَقْبُوضَةٌ)

(let there be a pledge taken (mortgaging)) given to the creditor in lieu of writing the transaction. The Two Sahihs recorded that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah died while his shield was mortgaged with a Jew in return for thirty Wasq (approximately 180 kg) of barley, which the Prophet bought on credit as provisions for his household. In another narration, the Hadith stated that this Jew was among the Jews of Al-Madinah.

Allah said,

(فَإِنَّ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤْدَّ الَّذِي أُوْثِنَ أَمْنَتَنَا)

(then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust (faithfully).)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded, with a sound chain of narration, that Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri said, "This Ayah abrogated what came before it (i.e. that which required recording the transaction and having witnesses present)." Ash-Sha`bi said, "If you trust each other, then there is no harm if you do not write the loan or have witnesses present." Allah's statement,

(وَلَيْبَقَ اللَّهُ رَبَّهُ)

(And let him have Taqwa of Allah) means, the debtor.

Imam Ahmad and the Sunan recorded that Qatadah said that Al-Hasan said that Samurah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«عَلَى الْيَدِ مَا أُحْذَتْ، حَتَّى تُؤْدَيْهَ»

(The hand (of the debtor) will carry the burden of what it took until it gives it back.)

Allah's statement,
(And conceal not the evidence) means, do not hide it or refuse to announce it. Ibn `Abbas and other scholars said, "False testimony is one of the worst of the major sins, and such is the case with hiding the true testimony. This is why Allah said,

(وَلَا تَكْنُمُوا الشَّهَدَةَ)  
(For he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful).

As-Suddi commented, "Meaning he is a sinner in his heart."

This is similar to Allah's statement,

(وَلَا تَكْنُمُ شَهْدَةَ اللَّهِ إِنَّا إِذَا لَمْنَ الْأَثِيمِينَ)  
(We shall not hide testimony of Allah, for then indeed we should be of the sinful) 5:106 .

Allah said,

(يَايُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوْمًا قَوْمًا مُّبَلَّغِينَ، وَلَوْ أَنْ سَكَنْتُمْ فِي قُرُونِكُمْ مَعَ الْأُلُوفِ الْأَقْرَبِينَ أَنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَى بِهِمَا فَلَا تَنْبِئُوا الْهَوْىَ أَنْ تَعْدُلُوا وإنْ تَلْوُوا أَوْ تَعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ يَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا).  
(O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a better Protector to both (than you). So follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you avoid justice; and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do) 4:135  and in this Ayah  2:283  He said,
And conceal not the evidence, for he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do.

(And conceal not the evidence, for he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do.)

Would the Servants be Accountable for What They Conceal in Their Hearts

Allah states that His is the kingship of the heavens and earth and of what and whoever is on or between them, that He has perfect watch over them. No apparent matter or secret that the heart conceals is ever a secret to Him, however minor it is. Allah also states that He will hold His servants accountable for what they do and what they conceal in their hearts. In similar statements, Allah said,

(Say (O Muhammad): "Whether you hide what is in your breasts or reveal it, Allah knows it, and He knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. And Allah is able to do all things) 3:29 , and,

(And conceal not the evidence, for he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do.)
(He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden.)

There are many other Ayat on this subject. In this Ayah 2:284, Allah states that He has knowledge of what the hearts conceal, and consequently, He will hold the creation accountable for whatever is in their hearts. This is why when this Ayah was revealed, it was hard on the Companions, since out of their strong faith and conviction, they were afraid that such reckoning would diminish their good deeds.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "When

(للّهِ مَا في السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا في الأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبْدِّوا مَا في أنفِسِكُمْ أَوْ تُحْفُوْهُ يُحَاسبْكُمْ بِهِ اللّهُ فَيُغَفِّرُ لَمِن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللّهُ عَلَى كُلّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and whether you disclose what is in yourselves or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it. Then He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. And Allah is able to do all things)

was revealed to the Messenger of Allah, it was very hard for the Companions of the Messenger. The Companions came to the Messenger and fell to their knees saying, `O Messenger of Allah! We were asked to perform what we can bear of deeds: the prayer, the fast, Jihad and charity. However, this Ayah was revealed to you, and we cannot bear it.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«أَتَرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَقُولُوا كَمَا قَالَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ: سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَغَفَّرَانَا رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ »

(Do you want to repeat what the People of the Two Scriptures before you said, that is, `We hear and we disobey' Rather, say, `We hear and we obey, and we seek Your forgiveness, O our Lord, and the Return is to You."

When the people accepted this statement and their tongues recited it, Allah sent down afterwards,
The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers and they say, "We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return (of all)."

When they did that, Allah abrogated the Ayah 2:284 and sent down the Ayah,

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error." until the end.

Muslim recorded it with the wording; "When they did that, Allah abrogated it 2:284 and sent down,

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error."

Allah said, `I shall (accept your supplication),'}
(Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians))

Allah said, `I shall (accept your supplication),'

(Our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear."

Allah said, `I shall (accept your supplication),'

(Pardon us and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Mawla (Supporter and Protector) and give us victory over the disbelieving people."

Allah said, `I shall.''

Imam Ahmad recorded that Mujahid said, "I saw Ibn `Abbas and said to him, `O Abu Abbas! I was with Ibn `Umar, and he read this Ayah and cried.' He asked, `Which Ayah.' I said,

(And whether you disclose what is in yourselves or conceal it."

Ibn `Abbas said, `When this Ayah was revealed, it was very hard on the Companions of the Messenger of Allah and worried them tremendously. They said: O Messenger of Allah! We know that we would be punished according to our statements and our actions, but as for what occurs in our hearts, we do not control what is in them.' The Messenger of Allah said,

(Say, `We hear and we obey.') They said, `We hear and we obey.' Thereafter, this Ayah abrogated the previous Ayah,
(The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah), until,

لا يَكْلِفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إلَّا وَسُعُهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا أَكْتَسَبَتْ

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned.)

Therefore, they were pardoned what happens in their hearts, and were held accountable only for their actions."

The Group recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

» إنَّ اللَّهِ تَجاَوَزَ لِي عَنْ أَمْتِي مَا حَدَّثَتْ يِهِ أنفَسَهَا مَالِمْ تَكْتَمَلْ أَوْ تَعْمَلُ

(Allah has pardoned my Ummah for what they say to themselves, as long as they do not utter it or act on it.)

The Two Sahihs recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

» قَالَ الَّهُ: إِذَا هَمْ عَبْدُي بِسَيْنَةٍ فَلَا تَكْتُبُوهَا عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنْ عَمِلَهَا فَاكْتُبُوهَا سِيْنَةَ، وَإِذَا هَمْ بِحَسَنَةٍ فَلْمَ يَعْمِلُهَا فَاكْتُبُوهَا حَسَنَةَ، فَإِنْ عَمِلَهَا فَاكْتُبُوهَا عَشْرًا

(Allah said (to His angels), "If My servant intends to commit an evil deed, do not record it as such for him, and if he commits it, write it for him as one evil deed. If he intends to perform a good deed, but did not perform it, then write it for him as one good deed, and if he performs it, write it for him as ten good deeds."
(عَمَّانُ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ عَمَّانَ بِاللَّهِ وَمُلْكَهُ وَكُلُّهُ وَرَسُّلُهُ لَا تَفَرَّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْ رَسُّلِهِ وَقَالَوْا سُعِينَا وَأَطْعَنَا غُفَرَانِكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ) (لا يَكْلِفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وَسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كُسبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تَؤْخَذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَثْمِنْ عَلَيْنَا إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الْذِّينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْنَا مَا لَا طَائِقَةً لَّنَا بِهِ وَأَعْفَ عَنَا وَأَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنتَ مُؤْلِنَا فَاتِصْرُنَا عَلَى الْقُوَّمِ الْكَفَرِينَ) (285. The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers and they say, "We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return (of all).") (286. Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error, our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians); our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Mawla (Patron, Supporter and Protector) and give us victory over the disbelieving people.") The Hadiths on the Virtue of These Two Ayat, May Allah Benefit Us by Them Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Mas'ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

»مَنْ قَرَأَ بَالآيَتَيْنِ مِنْ أَخْرَ سُورَةَ الْبَقَرَةِ فِي لِيْلَةٍ كَفَّتَاهُ«

(Whoever recites the last two Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah at night, they will suffice for him.)
The rest of the six also recorded similar wording for this Hadith. The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith using various chains of narration, and Imam Ahmad also recorded it.

Muslim recorded that `Abdullah said, "When the Messenger of Allah went on the Isra journey, he ascended to the Sadrat Al-Muntaha in the sixth heaven, where whatever ascends from the earth ends at, and whatever descends from above it ends at.

إِذَا يَغْشَى السَّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَى

(When that covered the lote tree which did cover it!) 53:16 meaning, a mat made of gold.

The Messenger of Allah was then given three things: the five prayers, the last Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah and forgiveness for whoever did not associate anything or anyone with Allah from his Ummah.''

Earlier we mentioned the Hadith regarding the virtues of Surat Al-Fatiyah from Ibn `Abbas which stated, "While the Messenger of Allah was with Jibil, he heard a noise from above. Jibil lifted his sight to the sky and said, `This is a door that was opened just now in heaven, and it was never opened before.' An angel came down through the door to the Prophet and said, "Receive the good news of two lights that you have been given and which no Prophet before you was given: the Opener of the Book (Al-Fatiyah) and the last Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah. You will not read a letter of them, but you will be granted its benefit.'" This Hadith was collected by Muslim and An-Nasa'i, and this is the wording collected by An-Nasa'i.

The Tafsir of the Last Two Ayat of Surat Al-Baqarah

Allah said,

كُلُّ عَمَّانٌ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتَهِ وَكُتُبٍ وَرُسُلٍ لَا نَفْرِقُ بَيْنَ أُحْدَ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ

(Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) 'We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers."

Therefore, each of the believers believes that Allah is the One and Only and the Sustainer, there is no deity worthy of worship except Him and there is no Lord except Him. The believers also believe in all Allah's Prophets and Messengers, in the Books that were revealed from heaven to the Messengers and Prophets, who are indeed the servants of Allah. Further, the believers do not differentiate between any of the Prophets, such as, believing in some of them and rejecting others. Rather, all of Allah's Prophets and Messengers are, to the believers, truthful, righteous, and they were each guided to the path of righteousness, even when some of them bring what abrogates the Law of some others by Allah's leave. Later on, the Law of Muhammad, the Final Prophet and Messenger from Allah, abrogated all the laws of the Prophets before him. So the Last Hour will commence while Muhammad's Law remains the only valid Law, and all the while a group of his Ummah will always be on the path of truth, apparent and dominant. Allah's statement,
(And they say, "We hear, and we obey") means, we heard Your statement, O our Lord, comprehended and implemented it, and adhered to its implications.

((We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord) contains a plea and supplication for Allah's forgiveness, mercy and kindness.

Allah's statement,

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope) means, Allah does not ask a soul what is beyond its ability. This only demonstrates Allah's kindness, compassion and generosity towards His creation. This Ayah is the Ayah that abrogated the Ayah that worried the Companions, that is, Allah's statement,

(And whether you disclose what is in yourselves or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it.)

This indicates that although Allah will question His servants and judge them, He will only punish for what one is able to protect himself from. As for what one cannot protect himself from, such as what one says to himself - or passing thoughts - they will not be punished for that. We should state here that to dislike the evil thoughts that cross one's mind is a part of faith. Allah said next,

(He gets reward for that which he has earned) of good,

(And he is punished for that which he has earned) of evil, that is, concerning the acts that one is responsible for.
Allah then said, mentioning what the believers said while directing His servants to supplicate to Him, all the while promising them that He will answer their supplication:

(ۚربّنَا لا تَؤْخَذْنَا إِن تَسَيَّبْنَا أو أَخْطَانَا)

(“Our Lord! Push us not if we forget or fall into error,”) meaning, “If we forgot an obligation or fell into a prohibition, or made an error while ignorant of its ruling.” We mentioned the Hadith by Abu Hurayrah, that Muslim collected, wherein Allah said, “I shall (accept your supplication).” There is also the Hadith by Ibn `Abbas that Allah said, “I did (accept your supplication).”

(ۚربّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِيلَ عَلَيْنَا إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَّلْتُهُ عَلَى الْذِّينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا)

(Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians),) means, “Even if we were able to perform them, do not require us to perform the difficult deeds as You required the previous nations before us, such as the burdens that were placed on them. You sent Your Prophet Muhammad, the Prophet of mercy, to abrogate these burdens through the Law that You revealed to him, the Hanifi (Islamic Monotheism), easy religion.” Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said that Allah said, “I shall (accept your supplication).” Ibn `Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah said that Allah said, “I did (accept your supplication).” There is the Hadith recorded through various chains of narration that the Messenger of Allah said,

(بُعِثتُ بِالْحَنِيفِيَّةِ السَّمْحَةَ)

(I was sent with the easy Hanifiyyah way.)

(ۚربّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِيلَنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ)

(Our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear) of obligations, hardships and afflictions, do not make us bear what we cannot bear of this.

(ۚربّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِيلَنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ)

(Our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear.)

We mentioned that Allah said, "I shall (accept your supplication)" in one narration, and, "I did (accept your supplication)," in another narration.
(وَعَفَّ عَنَّا)

(Pardon us) meaning, between us and You regarding what You know of our shortcomings and errors.

(وَعَفَّرَ لَنَا)

(And grant us forgiveness) concerning what is between us and Your servants. So do not expose our errors and evil deeds to them.

(وَارْحَمِنَا)

(Have mercy on us) in what will come thereafter. Therefore, do not allow us to fall into another error. They say that those who commit error need three things: Allah's forgiveness for what is between Him and them, that He conceals these errors from His other servants, and thus does not expose them before the servants, and that He grants them immunity from further error." We mentioned before that Allah answered these pleas, "I shall," in one narration and, "I did," in another narration.

(أَنتَ مَوْلَانَا)

(You are our Mawla) meaning, You are our supporter and helper, our trust is in You, You are sought for each and every type of help and our total reliance is on You. There is no power or strength except from You.

(فَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَفِيرِينَ)

(And give us victory over the disbelieving people) those who rejected Your religion, denied Your Oneness, refused the Message of Your Prophet, worshipped other than You and associated others in Your worship. Give us victory and make us prevail above them in this and the Hereafter. Allah said, "I shall," in one narration, and, "I did," in the Hadith that Muslim collected from Ibn `Abbas.

Further, Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Ishaq said that whenever Mu`adh would finish reciting this Surah,

(فَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَفِيرِينَ)

(And give us victory over the disbelieving people), he would say "Amin."