

(Say: "My Lord pays attention to you only because of your invocation to Him...") meaning, He would not care to pay attention to you if you did not worship Him, for He only created mankind to worship Him Alone and to glorify Him morning and evening. His saying:

(فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ)

(But now you have indeed denied.) "O you disbelievers."

(فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا)

(So the torment will be yours forever.) So your denial will remain with you forever, i.e., it will lead to your punishment, doom and destruction in this world and the Hereafter. This also refers to the day of Badr, as it was interpreted by `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, Ubayy bin Ka`b, Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi, Mujahid, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, As-Suddi and others.

(فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا)

(So the torment will be yours forever.) Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: "The Day of Resurrection." And there is no conflict between the two interpretations. This is the end of the Tafsir of Surat Al-Furqan, all praise and thanks are due to Allah.

The Tafsir of Surat Ash-Shu`ara

(Chapter - 26)

Which was revealed in Makkah

(بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ)

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

(طسّم - تِلْكَ ءَايٰتُ الْكِتٰبِ الْمُبِيْنِ - لَعَلَّكَ بٰخِعٌ
نَّفْسَكَ اِلَّا يَكُوْنُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ - اِنْ نَّشَأْ نُنَزِّلْ عَلَيْهِمْ
مِّنَ السَّمٰوٰتِ ءَايَةً فَظَلَّتْ اَعْنَاقُهُمْ لَهَا خٰضِعِيْنَ -
وَمَا يَأْتِيْهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّنَ الرَّحْمٰنِ مُحَدَّثٍ اِلَّا
كَانُوْا عَنْهُ مُعْرِضِيْنَ - فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوْا فَسَئٰتِيْهِمْ اَنْبُوْا

مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ - أَوْلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
كَمْ أَنْبَأْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ - إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ
لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ - وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(1. Ta Sn Mm.) (2. These are Ayat of the Book Mubin.) (3. It may be that you are going Bakhi` yourself, that they do not become believers.) (4. If We will, We could send down to them from the heaven a sign, to which they would bend their necks in humility.) (5. And never comes there unto them a Reminder as a recent revelation from the Most Gracious, but they turn away therefrom.) (6. So, they have indeed denied, then the news of what they mocked at will come to them.) (7. Do they not observe the earth -- how much of every good kind We cause to grow therein) (8. Verily, in this is an Ayah, yet most of them are not believers.) (9. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

The Qur'an and the Disbelievers turning away;

They could be compelled to believe if Allah so willed At the beginning of the explanation of Surat Al-Baqarah we discussed the letters which appear at the beginning of some Surahs. Allah's saying:

(تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ)

(These are the Ayat of the Book Mubin.) means, these are the verses of the Clear Qur'an, i.e. the clear and unambiguous Book which distinguishes between truth and falsehood, misguidance and guidance.

(لَعَلَّكَ بَخِعٌ نَفْسًا)

(It may be that you are going Bakhi` yourself,) means, destroy yourself -- because of your keenness that they should be guided and your grief for them.

(أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(that they do not become believers.) Here Allah is consoling His Messenger for the lack of faith of those among the disbelievers who do not believe in him. This is like the Ayat:

(فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَتٍ)

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

(فَلَعَلَّكَ بَخِعٌ بِنَفْسِكَ عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ إِنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا
بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا)

(Perhaps, you would Bakhi` yourself, over their footsteps, because they believe not in this narration) (18:6). Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Qatadah, `Atiyyah, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan and others said that:

(لَعَلَّكَ بَخِعٌ بِنَفْسِكَ)

(It may be that you are going Bakhi` yourself,) means, `kill yourself.' Then Allah says:

(إِنْ نَشَاءُ نُنزِّلُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ آيَةً فَظَلَّتْ
أَعْنَاقُهُمْ لَهَا خَاضِعِينَ)

(If We will, We could send down to them from the heaven a sign, to which they would bend their necks in humility.) meaning, `if We so willed, We could send down a sign that would force them to believe, but We will not do that because We do not want anyone to believe except by choice.' Allah says:

(وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ
جَمِيعًا أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرَهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And had your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed, all of them together. So, will you then compel mankind, until they become believers.) (10:99)

(وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً)

(And if your Lord had so willed, He could surely, have made mankind one Ummah...) (11:118) But Allah's will has acted, His decree has come to pass, and His proof has been conveyed to mankind by mission of Messengers and the revelation of Books to them. Then Allah says:

(وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ مُحَدَّثٍ إِلَّا
كَانُوا عَنْهُ مُعْرِضِينَ)

(And never comes there unto them a Reminder as a recent revelation from the Most Gracious, but they turn away therefrom.) meaning, every time a Scripture comes from heaven to them, most of the people turn away from it. As Allah says:

(وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.) (12:103)

(يَحْسِرَةَ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا
كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ)

(Alas for mankind! There never came a Messenger to them but they used to mock at him.)
(36:30)

(ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَىٰ كُلًّا مَّا جَاءَ أُمَّةً رَّسُولُهَا
كَذَّبُوهُ)

(Then We sent Our Messengers in succession. Every time there came to a nation their Messenger, they denied him...) (23:44). Allah says here:

(فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا فَسَيَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءُ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ)

(So, they have indeed denied, then the news of what they mocked at will come to them.) meaning, they denied the truth that came to them, so they will come to know the news of the consequences of this denial after a while.

(وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ)

(And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned) (26:227). Then Allah tells those who dared to oppose His Messenger and disbelieve in His Book, that He is the Subduer, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, Who created the earth and caused every good kind of crop, fruit and animal to grow therein. Sufyan Ath-Thawri narrated from a man from Ash-Sha`bi that people are a product of the earth. So whoever enters Paradise is good and noble, and whoever enters Hell is base and vile.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً)

(Verily, in this is an Ayah,) meaning an evidence of the power of the Creator of all things. He spread out the earth and raised the canopy of the heavens, yet despite that the majority of people do not believe, rather they deny Him, His Messengers, and His Books, and they go against His commands doing the things He had prohibited. His saying:

(وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ)

(And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty,) means, the One Who has power over all things, to subdue and control them,

(الرَّحِيمِ)

(the Most Merciful.) means, towards His creation, for He does not hasten to punish the one who sins, but He gives him time to repent, and if he does not, then He seizes him with a mighty punishment. Abu Al-`Aliyah, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Ibn Ishaq said: "He is Almighty in His punishment of those who went against His commands and worshipped others besides Him." Sa`id bin Jubayr said: "He is Most Merciful towards those who repent to Him and turn to Him."

(وَإِذْ نَادَى رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَنْتَ الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ -
قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَلَا يَتَّقُونَ - قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ
يُكذِّبُون - وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِي وَلَا يَنْطَلِقُ لِسَانِي
فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَارُونَ - وَلَهُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَنْبٍ فَأَخَافُ أَنْ
يَقْتُلُون - قَالَ كَلَّا فَادْهَبَا بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ
مُسْتَمِعُونَ - فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَا إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ - أَنْ أَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ - قَالَ أَلَمْ
تُرَبِّكُنَا فِيْنَا وَلِيدًا وَلِئِثَّتْ فِيْنَا مِنْ عُمْرِكَ سِنِينَ -
وَفَعَلْتَ فَعَلْتِكَ الَّتِي فَعَلْتَ وَأَنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ -
قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَا إِذَا وَأَنَا مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ - فَفَرَرْتُ مِنْكُمْ
لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِي رَبِّي حُكْمًا وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ
الْمُرْسَلِينَ - وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ
بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(10. And (remember) when your Lord called Musa (saying): "Go to the people who are wrongdoers.") (11. "The people of Fira`wn. Will they not have Taqwa") (12. He said: "My Lord! Verily, I fear that they will deny me,") (13. "And my breast straitens, and my tongue expresses not well. So send for Harun.") (14. "And they have a charge of crime against me, and I fear they will kill me. ") (15. (Allah) said: "Nay! Go you both with Our signs. Verily, We shall be with you, listening.") (16. "And go both of you to Fira`wn, and say: ` We are the Messengers of the Lord of Al-` Alamin,") (17. ` So allow the Children of Israel to go with us.") (18. (Fir`awn) said (to Musa): "Did we not bring you up among us as a child And you did dwell many years of your life with us.") (19. "And you did your deed, which you did. While you were one of the ingrates.") (20. Musa said: "I did it then, when I was in error.") (21. "So, I fled from you when I feared you. But my Lord has granted me Hukm, and made me one of the Messengers.") (22. "And this is the past favor with which you reproach me, -- that you have enslaved the Children of Israel.")

Between Musa and Fir`awn

Allah tells us what He commanded His servant, son of `Imran and Messenger Musa, peace be upon him, who spoke with Him, to do, when He called him from the right side of the mountain, and conversed with him, and chose him, sent him, and commanded him to go to Fir`awn and his people. Allah says:

(وَإِذْ نَادَى رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰ أَنِ أَنْتَ الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ -
 قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَلَا يَتَّقُونَ - قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ
 يُكَذِّبُون - وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِي وَلَا يَنْطَلِقُ لِسَانِي
 فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَارُونَ - وَلَهُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَنْبٍ فَأَخَافُ أَنْ
 يَقْتُلُون)

(And when your Lord called Musa: "Go to the people who are wrongdoers. The people of Fir`awn. Will they not have Taqwa" He said: "My Lord! Verily, I fear that they will deny me, And my breast straitens, and my tongue expresses not well. So send for Harun. And they have a charge of crime against me, and I fear they will kill me.") So, Musa asked Allah to remove these difficulties for him, as he said in Surah Ta Ha:

(قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي - وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي
)

(Musa said: "O my Lord! Open for me my chest. And ease my task for me.") (20:25-26) until:

(قَدْ أُوتِيتَ سُؤْلَكَ يَا مُوسَىٰ)

(You are granted your request, O Musa!) (20:36)

(وَلَهُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَنْبٍ فَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَقْتُلُونِ)

(And they have a charge of crime against me, and I fear they will kill me.) because he had killed that Egyptian, which was the reason that he left the land of Egypt.

(قَالَ كَلَّا)

((Allah) said: "Nay!...") Allah told him: do not be afraid of anything like that. This is like the Ayah,

(سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكَمَا سُلْطٰنًا)

(Allah said: "We will strengthen your arm through your brother, and give you both power) meaning, proof;

(فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا بِآيٰتِنَا أَنْتُمَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمَا
الغٰلِبُونَ)

(so they shall not be able to harm you, with Our signs, you two as well as those who follow you will be the victors) (28:35),

(فَاذْهَبَا بِآيٰتِنَا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُسْتَمِعُونَ)

(Go you both with Our signs. Verily, We shall be with you, listening.) This is like the Ayah,

(إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ)

(I am with you both, hearing and seeing) (20:46). Meaning, 'I will be with you by My protection, care, support and help.'

(فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَا إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ)

(And go both of you to Fir`awn, and say: `We are the Messengers of the Lord of the all that exists.') This is like the Ayah,

(إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ)

(Verily, we are both Messengers of your Lord) (20:47). which means, `both of us have been sent to you,'

(أَنْ أَرْسِلَ مَعَنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(So allow the Children of Israel to go with us.) Meaning, `let them go, free them from your captivity, subjugation and torture, for they are the believing servants of Allah, devoted to Him, and with you they are in a position of humiliating torture.' When Musa said that to him, Fir`awn turned away and ignored him completely, regarding him with scorn and thinking little of him. Saying:

(أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا)

(Did we not bring you up among us as a child) meaning, we brought you up among us, in our home and on our bed, we nourished you and did favors for you for many years, and after all that you responded to our kindness in this manner: you killed one of our men and denied our favors to you.' So he said to him:

(وَأَنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(While you were one of the ingrates.) meaning, one of those who deny favors. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam, and was the view favored by Ibn Jarir.

(قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَا إِذَا)

((Musa) said: "I did it then...") meaning, at that time,

(وَأَنَا مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ)

(when I was in error.) meaning, `before revelation was sent to me and before Allah made me a Prophet and sent me with this Message.'

(فَقَرَرْتُ مِنْكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِي رَبِّي حُكْمًا
وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ)

(So, I fled from you when I feared you. But my Lord has granted me Hukm, and made me one of the Messengers.) means, `the first situation came to an end and another took its place. Now Allah has sent me to you, and if you obey Him, you will be safe, but if you oppose Him, you will be destroyed.' Then Musa said:

(وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(And this is the past favor with which you reproach me, -- that you have enslaved the Children of Israel.) meaning, `whatever favors you did in bringing me up are offset by the evil you did by enslaving the Children of Israel and using them to do your hard labor. Is there any comparison between your favors to one man among them and the evil you have done to all of them What you have mentioned about me is nothing compared to what you have done to them.'

(قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ - قَالَ رَبُّ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ
- قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ - قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ
ءَابَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ - قَالَ إِنْ رَسُولِكُمُ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ
إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ - قَالَ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(23. Fir`awn said: "And what is the Lord of Al-`Alamin") (24. (Musa) said: "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, if you seek to be convinced with certainty.") (25. (Fir`awn) said to those around: "Do you not hear (what he says)") (26. (Musa) said: "Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!") (27. (Fir`awn) said: "Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!") (28. (Musa) said: "Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!")

**Allah tells us about the disbelief, rebellion, oppression and denial
of Fir`awn, as He says:**

(وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

((Fir`awn said:) "And what is the Lord of the `Alamin") This is because he used to say to his people:

(مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي)

(I know not that you have a god other than me.) (28:28)

(فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَاطَاعُوهُ)

(Thus he fooled his people, and they obeyed him.) (43:54) They used to deny the Creator, may He be glorified, and they believed that they had no other lord than Fir`awn. When Musa said to them: "I am the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds," Fir`awn said to him, "Who is this who you are claiming is the Lord of Al-`Alamin other than me" This is how it was interpreted by the scholars of the Salaf and the Imams of later generations. As-Suddi said, "This Ayah is like the Ayah,

(قَالَ فَمَنْ رَبُّكُمَا يَمُوسَى - قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى)

((Fir`awn) said: "Who then, O Musa, is the Lord of you two" He said: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright.") (20:49-50) Those among the philosophers and others who claimed that this was a question about the nature or substance)of Allah(are mistaken. Fir`awn did not believe in the Creator in the first place, so he was in no position to ask about the nature of the Creator; he denied that the Creator existed at all, as is apparent from the meaning, even though proof and evidence had been established against him. When Fir`awn asked him about the Lord of Al-`Alamin, Musa said:

(قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا)

((Musa) said: "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them...") meaning, the Creator, Sovereign and Controller of all that, their God Who has no partner or associate. He is the One Who has created all things. He knows the higher realms and the heavenly bodies that are in them, both those that are stationary and those that move and shine brightly. He knows the lower realms and what is in them; the oceans, continents, mountains, trees, animals, plants and fruits. He knows what is in between the two realms; the winds, birds, and whatever is in the air. All of them are servants to Him, submitting and humbling themselves before Him.

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ)

(if you seek to be convinced with certainty.) means, if you have believing hearts and clear insight. At this, Fir`awn turned to the chiefs and leaders of his state around him, and said to them -- mockingly expressing his disbelief in Musa:

(أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ)

("Do you not hear") meaning, `are you not amazed by what this man is claiming -- that you have another god other than me' Musa said to them:

(رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأُولِينَ)

(Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!) meaning, the One Who created you and your forefathers, those who came before Fir`awn and his time.

(قَالَ)

(He said) that is, Fir`awn said:

(إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمْ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ)

(Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!) meaning, there is no sense in his claim that there is any god other than me!

(قَالَ)

((Musa) said) -- to those in whose hearts Fir`awn had planted doubts:

(رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!) `He is the One Who made the east the place where the heavenly bodies rise, and made the west the place where they set; this is the system to which He has subjugated all the heavenly bodies, stationary and moving. If what Fir`awn claims is true, that he is your lord and your god, then let him turn things around so that the heavenly bodies set in the east and rise in the west.' This is similar to the Ayah,

(الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ)

(who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord, because Allah had given him the kingdom When Ibrahim said: "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. So cause it to rise from the west.") (2:258) So when Fir`awn was defeated in debate, he resorted to the use of his force and power, believing that this would be effective in dealing with Musa, peace be upon him, so he said, as Allah tells us:

(قَالَ لئن اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي لأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ
 الْمَسْجُونِينَ - قَالَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ - قَالَ
 فَأْتِ بِهِ إن كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ
 فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ
 لِلنَّظِيرِينَ قَالَ لِلْمَلَأِ حَوْلَهُ إِنَّ هَذَا لَسِحْرٌ عَلِيمٌ
 يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ فَمَاذَا
 تَأْمُرُونَ قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَبْعَثْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ
 حَاشِرِينَ يَاأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سِحَارٍ عَلِيمٍ)

(29. He said: "If you choose a god other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners.") (30. He said: "Even if I bring you something manifest") (31. He said: "Bring it forth then, if you are of the truthful!") (32. So he threw his stick, and behold, it was a serpent, manifest.) (33. And he drew out his hand, and behold, it was white to all beholders!) (34. He said to the chiefs around him: "Verily, this is indeed a well-versed sorcerer.") (35. "He wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery: what is it then that you command") (36. They said: "Put him off and his brother (for a while), and send callers to the cities;") (37. "To bring up to you every well-versed sorcerer.")

After the Rational Proof, Fir`awn resorts to Force

When proof had been established against Fir`awn, clearly and rationally, he resorted to using force against Musa, thinking that after this there would no further room for discussion. So he said:

(لئن اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي لأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ
 الْمَسْجُونِينَ)

(If you choose a god other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners.) To this, Musa responded:

(أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ)

(Even if I bring you something manifest) meaning, clear and definitive proof.

قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ - فَأَلْقَىٰ
عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ)

(Fir`awn said: "Bring it forth then, if you are of the truthful!" So he threw his stick, and behold, it was a serpent, manifest.) meaning, it was very clear and obvious, with a huge body and a big mouth, terrifying in appearance.

(وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ)

(And he drew out his hand,) meaning, from his sleeve,

فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنّٰظِرِيْنَ)

(and behold, it was white to all beholders!) It was shining like a piece of the moon. Since Fir`awn was already doomed, he hastened to stubborn denial, and said to the chiefs around him:

(إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسِحْرٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, this is indeed a well-versed sorcerer.) One who knows a great deal of magic or witchcraft. Fir`awn was trying to convince them that this was sorcery, not a miracle. Then he provoked them against Musa, trying to make them oppose him and disbelieve in him, and said:

(يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ)

(He wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery...) meaning, `he wants to capture the people's hearts and win them over by doing this, so that they will support him, and help him and follow him, and he will defeat you in your own land and take the land from you. So advise me, what should I do with him'

قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَبْعَثْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ
- يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سِحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ)

(They said: "Put him off and his brother, and send callers to the cities; to bring up to you every well-versed sorcerer.") meaning, `delay him and his brother until you gather together all the sorcerers from every city and region of your kingdom so that they may confront him and produce something like he produces, then you will defeat him and have the victory.' So Fir`awn did as they suggested, which is what Allah decreed would happen to them, so that all the

people would gather in one place and the signs and proof of Allah would be made manifest before them all in one day.

(فَجُمِعَ السَّحَرَةُ لِمِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ - وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُجْتَمِعُونَ - لَعَلْنَا نَتَّبِعُ السَّحَرَةَ إِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ - فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَإِنَّا لَنَا لِأَجْرٍ إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ - قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ - قَالَ لَهُمْ مُوسَى أَلْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُلقُونَ - فَأَلْقَوْا حِبَلَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ وَقَالُوا بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْغَالِبُونَ - فَأَلْقَى مُوسَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ - فَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سَجْدِينَ - قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ)

(38. So, the sorcerers were assembled at a fixed time on a day appointed.) (39. And it was said to the people: "Are you (too) going to assemble") (40. "That we may follow the sorcerers if they are the winners.") (41. So, when the sorcerers arrived, they said to Fir`awn: "Will there surely be a reward for us if we are the winners") (42. He said: "Yes, and you shall then verily be of those brought near (to myself).") (43. Musa said to them: "Throw what you are going to throw!") (44. So, they threw their ropes and their sticks, and said: "By the might of Fir`awn, it is we who will certainly win!") (45. Then Musa threw his stick, and behold, it swallowed up all that they falsely showed!) (46. And the sorcerers fell down prostrate.) (47. Saying: "We believe in the Lord of Al-`Alamin.") (48. "The Lord of Musa and Harun.")

Between Musa, peace be upon him, and the Sorcerers Allah describes the actual encounter between Musa, peace be upon him, and the Egyptians in Surat Al-A`raf, Surah Ta Ha, and in this Surah.

The Egyptians wanted to extinguish the Light of Allah with their words, but Allah insisted that His Light should prevail even though the disbelievers disliked that. This is the issue of disbelief and faith; they never confront one another but faith always prevails:

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ
زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمْ الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ)

(Nay, We fling the truth against the falsehood, so it destroys it, and behold, it disappears. And woe to you for that which you ascribe.) (21:18)

(وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ)

(And say: "Truth has come and falsehood has vanished.") (17:81) The sorcerers of Egypt were the most skilled in the art of illusion, but when a huge group of them gathered from all corners of the land, and the people came together on that day whose exact numbers are known to Allah Alone, one of them said:

(لَعَلَّنَا نَتَّبِعُ السَّحَرَةَ إِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ)

(That we may follow the sorcerers if they are the winners.) They did not say: `we will follow the truth, whether it rests with the sorcerers or with Musa;' the people were followers of the religion of their king.

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ)

(So, when the sorcerers arrived,) means, when they reached the court of Fir`awn, and a pavilion had been erected for him. There he gathered his servants, followers, administrators, and provincial leaders, and the soldiers of his kingdom. The sorcerers stood before Fir`awn, asking him to treat them well and bring them closer to him if they prevailed in this matter which he had brought them together for. They said:

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَإِنَّا لَنَا لِأَجْرٍ
إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ - قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَمِنَ
الْمُقَرَّبِينَ)

("Will there surely be a reward for us if we are the winners" He said: "Yes, and you shall then verily be of those brought near.") meaning, `and you will be given more than what you are asking for; I will make you among those who are close to me, those who sit with me.' So they went back to their places:

قَالُوا يَمُوسَىٰ إِمَّا أَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ نَكُونَ أَوْلَ
مَنْ أَلْقَىٰ قَالَ بَلْ أَلْقُوا

(They said: "O Musa! Either you throw first or we be the first to throw" (Musa) said: "Nay, throw you (first)!") (20:65-66). Here the incident is described more briefly. Musa said to them:

أَلْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُلقُونَ فَأَلْقَوْا حِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ
وَقَالُوا بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْغَالِبُونَ

("Throw what you are going to throw!" So, they threw their ropes and their sticks, and said: "By the might of Fir`awn, it is we who will certainly win!") This is what the ignorant masses say when they do something: `this is by the virtue of So-and-so!' In Surat Al-A`raf Allah mentioned that they:

سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرَهُبُوهُمْ وَجَاءُوا
بِسِحْرِ عَظِيمٍ

(They bewitched the eyes of the people, and struck terror into them, and they displayed a great magic) (7:116). And in Surah Ta Ha He said:

فَإِذَا حِبَالُهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ
أَنَّهَا تَسْعَىٰ

(Then behold! their ropes and their sticks, by their magic, appeared to him as though they moved fast.) until Allah saying:

وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّحَرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ

(and the magician will never be successful, whatever the amount (of skill) he may attain) (20:69). And here Allah says:

فَأَلْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ

(Then Musa threw his stick, and behold, it swallowed up all that they falsely showed!) by snatching up and catching them from every corner and swallowing them up, and it did not leave any of them untouched. Allah says:

(فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(Thus truth was confirmed, and all that they did was made of no effect.) until

(رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ)

(The Lord of Musa and Harun.) (7:118-122) This was a very serious matter, furnishing decisive proof leaving no room for any excuse. Fir`awn's supporters, who sought and hoped that they would prevail over Musa, were themselves defeated. At that moment they believed in Musa and prostrated to Allah, the Lord of Al` Alamin Who sent Musa and Harun with the truth and an obvious miracle. Fir`awn was defeated in a manner the likes of which the world had never seen, but he remained arrogant and stubborn despite the clear evidence, may the curse of Allah and the angels and all of mankind be upon him. He resorted to arrogance and stubbornness and propagating falsehood. He began to issue threats against them, saying:

(إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ)

(Verily, he is your chief who has taught you magic) (20:71).

(إِنَّ هَذَا لَمَكْرٌ مَّكْرْتُمُوهُ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ)

(Surely, this is a plot which you have plotted in the city) (7:123).

(قَالَ ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَادِّنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ
الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ لَأَقْطَعَنَّ
أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ وَلَأَصْلَبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ
- قَالُوا لَا ضَيْرَ إِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ - إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ
أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبَّنَا خَطِيئَتَنَا أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(49. He said: "You have believed in him before I give you leave. Surely, he indeed is your chief, who has taught you magic! So verily, you shall come to know. Verily, I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify you all.") (50. They said: "No harm! Surely, to our Lord we are to return.") (51. "Verily, we really hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins, as we are the first of the believers.")

Between Fir`awn and the Sorcerers

His threats against them resulted only in an increase in their faith and submission to Allah, for the veil of disbelief had been lifted from their hearts and the truth became clear to them because they knew something that their people did not: that what Musa had done could not have been done by any human being unless Allah helped him, making it proof and an evidence of the truth of what he had brought from his Lord. Then Fir`awn said to them:

(ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذِنَ لَكُمْ)

(You have believed in him before I give you leave.) meaning, `you should have asked my permission for what you did, and you did not consult with me; if I had given you permission you could have done it, and if I did not allow you, you should not have done it, for I am the ruler and the one to be obeyed.'

(إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ)

(Surely, he indeed is your chief, who has taught you magic!) This is stubborn talk, and anyone can see that it is nonsense, for they had never met Musa before that day, so how could he have been their chief who taught them how to do magic No rational person would say this. Then Fir`awn threatened to cut off their hands and feet, and crucify them. They said:

(لَا ضَيْرَ)

(No harm!) meaning, `no problem, that will not harm us and we do not care.'

(إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ)

(Surely, to our Lord we are to return.) means, `the return of us all is to Allah, may He be glorified, and He will never allow the reward of anyone who has done good to be lost. What you have done to us is not hidden from Him, and He will reward us in full for that.' So they said:

(إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطِيئَاتِنَا)

(Verily, we really hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins,) `the sins we have committed and the magic you forced us to do.'

(أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(as we are the first of the believers,) means, because we are the first of our people, the Egyptians, to believe. So he killed them all.

(وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي إِنَّكَ مَتَّبِعُونَ - فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِرْعَوْنَ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَاشِرِينَ - إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ - وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَائِظُونَ - وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَازِرُونَ - فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ جَبَّتٍ وَعُيُونٍ - وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ - كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(52. And We revealed to Musa, saying: "Depart by night with My servants, verily, you will be pursued.") (53. Then Fir`awn sent callers to (all) the cities.) (54. (Saying): "Verily, these indeed are but a small band.") (55. "And verily, they have done what has enraged us.") (56. "But we are a host all assembled, amply forewarned.") (57. So, We expelled them from gardens and springs,) (58. Treasures, and every kind of honorable place.) (59. Thus and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them.)

The Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt

After Musa stayed in Egypt for a long time, and the proof of Allah was established against Fir`awn and his chiefs, yet they were still arrogant and stubborn, then there was nothing left for them but punishment and vengeance. So Allah commanded Musa, peace be upon him, to take the Children of Israel out of Egypt by night, and take them wherever he would be commanded. So Musa, peace be upon him, did as he was commanded by his Lord, may He be glorified, and he led them forth after they had borrowed an abundance of jewelry from the people of Fir`awn. As more than one of the scholars of Tafsir have said, they left when the moon was rising, and Mujahid, may Allah have mercy on him, said that the moon was eclipsed that night. And Allah knows best. Musa asked about the grave of Yusuf (Prophet Joseph), peace be upon him, and an old woman from among the Children of Israel showed him where it was, so he took the remains with them, and it was said that they were among the things that were carried by Musa himself, may peace be upon them both. It was also said that Yusuf, peace be upon him, had left instructions in his will that if the Children of Israel ever left Egypt, they should take his remains with them. The following morning, when there was nobody to be found in the Israelite quarters, Fir`awn became angry and his anger intensified since Allah had decreed that he was to be destroyed. So he quickly sent his callers to all his cities, i.e., to mobilize his troops and bring them together, and he called out to them:

(إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ)

(Verily, these) meaning, the Children of Israel,

(لَشِرْذِمَةً قَلِيلُونَ)

(indeed are but a small band.) meaning, a small group.

(وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَائِظُونَ)

(And verily, they have done what has enraged us.) means, `every time we have heard anything about them, it has upset us and made us angry.'

(وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَازِرُونَ)

(But we are a host all assembled, amply forewarned.) means, `we are constantly taking precautions lest they betray us.' Some of the Salaf read this with the meaning, "we are constantly forewarned and forearmed. And I want to destroy them to the last man, and destroy all their lands and property." So he and his troops were punished with the very things he sought to inflict upon the Children of Israel. Allah says:

(فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ مِّن جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ - وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ
كَرِيمٍ)

(So, We expelled them from gardens and springs, treasures, and every kind of honorable place.) meaning, they were thrown out of those blessings and into Hell, and they left behind the honorable places, gardens and rivers, wealth, provision, position and power in this world:

(كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(Thus and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them.) This is like the Ayat:

(وَأَوْرَثْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ مَشْرِقَ
الْأَرْضِ وَمَغْرِبَهَا الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا)

(And We made the people who were considered weak to inherit the eastern parts of the land and the western parts thereof which We have blessed) (7: 137).

(وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ)

(And We wished to do a favor to those who were weak in the land, and to make them rulers and to make them the inheritors) The two Ayat thereafter:)28:5-6(.

(فَأَتَّبَعُوهُمْ مُشْرِقِينَ - فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَا الْجَمْعَانَ قَالَ
أَصْحَابُ مُوسَى إِنَّا لَمُدْرِكُونَ - قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ
رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ - فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى مُوسَى أَنْ اضْرِبْ
بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَانْفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ
الْعَظِيمِ - وَأَزَلَفْنَا تَمَّ الْأَخْرِينَ - وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَى
وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا الْأَخْرِينَ - إِنَّ فِي
ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ
لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(60. So, they pursued them at sunrise.) (61. And when the two hosts saw each other, the companions of Musa said: "We are sure to be overtaken.") (62. (Musa) said: "Nay, verily with me is my Lord. He will guide me.") (63. Then We revealed to Musa (saying): "Strike the sea with your stick." And it parted, and each separate part became like huge mountain.) (64. Then We brought near the others to that place.) (65. And We saved Musa and all those with him.) (66. Then We drowned the others.) (67. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (68. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

Fir`awn's Pursuit and Expulsion of the Children of Israel, and how He and His People were drowned

More than one of the scholars of Tafsir said that Fir`awn set out with a huge group, a group containing the leaders and entire government of Egypt at that time, i.e., the decision-makers and influential figures, princes, ministers, nobles, leaders and soldiers.

(فَأَتَّبَعُوهُمْ مُشْرِقِينَ)

(So, they pursued them at sunrise.) means, they caught up with the Children of Israel at sunrise.

(فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَا الْجَمْعَانَ)

(And when the two hosts saw each other,) means, each group saw the other. At that point,

(قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ)

(the companions of Musa said: "We are sure to be overtaken.") This was because Fir`awn and his people caught up with them on the shores of the Red Sea, so the sea was ahead of them and Fir`awn and his troops were behind them. Hence they said:

(قَلَمَّا تَرَآءَا الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا
لَمُدْرَكُونَ - قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ)

("We are sure to be overtaken." (Musa) said: "Nay, verily with me is my Lord. He will guide me.") meaning, 'nothing of what you fear will happen to you, for Allah is the One Who commanded me to bring you here, and He does not go back on His promise.' Harun, peace be upon him, was in the front, with Yusha` bin Nun and a believer from the family of Fir`awn, and Musa, peace be upon him, was in the rear. More than one of the scholars of Tafsir said that they stood there not knowing what to do, and Yusha` bin Nun or the believer from the family of Fir`awn said to Musa, peace be upon him, "O Prophet of Allah, is it here that your Lord commanded you to bring us" He said: "Yes." Then Fir`awn and his troops drew near and were very close indeed. At that point Allah commanded his Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, to strike the sea with his staff, so he struck it, and it parted, by the will of Allah. Allah says:

(فَانفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(And it parted, and each separate part became like huge mountain.) meaning, like mighty mountains. This was the view of Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah and others. `Ata' Al-Khurasani said, "It refers to a pass between two mountains." Ibn `Abbas said, "The sea divided into twelve paths, one for each of the tribes." As-Suddi added, "And in it there were windows through which they could see one another, and the water was erected like walls." Allah sent the wind to the sea bed to make it solid like the land. Allah says:

(فَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَّا تَخَافُ
دَرْكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ)

(and strike a dry path for them in the sea, fearing neither to be overtaken nor being afraid) (20:77). And here He says:

(وَأَزَلَقْنَا تَمَّ الْأَخْرِينَ)

(Then We brought near the others to that place.) Ibn `Abbas, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Qatadah and As-Suddi said:

(وَأَزَلَقْنَا)

(Then We brought near) means, "We brought Fir`awn and his troops near to the sea."

(وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا
الْآخَرِينَ)

(And We saved Musa and all those with him. Then We drowned the others.) meaning: `We saved Musa and the Children of Israel and whoever followed their religion, and none of them were destroyed, but Fir`awn and his troops were drowned and not one of them remained alive, but was destroyed.' Then Allah says:

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign,) meaning, this story with its wonders and tales of aid to the believing servants of Allah is definitive proof and evidence of Allah's wisdom.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.) The explanation of this phrase has already been discussed above.

(وَإِتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ - إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ - قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَنْظِلُّ لَهَا عَافِينَ -
قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ - أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ
يَضُرُّونَ - قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ -
قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - أَنْتُمْ وَاَبَاؤُكُمْ
الْأَقْدَمُونَ - فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(69. And recite to them the story of Ibrahim.) (70. When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship") (71. They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted.") (72. He said: "Do they hear you when you call") (73. "Or do they benefit you or do they cause

harm") (74. They said: "(Nay) but we found our fathers doing so.") (75. He said: "Do you observe that which you have been worshipping --") (76. "You and your ancient fathers") (77. "Verily, they are enemies to me, save the Lord of Al-`Alamin,")

How the Close Friend of Allah, Ibrahim spoke out against Shirk

Here Allah tells us about His servant, Messenger and Close Friend, Ibrahim, upon him be peace, the leader of the pure monotheists. Allah commanded His Messenger Muhammad to recite this story to his Ummah so that they could follow this example of sincerity towards Allah, putting one's trust in Him, worshipping Him Alone with no partner or associate, and renouncing Shirk and its people. Allah granted guidance to Ibrahim before, i.e., from a very early age he had denounced his people's practice of worshipping idols with Allah, may He be exalted.

(إِذْ قَالَ لِأَيِّهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ)

(When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship") meaning: what are these statues to which you are so devoted

(قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَظُلُّ لَهَا عَاكِفِينَ)

(They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted.") meaning: we are devoted to worshipping them and praying to them.

(قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكَ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ - أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكَ أَوْ
يَضُرُّونَ - قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ
(

(He said: "Do they hear you when you call Or do they benefit you or do they cause harm" They said: "(Nay) but we found our fathers doing so.") They knew that their idols could not do anything, but they had seen their fathers doing this, so they made haste to follow in their footsteps. So Ibrahim said to them:

(قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - أَنْتُمْ وَعَابَاؤُكُمْ
الْأَقْدَمُونَ - فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(Do you observe that which you have been worshipping --you and your ancient fathers Verily, they are enemies to me, save the Lord of Al-`Alamin.) meaning, `if these idols mean anything and have any influence, then let them do me any kind of harm, for I am an enemy to them and I do not care about them or think anything of them.' This is akin to the way Allah described Nuh:

(فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ)

(So devise your plot, you and your partners) (10:71). And Hud, upon him be peace, said:

(إِنْ تَقُولُ إِلَّا اعْتَرَاكَ بَعْضُ آلِهَتِنَا بِسُوءٍ قَالَ
إِنِّي أَشْهَدُ اللَّهَ وَأَشْهَدُوا أَنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ
- مِنْ دُونِهِ فَكِيدُونِي جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونَ - إِنِّي
تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ مَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ
ءَاخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ)

("I call Allah to witness and bear you witness that I am free from that which you ascribe as partners in worship. So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving creature but He has the grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the straight path) (11:54-56). rSimilarly, Ibrahim denounced their gods and idols and said:

(وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ
أَشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ)

(And how should I fear those whom you associate in worship with Allah, while you fear not that you have joined in worship with Allah) (6:81). And Allah said:

(قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrahim) until His saying;

(حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُ)

(until you believe in Allah Alone) (60:4).

(وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا
تَعْبُدُونَ - إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِين -
وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ)

(And (remember) when Ibrahim said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him Who created me; and verily, He will guide me." And he made it a Word lasting among his offspring, that they may turn back) (43:26-28). meaning: "La Ilaha Illallah."

(الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِين - وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي
وَيَسْقِين - وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِين - وَالَّذِي
يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِين - وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي
خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ)

(78. Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.) (79. And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.) (80. And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) (81. And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life.) (82. And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense.)

Ibrahim mentions Allah's Kindness towards Him

Ibrahim said, "I will not worship any but the One Who does these things:

(الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِين)

(Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.) He is the Creator Who has decreed certain things to which He guides His creation, so each person follows the path which is decreed for him. Allah is the One Who guides whomsoever He wills and leaves astray whomsoever He wills.

(وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِين)

(And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.) He is my Creator Who provides for me from that which He has made available in the heavens and on earth. He drives the clouds and causes water to fall with which He revives the earth and brings forth its fruits as provision for mankind. He sends down the water fresh and sweet so that many of those whom He has created, animals and men alike, may drink from it.

(وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَبِهِ يَشْفِينِ)

(And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) Here he attributed sickness to himself, even though it is Allah Who decrees it, out of respect towards Allah. By the same token, Allah commands us to say in the prayer,

(اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ)

(Guide us to the straight way) (1:6) to the end of the Surah. Grace and guidance are attributed to Allah, may He be exalted, but the subject of the verb with reference to anger is omitted, and going astray is attributed to the people. This is like when the Jinn said:

(وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ
أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا)

(And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a right path) (72:10) Similarly, Ibrahim said:

(وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَبِهِ يَشْفِينِ)

(And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) meaning, 'when I fall sick, no one is able to heal me but Him, Who heals me with the means that may lead to recovery'.

(وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ)

(And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life.) He is the One Who gives life and causes death, and no one besides Him is able to do that, for He is the One Who originates and repeats.

(وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ)

(And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense.) means, no one is able to forgive sins in this world or the Hereafter except Him. Who can forgive sins except Allah For He is the One Who does whatever He wills.

(رَبِّ هَبْ لِي حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ -
وَاجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ - وَاجْعَلْنِي

مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ - وَاعْفِرْ لِأَبِي إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ
الضَّالِّينَ - وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ - يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ
مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ - إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ)

(83. My Lord! Bestow Hukm on me, and join me with the righteous.) (84. And grant me an honorable mention in later generations.) (85. And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.) (86. And forgive my father, verily, he is of the erring.) (87. And disgrace me not on the Day when they will be resurrected.) (88. The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,) (89. Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart.)

The Prayer of Ibrahim for Himself and for His Father

Here Ibrahim, upon him be peace, asks his Lord to give him Hukm. Ibn `Abbas said, "This is knowledge."

(وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ)

(and join me with the righteous.) means, `make me one of the righteous in this world and the Hereafter.' This is like the words the Prophet said three times when he was dying:

«اللَّهُمَّ فِي الرَّفِيقِ الْأَعْلَى»

(O Allah, with the Exalted Companion (of Paradise)).

(وَأَجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْأَخْرِينَ)

(And grant me an honorable mention in later generations.) meaning, `cause me to be remembered in a good manner after my death, so that I will be spoken of and taken as a good example.' This is like the Ayah,

(وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْأَخْرِينَ سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(And We left for him (a goodly remembrance) among the later generations: "Salam (peace) be upon Ibrahim. Thus indeed do we reward the good doers.) (37:108-110)

(وَأَجْعَلْنِي مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ)

(And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.) meaning, `bless me in this world with honorable mention after I am gone, and in the Hereafter by making me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.'

(وَاعْفِرْ لَأَبِي)

(And forgive my father,) This is like the Ayah,

(رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ)

(My Lord! Forgive me, and my parents) (71:28). But this is something which Ibrahim, peace be upon him, later stopped doing, as Allah says:

(وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَّهَا إِيَّاهُ)

(And Ibrahim's supplication for his father's forgiveness was only because of a promise he had made to him) (9:114) until:

(إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, Ibrahim was Awwah and was forbearing) (9:114). Allah stopped Ibrahim from asking for forgiveness for his father, as He says:

(قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ)

(Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrahim and those with him), until His saying:

(وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ)

(but I have no power to do anything for you before Allah.) (60:4),

(وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ)

(And disgrace me not on the Day when they will be resurrected.) means, `protect me from shame on the Day of Resurrection and the Day when all creatures, the first and the last, will be raised.' Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said that the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَأَىٰ أَبَاهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَيْهِ الْغَبْرَةُ
وَالْقَتْرَةُ»

(Ibrahim will see his father on the Day of Resurrection, covered with dust and darkness.)
According to another narration, also from Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, the
Prophet said:

«يَلْقَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَبَاهُ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّكَ وَعَدْتَنِي
أَنَّكَ لَا تُخْزِينِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ:
إِنِّي حَرَمْتُ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ»

(Ibrahim will meet his father and will say: "O Lord, You promised me that You would not
disgrace me on the Day when all creatures are resurrected." And Allah will say to him: "I have
forbidden Paradise to the disbelievers.") He also recorded this in the Hadiths about the
Prophets, upon them be peace, where the wording is:

«يَلْقَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَبَاهُ آزَرَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَعَلَىٰ وَجْهِ
آزَرَ قَتْرَةٌ وَغَبْرَةٌ، فَيَقُولُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ
لَا تَعْصِينِي، فَيَقُولُ أَبُوهُ: قَالِيَوْمَ لَا أُعْصِيكَ،
فَيَقُولُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّكَ وَعَدْتَنِي أَنْ لَا
تُخْزِينِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ، فَأَيُّ خِزْيٍ أَخْزَىٰ مِنْ أَبِي
الْأَبْعَدِ فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ: إِنِّي حَرَمْتُ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى
الْكَافِرِينَ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ انظُرْ تَحْتَ
رَجْلِكَ، فَيَنْظُرُ، فَإِذَا هُوَ بِذِيخٍ مُتَلَطِّخٍ، فَيُؤْخَذُ
بِقَوَائِمِهِ فَيُلْقَىٰ فِي النَّارِ»

(Ibrahim will meet his father Azar on the Day of Resurrection, and there will be dust and
darkness on Azar's face. Ibrahim will say to him, "Did I not tell you not to disobey me" His father

will say to him: "Today I will not disobey you." Ibrahim will say: "O Lord, You promised me that You would not disgrace me on the Day when they are resurrected, but what disgrace can be greater than seeing my father in this state" Allah will say to him: "I have forbidden Paradise to the disbelievers." Then it will be said: "O Ibrahim! Look beneath your feet." So he will look and there he will see (that his father was changed into) a male hyena covered in dung, which will be caught by the legs and thrown in the Fire.) This was also recorded by Abu `Abdur-Fahman An-Nasa'i in the Tafsir of his Sunan Al-Kubra.

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ)

(The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,) means, a man's wealth will not protect him from the punishment of Allah, even if he were to pay a ransom equivalent to an earthful of gold.

(وَلَا بَنُونَ)

(nor sons) means, `or if you were to pay a ransom of all the people on earth.' On that Day nothing will be of any avail except faith in Allah and sincere devotion to Him, and renunciation of Shirk and its people. Allah says:

(إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ)

(Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart.) meaning, free from any impurity or Shirk. Ibn Srin said, "The clean heart knows that Allah is true, that the Hour will undoubtedly come and that Allah will resurrect those who are in the graves." Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said, "The clean heart is the sound heart." This is the heart of the believer, for the heart of the disbeliever and the hypocrite is sick. Allah says:

(فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ)

(In their hearts is a disease) (2:10). Abu `Uthman An-Nisaburi said, "It is the heart that is free from innovation and is content with the Sunnah."

(وَأَزَلِفَتْ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ - وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ
لِلْغَاوِينَ - وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - مِنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ -
فَكَبَّبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ - وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ
أَجْمَعُونَ - قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ - تَاللَّهِ إِنْ

كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّجُكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
 - وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ - فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ
 - وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ - قُلُوا أَنْ لَنَا كَرَّةٌ فَنَكُونُ مِنَ
 الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ
 مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(90. And Paradise will be brought near to those who had Taqwa.) (91. And the (Hell) Fire will be placed in full view of the astray.) (92. And it will be said to them: "Where are those that you used to worship.") (93. "Instead of Allah Can they help you or help themselves") (94. Then they will be thrown on their faces into it (the Fire), they and the astray.) (95. And all of the hosts of Iblis together.) (96. They will say while contending therein,) (97. "By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error,) (98. "When we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists;" (99. "And none has brought us into error except the criminals.") (100. "Now we have no intercessors,") (101. "Nor a close friend.") (102. "(Alas! If we only had a chance to return, we shall truly be among the believers!") (103. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (104. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

Those Who have Taqwa and the Astray on the Day of Resurrection, and the Arguments and Sorrow of the Erring

(وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ)

(And Paradise will be brought near) means, it will be brought close to its people, adorned and decorated for them to behold it. Its people are the pious who preferred it to whatever was in this world, and strove for it in this world.

(وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ)

(And the (Hell) Fire will be placed in full view of the astray.) meaning, it will be shown to them and a neck will stretch forth from it, moaning and sighing, and their hearts will reach their throats. It will be said to its people by way of reproach and rebuke:

(وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
 هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ)

(Where are those that you used to worship instead of Allah Can they help you or help themselves) meaning, `the gods and idols whom you used to worship instead of Allah cannot help you today, and they cannot even protect themselves. You and they are fuel for Hell today, which you will surely enter.'

(فَكُبِّبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ)

(Then they will be thrown on their faces into it (the Fire), they and the astray.) Mujahid said, "This means, they will be hurled into it." Others said: "They will be thrown on top of one another, the disbelievers and their leaders who called them to Shirk. "

(وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ)

(And all of the hosts of Iblis together.) they will all be thrown into it.

(قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ - تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(They will say while contending therein, "By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error, when we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists.") The weak ones among them will say to their arrogant leaders: `Verily, we were following you; can you avail us anything from the Fire' Then they will realize that themselves are to blame and will say: a

(تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error, when we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists.) meaning, `we obeyed your commands as we should have obeyed the commands of the Lord of the all that exists, and we worshipped you along with the Lord of all that exists.'

(وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ)

(And none has brought us into error except the criminals.) meaning, `nobody called us to do that except the evildoers.'

(فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ)

(Now we have no intercessors.) This is like the Ayah which tells us that they will say:

فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلْ
غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ

(...now are there any intercessors for us that they might intercede on our behalf Or could we be sent back so that we might do deeds other than those deeds which we used to do) (7:53). Similarly, in this Surah, Allah tells us that they will say:

(فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ - وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ)

(Now we have no intercessors, nor a close friend.)

(فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

((Alas!) If we only had a chance to return, we shall truly be among the believers!) They will wish that they could come back to this world so that they could do deeds of obedience to their Lord -- as they claim -- but Allah knows that if they were to come back to this world, they would only go back to doing forbidden things, and He knows that they are liars. Allah tells us in Surah Sad about how the people of Hell will argue with one another, as He says:

(إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَحَقٌّ تَخَاصُمُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ)

(Verily, that is the very truth -- the mutual dispute of the people of the Fire!) (38:64) Then He says:

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) meaning, in the dispute of Ibrahim with his people and his proof of Tawhid there is a sign, i.e., clear evidence that there is no God but Allah.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(yet most of them are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
 نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ - إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ - فَاتَّقُوا
 اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ
 أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 وَأَطِيعُوا)

(105. The people of Nuh denied the Messengers.) (106. When their brother Nuh said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (107. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (108. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (109. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.") (110. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.")

Nuh's preaching to His People, and Their Response

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Nuh, peace be upon him, who was the first Messenger sent by Allah to the people of earth after they started to worship idols. Allah sent him to forbid that and to warn people of the consequences of idol worship. But his people belied him and continued their evil practice of worshipping idols besides Allah. Allah revealed that their disbelieving in him was akin to disbelieving in all the Messengers, So Allah said:

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
 نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ)

(The people of Nuh belied the Messengers. When their brother Nuh said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") meaning, `do you not fear Allah when you worship others instead of Him'

(إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ)

(I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.) means, `I am the Messenger of Allah to you, faithfully fulfilling the mission with which Allah has sent me. I convey the Messages of my Lord to you, and I do not add anything to them or take anything away from them.,

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me. No reward do I ask of you for it;) means, `I do not want any payment for the advice I give you; I will save my reward for it with Allah. '

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) `It is clear to you that I am telling the truth and that I am faithfully fulfilling the mission with which Allah has entrusted me.'

(قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ - قَالَ وَمَا
عِلْمِي بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ - إِنَّ حِسَابَهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى
رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ - وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ -
إِن أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ)

(111. They said: "Shall we believe in you, when the inferior follow you") (112. He said: "And what knowledge have I of what they used to do") (113. "Their account is only with my Lord, if you could (but) know.") (114. "And I am not going to drive away the believers.") (115. "I am only a plain warner.")

The Demand of the People of Nuh and His Response

They said: "We do not believe in you, and we will not follow you and become equal to the meanest of the people, who follow you and believe in you, and they are the lowest among us."

(قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ - قَالَ وَمَا
عِلْمِي بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(They said: "Shall we believe in you, when the inferior follow you" He said: "And what knowledge have I of what they used to do") meaning, `what does it have to do with me if they follow me No matter what they used to do before, I do not have to check on them and examine their background; all I have to do is accept it if they believe in me; whatever is in their hearts is for Allah to know.'

(إِنَّ حِسَابَهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ - وَمَا أَنَا
بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Their account is only with my Lord, if you could (but) know. And I am not going to drive away the believers.) It seems that they asked him to drive these people away, then they would follow him, but he refused to do that, and said:

(وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - إِن أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ
(

(And I am not going to drive away the believers. I am only a plain warner.) meaning, 'I have been sent as a warner, and whoever obeys me and follows me and believes in me, then he belongs to me and I to him, whether he is noble or common, upper-class or lower-class.'

(قَالُوا لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ يٰ نُوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ
- قَالَ رَبِّ إِن قَوْمِي كَذَّبُون - فَأَفْتَحْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ
فَقْهًا وَنَجِّنِي وَمَنْ مَعِيَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ
وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِكِ الْمَشْحُون - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدُ
الْبَاقِينَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(116. They said: "If you cease not, O Nuh you will surely be among those stoned.") (117. He said: "My Lord! Verily, my people have denied me.") (118. "Therefore judge You between me and them, and save me and those of the believers who are with me.") (119. And We saved him and those with him in the laden ship.) (120. Then We drowned the rest thereafter.) (121. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (122. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

His People's Threat, Nuh's Prayer against Them, and Their Destruction

Nuh stayed among his people for a long time, calling them to Allah night and day, in secret and openly. The more he repeated his call to them, the more determined were they to cling to their extreme disbelief and resist his call. In the end, they said:

(لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ يٰ نُوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ)

(If you cease not, O Nuh you will surely be among those stoned.) meaning, 'if you do not stop calling us to your religion,'

(لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ)

(you will surely be among those stoned.) meaning, 'we will stone you.' At that point, he prayed against them, and Allah responded to his prayer. Nuh said:

(رَبِّ إِنِّ قَوْمِي كَذَّبُوْنِ فَافْتَحْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتْحًا)

(My Lord! Verily, my people have denied me. Therefore judge You between me and them.) This is like the Ayah:

(فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ)

(Then he invoked his Lord (saying): "I have been overcome, so help (me)!")(54:10) And Allah says here:

(فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِكِ الْمَشْحُونِ - ثُمَّ
أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدَ الْبَاقِينَ)

(And We saved him and those with him in the laden ship. Then We drowned the rest thereafter.) The "laden ship" is one that is filled with cargo and the couples, one pair from every species, that were carried in it. This Ayah means: 'We saved Nuh and all of those who followed him, and We drowned those who disbelieved in him and went against his commands, all of them.'

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ عَادُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ
أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ - إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيْعٍ ءَايَةً
تَعْبَثُونَ)

وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ - وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُمْ
بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي
أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَمٍ وَبَنِينَ وَجَبَّتِ
وَعُيُونَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(123. `Ad denied the Messengers.) (124. When their brother Hud said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (125. "Verily, I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (126. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (127. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.") (128. "Do you build on every Ri` an Ayah for your amusement") (129. "And do you get for yourselves Masani` as if you will live therein forever") (130. "And when you seize (somebody), seize you (him) as tyrants") (131. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (132. "And have Taqwa of Him, fear Him Who has aided you with all (good things) that you know.") (133. "He has aided you with cattle and children.") (134. "And gardens and springs.") (135. "Verily, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day.")

Hud's preaching to His People ` Ad

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Hud, when he called his people `Ad. His people used to live in the Ahqaf, curved sand-hills near Hadramawt, on the borders of Yemen. They lived after the time of Nuh, as Allah says in Surat Al-A`raf:

وَإِذْ نَادَىٰ نُوْحٌ
وَأَذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ
وَزَادَكُمْ فِي الْخَلْقِ بَسْطَةً)

(And remember that He made you successors after the people of Nuh and increased you amply in stature) (7:69). This refers to the fact that they were physically strong and well-built, and very violent, and very tall; they had also been given a great deal of provisions, wealth, gardens, rivers, sons, crops and fruits. Yet despite all of that, they worshipped others besides Allah. So Allah sent Hud, one of their own, as a Messenger bringing them good news and delivering warnings. He called them to worship Allah alone, and he warned them of Allah's wrath and punishment if they were to go against him and treating him harshly. He said to them, as Nuh had said to his people:

(أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ ءَايَةً تُعْبَثُونَ)

(Do you build on every Ri` an Ayah for your amusement) The scholars of Tafsir differed over the meaning of the word Ri`. In brief, they said that it refers to an elevated location at a well-known crossroads, where they would build a huge, dazzling, sturdy structure, this is why he said:

(أَتَّبُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيْعٍ ءَايَةً)

(Do you build on every Ri` an Ayah) i.e., a well-known landmark,

(تَعْبُونَ)

(for your amusement) meaning, `you are only doing that for the purpose of frivolity, not because you need it, but for fun and to show off your strength.' So their Prophet, peace be upon him, denounced them for doing that, because it was a waste of time and exhausted people's bodies for no purpose, and kept them busy with something that was of no benefit in this world or the next. He said:

(وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ)

(And do you get for yourselves Masani` as if you will live therein forever) Mujahid said, "This means fortresses built up strong and high and structures that are built to last."

(لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ)

(as if you will live therein forever) means, `so that you may stay there forever, but that is not going to happen, because they will eventually cease to be, just as happened in the case of those who came before you.'

(وَإِذَا بَطِشْتُمْ بَطِشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ)

(And when you seize (somebody), seize you (him) as tyrants) They are described as being strong, violent and tyrannical.

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) `Worship your Lord and obey your Messenger.' Then Hud began reminding them of the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them. He said:

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ - أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَمٍ
وَبَنِينَ - وَجَبَّتِ وَعُيُونَ - إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ
عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(And have Taqwa of Him, Who has aided you with all that you know. He has aided you with cattle and children, and gardens and springs. Verily, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day.)

meaning, 'if you disbelieve and oppose (your Prophet).' So he called them to Allah with words of encouragement and words of warning, but it was to no avail.

قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعَضْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِّنَ
الْوَعِظِينَ - إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ - وَمَا نَحْنُ
بِمُعَذِّبِينَ)

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ
أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(136. They said: "It is the same to us whether you preach or be not of those who preach.") (137. "This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients,") (138. "And we are not going to be punished.") (139. So they denied him, and We destroyed them. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (140. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the Almighty, the Most Merciful.)

The Response of the People of Hud, and Their Punishment

Allah tells us how the people of Hud responded to him after he had warned them, encouraged them, and clearly explained the truth to them.

قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعَضْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِّنَ
الْوَعِظِينَ)

(They said: "It is the same to us whether you preach or be not of those who preach.") meaning, 'we will not give up our ways.'

وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَارِكِي ءَالِهَتِنَا عَنْ قَوْلِكَ وَمَا نَحْنُ
لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And we shall not leave our gods for your (mere) saying! And we are not believers in you) (11:53). This is how it was, as Allah says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ
تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Verily, those who disbelieve, it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe) (2:6).

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Truly, those, against whom the Word of your Lord has been justified, will not believe) (10:96-97). And they said:

(إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients.) Some scholars read this: "Khalq". According to Ibn Mas`ud and according to `Abdullah bin `Abbas -- as reported from Al-`Awfi -- and `Alqamah and Mujahid, they meant, "What you have brought to us is nothing but the tales (Akhlaq) of the ancients." This is like what the idolators of Quraysh said:

(وَقَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ
بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا)

(And they say: "Tales of the ancients, which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon.") (25:5) And Allah said:

(وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ
وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ ءَاخِرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا ظُلْمًا
وَزُورًا وَقَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(Those who disbelieve say: "This is nothing but a lie that he has invented, and others have helped him in it. In fact, they have produced an injustice and a lie." And they say: "Tales of the ancients...") (25:4-5)

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَآذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ
الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(And when it is said to them: "What is it that your Lord has sent down" They say: "Tales of the ancient!") (16:24). Some other scholars recited it,

(إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients,) "as Khuluq," meaning their religion. What they were following was the religion of the ancients, their fathers and grandfathers, as if they were saying: "We are following them, we will live as they lived and die as they died, and there will be no resurrection and no judgement." Hence they said:

(وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ)

(And we are not going to be punished.) Allah's saying;

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ)

(So they denied him, and We destroyed them.) meaning, they continued to disbelieve and stubbornly oppose Allah's Prophet Hud, so Allah destroyed them. The means of their destruction has been described in more than one place in the Qur'an: Allah sent against them a strong and furious wind, i.e., a fiercely blowing wind that was intensely cold. Thus the means of their destruction was suited to their nature, for they were the strongest and fiercest of people, so Allah overpowered them with something that was even stronger and fiercer than them, as Allah says:

(أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ - إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ)

(Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with `Ad of Iram Possesors of the pillars) (89:6-7). This refers to the former `Ad, as Allah says:

(وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الْأُولَى)

(And that it is He Who destroyed the former `Ad) (53:50). They were descendents of Iram bin Sam bin Nuh,

(ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ)

(Possesors of the pillars) They used to live among pillars. Those who claim that Iram was a city take this idea from Isra'iliyyat narrations, from the words of Ka`b and Wahb, but there is no real basis for that. Allah says:

(الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلَهَا فِي الْبَلَدِ)

(The like of which were not created in the land) (89:8). meaning, nothing like this tribe was created in terms of might, power and tyranny. If what was meant was a city, it would have said, "The like of which was not built in the land." And Allah says:

فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ
وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي
خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ
(

(As for `Ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: "Who is mightier than us in strength" See they not that Allah Who created them was mightier in strength than them. And they used to deny Our Ayat!) (41:15) And Allah says:

وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَأَهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ)

(And as for `Ad, they were destroyed by a furious violent wind!) until His saying:

(حُسُومًا)

(in succession) (69:6-7) meaning, consecutively (i. e., seven nights and eight days).

فَقَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أُعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ
خَاوِيَةٍ)

(so that you could see men lying overthrown (destroyed), as if they were hollow trunks of date palms!) (69:7) means, they were left as headless bodies, because the wind would come and carry one of them, then drop him on his head, so that his brains were spilled out, his head was broken and he was thrown aside, as if they were uprooted stems of date-palms. They used to build fortresses in the mountains and caves, and they dug ditches half as deep as a man is tall, but that did not help them against the command of Allah at all.

إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ)

(Verily, the term given by Allah, when it comes, cannot be delayed) (71:4). Allah says here:

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ)

(So they denied him, and We destroyed them.)

(كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
صَلِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(141. Thamud denied the Messengers.) (142. When their brother Salih said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (143. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (144. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (145. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of Al-`Alamin.")

Salih and the People of Thamud

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Salih, whom He sent to his people Thamud. They were Arabs living in the city of Al-Hijr -- which is between Wadi Al-Qura and Greater Syria. Their location is well known. In our explanation of Surat Al-A`raf, we mentioned the Hadiths which tell how the Messenger of Allah passed by their dwelling place when he wanted to launch a raid on Syria. He went as far as Tabuk, then he went back to Al-Madinah to prepare himself for the campaign. Thamud came after `Ad and before Ibrahim, peace be upon him. Their Prophet Salih called them to Allah, to worship Him alone with no partner or associate, and to obey whatever commands were conveyed to them, but they refused, rejecting him and opposing him. He told them that he did not seek any reward from them for his call to them, but that he would seek the reward for that with Allah. Then he reminded them of the blessings of Allah.

(أَتُرْكُونَ فِي مَا هَاهُنَا ءَامِنِينَ - فِي جَبَّتٍ
وَعُيُونٍ - وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ -
وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرَاهِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ الَّذِينَ
يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ)

(146. "Will you be left secure in that which you have here") (147. "In gardens and springs.") (148. "And crops and date palms with soft clusters.") (149. "And you hew out in the mountains, houses with great skill.") (150. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (151. "And follow not the command of the extravagant,") (152. Who make mischief in the land, and reform not.")

A Reminder to Them of their Circumstances and the Blessings

They enjoyed Salih preached to them, warning them that the punishment of Allah could overtake them and reminding them of the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them, by giving them ample provision and making them safe from all kinds of dangers, giving them gardens and flowing springs, and bringing forth for them crops and fruits.

(وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعَهَا هَضِيمٌ)

(and date palms with soft clusters.) Al-`Awfi narrated from Ibn `Abbas, "Ripe and rich." `Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn `Abbas that this meant growing luxuriantly. Isma`il bin Abi Khalid narrated from `Amr bin Abi `Amr -- who met the Companions -- from Ibn `Abbas that this means, "When it becomes ripe and soft." This was narrated by Ibn Abi Hatim, then he said: "And something similar was narrated from Abu Salih."

(وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرَاهِينَ)

(And you hew out in the mountains, houses with great skill.) Ibn `Abbas and others said, "With great skill." According to another report from him: "They were greedy and extravagant." This was the view of Mujahid and another group. There is no contradiction between the two views, because they built the houses which they carved in the mountains as a form of extravagant play, with no need for them as dwelling places. They were highly skilled in the arts of masonry and stone-carving, as is well known to anyone who has seen their structures. So, Salih said to them:

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) Pay attention to that which could benefit you in this world and the Hereafter; worshipping your Lord Who created you, who granted you provisions so that you could worship Him alone and glorify Him morning and evening.

(وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ - الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ)

(And follow not the command of the extravagant, who make mischief in the land, and reform not.) meaning, their chiefs and leaders, who called them to Shirk, disbelief and opposition to the truth.

(قَالُوا إِيْمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسْحَرِينَ - مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بَيِّتِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - قَالَ هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَعْلُومٍ - وَلَا

تَمَسُّوْهَا بِسُوْءٍ فَيَأْخُذْكُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ عَظِيْمٍ -
 فَعَقَرُوْهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا نَدِيْمِيْنَ - فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ إِنْ
 فِيْ ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةٌ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ)
 وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الرَّحِيْمُ-

(153. They said: "You are only of those bewitched!") (154. "You are but a human being like us. Then bring us a sign if you are of the truthful.") (155. He said: "Here is a she-camel: it has a right to drink (water), and you have a right to drink (water) (each) on a day, known.") (156. "And touch her not with harm, lest the torment of a Great Day should seize you.") (157. But they killed her, and then they became regretful.) (158. So, the torment overtook them. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (159. And verily, your Lord He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

The Response of Thamud, Their Demand for a Sign, and Their Punishment

Allah tells us how Thamud responded to their Prophet Salih, upon him be peace, when he called them to worship their Lord, may He be glorified.

(قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِيْنَ)

(They said: "You are only of those bewitched!") Mujahid said, "They meant he was one affected by witchcraft." Then they said:

(مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا)

(You are but a human being like us.) meaning, `how can you receive Revelation when we do not' This is like the Ayah where they are described as saying:

(أَعْلَقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌّ -
 سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مِّنَ الْكَذَّابِ الْأَشِرِّ)

("Is it that the Reminder is sent to him alone from among us Nay, he is an insolent liar!" Tomorrow they will come to know who is the liar, the insolent one!) (54:26-27) Then they asked him for a sign to prove that what he brought to them from their Lord was the truth. A crowd of them gathered and demanded that he immediately bring forth from the rock a she-camel that was ten months pregnant, and they pointed to a certain rock in their midst. Allah's

Prophet Salih made them promise that if he responded to their request, they would believe in him and follow him. So they agreed to that. The Prophet of Allah Salih, peace be upon him, stood and prayed, then he prayed to Allah to grant them their request. Then the rock to which they had pointed split open, revealing a she-camel that was ten months pregnant, exactly as they had requested. So some of them believed, but most of them disbelieved.

(قَالَ هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ
(

(He said: "Here is a she-camel: it has a right to drink (water), and you have a right to drink (water) (each) on a day, known.) meaning, 'she will drink from your water one day, and on the next day you will drink from it.'

(وَلَا تَمَسُّوْهَا بِسُوءٍ فَيَأْخُذْكُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(And touch her not with harm, lest the torment of a Great Day should seize you.) He warned them of the punishment of Allah if they should do her any harm. The she-camel stayed among them for a while, drinking the water, eating leaves and grazing, and they benefitted from her milk which they took in sufficient quantities for every one to drink his fill. After this had gone on for a long time, and the time for their destruction drew near, they conspired to kill her:

(فَعَقَرُوهَا فَاصْبَحُوا نَدِمِينَ فَاْخُذْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ)

(But they killed her, and then they became regretful. So, the torment overtook them.) Their land was shaken by a strong earthquake, and there came to them an overwhelming Sayhah (shout) which took their hearts from their places. They were overtaken by events which they were not expecting, so they were left (dead), lying prostrate in their homes.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
لُوطُ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَأَطِيعُونَ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(160. The people of Lut denied the Messengers.) (161. When their brother Lut said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (162. "Verily, I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (163. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (164. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.")

Lut and His Call

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Lut, peace be upon him. He was Lut bin Haran bin Azar, the nephew of Ibrahim Al-Khalil, upon him be peace. Allah sent him to a mighty nation during the lifetime of Ibrahim, peace be upon them both. They lived in Sadum (Sodom) and its environs, where Allah destroyed them and turned the area into a putrid, stinking lake, which is well-known in the land of Al-Ghur)the Jordan Valley(, bordering the mountains of Jerusalem, between the mountains and the land of Al-Karak and Ash-Shawbak. He called them to Allah, to worship Him alone with no partner or associate, and to obey the Messenger whom Allah sent to them. He forbade from disobeying Allah and committing the sin that they had invented which was unknown on earth before their time; intercourse with males instead of with females. Allah said:

(أَتَأْتُونَ الذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ - وَتَدْرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ
لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ -
قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهَ يَلُوطُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ -
قَالَ إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ)

رَبِّ نَجْنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ- فَنجَيْنَهُ وَأَهْلَهُ
أَجْمَعِينَ- إِلَّا عَجُوزاً فِي الْغَيْرِينَ- ثُمَّ دَمَرْنَا
الْآخِرِينَ- وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ
الْمُنذَرِينَ- إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ- وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ-)

(165. "Go you in unto the males of Al-`Alamin (people),") (166. "And leave those whom Allah has created for you to be your wives Nay, you are a trespassing people!") (167. They said: "If

you cease not, O Lut, verily, you will be one of those who are driven out!") (168. He said: "I am indeed of those who disapprove with severe anger and fury your behavior.") (169. "My Lord! Save me and my family from what they do.") (170. So, We saved him and his family, all,) (171. Except an old woman among those who remained behind.) (172. Then afterward We destroyed the others.) (173. And We rained on them a rain, and how evil was the rain of those who had been warned!) (174. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (175. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

Lut's Denunciation of His People's Deeds, Their Response and Their Punishment

The Prophet of Allah forbade them from committing evil deeds and intercourse with males, and he taught them that they should have intercourse with their wives whom Allah had created for them. Their response was only to say:

(لَيْن لَمْ تَنْتَه يَلُوطُ)

(If you cease not, O Lut,) meaning, `if you do not give up what you have brought,'

(لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ)

(verily, you will be one of those who are driven out!) meaning, `we will expel you from among us.' This is like the Ayah,

(فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِّنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَّتَطَهَّرُونَ)

(There was no other answer given by his people except that they said: "Drive out the family of Lut from your city. Verily, these are men who want to be clean and pure!") (27:56). When he saw that they would not give up their ways, and that they were persisting in their misguidance, he declared his innocence of them, saying:

(إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ)

(I am, indeed, of those who disapprove with severe anger and fury) `Of those who are outraged, I do not like it and I do not accept it, and I have nothing to do with you. ' Then he prayed to Allah against them and said:

(رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(My Lord! Save me and my family from what they do.) Allah says:

فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي
الْغَيْرِينَ)

(So, We saved him and his family, all. Except an old woman among those who remained behind.) This was his wife, who was a bad old woman. She stayed behind and was destroyed with whoever else was left. This is similar to what Allah says about them in Surat Al-A`raf and Surat Hud, and in Surat Al-Hijr, where Allah commanded him to take his family at night, except for his wife, and not to turn around when they heard the Sayhah as it came upon his people. So they patiently obeyed the command of Allah and persevered, and Allah sent upon the people a punishment which struck them all, and rained upon them stones of baked clay, piled up. Allah says:

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الْآخَرِينَ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا)

(Then afterward We destroyed the others. And We rained on them a rain) until Allah's saying;

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(And verily, your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ
شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ)

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ
إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ -)

(176. The companions of Al-Aykah denied the Messengers.) (177. When Shu`ayb said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (178. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (179. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (180. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of Al-`Alamin.")

Shu`ayb and His Preaching to the Dwellers of Al-Aykah

The companions of Al-Aykah were the people of Madyan, according to the most correct view. The Prophet of Allah Shu`ayb was one of them, but it does not say here, their brother Shu`ayb, because they called themselves by a name denoting their deification of Al-Aykah, which was a tree which they used to worship; it was said that it was a group of trees which were tangled, like trees in a thicket. For this reason, when Allah said that the companions of Al-Aykah denied the Messengers, He did not say, "When their brother Shu`ayb said to them." Rather, He said:

(إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ)

(When Shu` ayb said to them) He is not described as belonging to them because of the meaning that was inherent in the name given to them even though he was their brother by blood. Some people did not notice this point, so they thought that the dwellers of Al-Aykah were different from the people of Madyan, and claimed that Shu` ayb was sent to two nations; some said that he was sent to three.

(أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ)

(The companions of Al-Aykah) were the people of Shu` ayb. This was the view of Ishaq bin Bishr. Someone besides Juwaybir said, "The dwellers of Al-Aykah and the people of Madyan are one and the same." And Allah knows best. Although there is another opinion that they were different nations with two identities, the correct view is that they were one nation, but they are described differently in different places. Shu` ayb preached to them and commanded them to be fair in their weights and measures, the same as is mentioned in the story of Madyan, which also indicates that they were the same nation.

(أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ - وَزِنُوا
بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ)

(وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي
الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ-)

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْحِيلَةَ الْأُولِينَ-)

(181. "Give full measure, and cause no loss (to others).") (182. "And weigh with the true and straight balance.") (183. "And defraud not people by reducing their things, nor do evil, making corruption and mischief in the land.") (184. "And have Taqwa of Him Who created you and the generations of the men of old.")

The Command to give Full Measure

Allah commanded them to give full measure, and forbade them to give short measure. He said:

(أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ)

(Give full measure, and cause no loss.) meaning, 'when you give to people, give them full measure, and do not cause loss to them by giving them short measure, while taking full measure when you are the ones who are taking. Give as you take, and take as you give.'

(وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ)

(And weigh with the true and straight balance.) The balance is the scales.

(وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ)

(And defraud not people by reducing their things,) means, do not shortchange them.

(وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ)

(nor do evil, making corruption and mischief in the land.) means, by engaging in banditry. This is like the Ayah,

(وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَاطٍ تُوعِدُونَ)

(And sit not on every road, threatening) (7:86).

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْحَيَلَةَ الْأُولِينَ)

(And have Taqwa of Him Who created you and the generations of the men of old.) Here he is frightening them with the punishment of Allah Who created them and created their forefathers. This is like when Musa, peace be upon him, said:

(رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأُولِينَ)

(Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!) (26:26). Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, As-Suddi, Sufyan bin `Uyaynah and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said:

(وَالْحَيَلَةَ الْأُولِينَ)

(the generations of the men of old.) means, He created the early generations. And Ibn Zayd recited:

(وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا)

(And indeed he (Shaytan) did lead astray a great multitude of you) (36:62).

(قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ)
وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ-
(
فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ
الصَّادِقِينَ-))
قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ-))
فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ-))
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ- وَإِنَّ
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ-))

(185. They said: "You are only one of those bewitched!") (186. "You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars!") (187. "So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful!") (188. He said: "My Lord is the Best Knower of what you do.") (189. But they denied him, so the torment of the Day of Shadow (a gloomy cloud) seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) (190. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (191. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

The Response of Shu`ayb's People, Their Disbelief in Him and the coming of the Punishment upon Them

Allah tells us how his people responded, and how it was like the response of Thamud to their Messenger -- for they were of like mind -- when they said:

(إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ)

(You are only one of those bewitched!) meaning, `you are one of those who are affected by witchcraft.'

(وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَّظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ
(

(You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars!) means, `we think you are deliberately lying to us in what you say, and Allah has not sent you to us.'

(فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(So cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us,) Ad-Dahhak said: "One side of the heavens." Qatadah said: "A piece of the heaven." As-Suddi said: "A punishment from heaven." This is like what the Quraysh said, as Allah tells us:

(وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ
يَبُوعًا)

(And they say: "We shall not believe in you, until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us) until:

(أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا أَوْ
تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا)

(Or you cause the heaven to fall upon us in pieces, as you have pretended, or you bring Allah and the angels before (us) face to face.") (17:90-92)

(وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ
فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(And (remember) when they said: "O Allah! If this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky....") (8:32). Similarly, these ignorant disbelievers said:

(فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful!)

(قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(He said: "My Lord is the Best Knower of what you do.") means, 'Allah knows best about you, and if you deserve that, He will punish you therewith, and He will not treat you unjustly.' So this is what happened to them -- as they asked for -- an exact recompense. Allah says:

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(But they denied him, so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) This is what they asked for, when they asked for a part of the heaven to fall upon them. Allah made their punishment in the form of intense heat which overwhelmed them for seven days, and nothing could protect them from it. Then He sent a cloud to shade them, so they ran towards it to seek its shade from the heat. When all of them had gathered underneath it, Allah sent sparks of fire and flames and intense heat upon them, and caused the earth to convulse beneath them, and He sent against them a mighty Sayhah which destroyed their souls. Allah says:

(إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) Allah has mentioned how they were destroyed in three places in the Qur'an, in each of which it is described in a manner which fits the context. In Surat Al-A`raf He says that the earthquake seized them, and they lay (dead), prostrate in their homes. This was because they said:

(لنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَشُعَيْبُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَكَ مِنَ
قَرْيَتِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا)

("We shall certainly drive you out, O Shu`ayb, and those who have believed with you from our town, or else you (all) shall return to our religion.") (7:88). They had sought to scare the Prophet of Allah and those who followed him, so they were seized by the earthquake. In Surah Hud, Allah says:

(وَأَخَذَتِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ)

(And As-Sayhah seized the wrongdoers) (11:94). This was because they mocked the Allah's Prophet when they said:

أَصْلَوْكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ تَتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ
تَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ
الرَّشِيدُ

("Does your Salah command that we give up what our fathers used to worship, or that we give up doing what we like with our property Verily, you are the forbearer, right-minded!") (11:87). They had said this in a mocking, sarcastic tone, so it was befitting that the Sayhah should come and silence them, as Allah says:

فَأَخَذْتَهُمُ الصَّيْحَةَ

(So As-Saihah overtook them) (15:73).

وَأَخَذَتِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ

(And As-Saihah seized the wrongdoers) (11:94). And here, they said:

فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ

(So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us,) in a stubborn and obstinate manner. So, it was fitting that something they never thought would happen should befall them:

فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ

(so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) Muhammad bin Jarir narrated from Yazid Al-Bahili: "I asked Ibn `Abbas about this Ayah:

فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ

(so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them.) He said: `Allah sent upon them thunder and intense heat, and it terrified them)so they entered their houses and it pursued them to the innermost parts of their houses and terrified them further(, and they ran fleeing from their houses into the fields. Then Allah sent upon them clouds which shaded them from the sun, and they found it cool and pleasant, so they called out to one another until they had all gathered beneath the cloud, then Allah sent fire upon them.' Ibn `Abbas said, `That was the torment of the Day of Shadow, indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.'"

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(Verily, in this is an Ayah, yet most of them are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is truly, the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.) (26:8-9) meaning, He is All-Mighty in His punishment of the disbelievers, and Most Merciful towards His believing servants.

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ - نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ
الْأَمِينُ - عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ - بِلِسَانٍ
عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ)

(192. And truly, this is a revelation from the Lord of all that exists,) (193. Which the trustworthy Ruh (Jibril) has brought down.) (194. Upon your heart that you may be (one) of the warners,) (195. In the plain Arabic language.)

The Qur'an was revealed by Allah

Here Allah tells us about the Book which He revealed to His servant and Messenger Muhammad.

(وَإِنَّهُ)

(And truly, this) refers to the Qur'an, which at the beginning of the Surah was described as

(وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ مُحَدَّثٍ)

(and never comes there unto them a Reminder as a recent revelation from the Most Gracious...) (26:5).

(لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(is a revelation from the Lord of Al-'Alamin.) means, Allah has sent it down to you and revealed it to you.

(نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ)

(Which the trustworthy Ruh has brought down.) This refers to Jibril, peace be upon him. This was the view of more than one of the Salaf: Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Qatadah,

`Atiyah Al-`Awfi, As-Suddi, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri and Ibn Jurayj. This is an issue concerning which there is no dispute. Az-Zuhri said, "This is like the Ayah:

(قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ)

(Say: "Whoever is an enemy to Jibril -- for indeed he has brought it down to your heart by Allah's permission, confirming what came before it...") (2:97).

(عَلَى قَلْبِكَ)

(Upon your heart) `O Muhammad, free from any contamination, with nothing added or taken away.'

(لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ)

(that you may be of the warners,) means, `so that you may warn people with it of the punishment of Allah for those who go against it and disbelieve in it, and so that you may give glad tidings with it to the believers who follow it.'

(بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ)

(In the plain Arabic language.) meaning, `this Qur'an which We have revealed to you, We have revealed in perfect and eloquent Arabic, so that it may be quite clear, leaving no room for excuses and establishing clear proof, showing the straight path.'

(وَإِنَّهُ لَفِي زُبُرِ الْأَوَّلِينَ أَوْلَمَيَكُنْ لَهُمْ آيَةٌ أَنْ
يَعْلَمَهُ عُلَمَاءُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَى بَعْضِ
الْأَعْجَمِينَ)

(فَقَرَأَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ-)

(196. And verily, it is in the Zubur of the former people.) (197. Is it not a sign to them that the learned scholars of the Children of Israel knew it) (198. And if We had revealed it unto any of the non-Arabs,) (199. And he had recited it unto them, they would not have believed in it.)

The Qur'an was mentioned in the Previous Scriptures

Allah says: this Qur'an was mentioned and referred to in the previous Scriptures that were left behind by their Prophets who foretold it in ancient times and more recently. Allah took a covenant from them that they would follow it, and the last of them stood and addressed his people with the good news of Ahmad:

(وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ بَيْنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ
التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ
أَحْمَدُ)

(And (remember) when `Isa, son of Maryam, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, confirming the Tawrah before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.) (61:6) Zubur here refers to Books; Zubur is the plural of Az-Zabur, which is also the name used to refer to the Book given to Dawud. Allah says:

(وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ)

(And everything they have done is noted in the Az-Zubur.) (54:52), meaning, it is recorded against them in the books of the angels. Then Allah says:

(أُولَئِكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ آيَةٌ أَنْ يَعْلَمَهُ عُلَمَاءُ بَنِي
إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(Is it not a sign to them that the learned scholars of the Children of Israel knew it) meaning, is it not sufficient witness to the truth for them that the scholars of the Children of Israel found this Qur'an mentioned in the Scriptures which they study The meaning is: the fair-minded among them admitted that the attributes of Muhammad and his mission and his Ummah were mentioned in their Books, as was stated by those among them who believed, such as `Abdullah bin Salam, Salman Al-Farisi and others who met the Prophet . Allah said:

(الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ)

(Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write ...) (7:157)

The Intense Disbelief of Quraysh

Then Allah tells us how intense the disbelief of Quraysh was, and how stubbornly they resisted the Qur'an. If this Book with all its eloquence had been revealed to a non-Arab who did not know one word of Arabic, they still would not have believed in him. Allah says:

(وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضِ الْأَعْجَمِينَ)
فَقَرَأَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ -)

(And if We had revealed it unto any of the non-Arabs, And he had recited it unto them, they would not have believed in it.) And Allah says:

(وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ
يَعْرُجُونَ لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكَّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا)

(And even if We opened to them a gate from the heaven and they were to keep on ascending thereto. They would surely say: "Our eyes have been dazzled..." (15:14-15)

(وَلَوْ أَنَّا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَىٰ)

(And even if We had sent down unto them angels, and the dead had spoken unto them...) (6:111)

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Truly, those, against whom the Word of your Lord has been justified, will not believe.) (10:96)

(كَذَلِكَ سَلَكْنَاهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ - لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِهِ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ - فَيَأْتِيهِمْ بَعْثَةٌ وَهُمْ
لَا يَشْعُرُونَ - فَيَقُولُوا هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنْظَرُونَ -
أَفْبِعَادَانَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ - أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُمْ سِنِينَ
- ثُمَّ جَاءَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ - مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ
مَا كَانُوا يُمْتَعُونَ - وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا
مُنْذِرُونَ)

ذِكْرِي وَمَا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ-

(200. Thus have We caused it to enter the hearts of the criminals.) (201. They will not believe in it until they see the painful torment.) (202. It shall come to them of a sudden, while they perceive it not.) (203. Then they will say: "Can we be respited") (204. Would they then wish for Our torment to be hastened on) (205. Think, if We do let them enjoy for years,) (206. And afterwards comes to them that which they had been promised.) (207. All that with which they used to enjoy shall not avail them.) (208. And never did We destroy a township but it had its warners) (209. By way of reminder, and We have never been unjust.)

The Deniers will never believe until They see the Torment

Allah says: `thus We caused denial, disbelief, rejection and stubbornness to enter the hearts of the sinners.'

(لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ)

(They will not believe in it), i.e., the truth,

(حَتَّى يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ)

(until they see the painful torment.) means, when their excuses will be of no avail, and the curse will be upon them, and theirs will be an evil abode.

(فَيَأْتِيهِمْ بَعْتَةٌ)

(It shall come to them of a sudden,) means, the punishment of Allah will come upon them suddenly,

(وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ وَيَقُولُوا هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنْظَرُونَ)

(while they perceive it not. Then they will say: "Can we be respited") means, when they see the punishment, then they will wish they had a little more time so that they can obey Allah -- or so they claim. This is like the Ayah:

(وَأَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ)

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

(مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ زَوَالٍ)

(that you would not leave) (14: 44). When every sinner and evildoer sees his punishment, he will feel intense regret. Such was the case of Fir`awn, when Musa prayed against him:

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ آتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُ زِينَةً وَأَمْوَالًا
فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

(Our Lord! "You have indeed bestowed on Fir`awn and his chiefs splendor and wealth in the life of this world) until:

قَالَ قَدْ أُجِيبَتِ دَعْوَتُكُمَا

((Allah) said: "Verily, the invocation of you both is accepted.") (10:88-89). This supplication had an effect on Fir`awn: he did not believe until he saw the painful torment:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ قَالَ ءَأَمِنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ
إِلَّا الَّذِي ءَأَمِنْتُ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ

(till when drowning overtook him, he said: "I believe that none has the right to be worshipped but He in Whom the Children of Israel believe.") until:

وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

(and you were one of the mischief-makers) (10:90-91). And Allah says:

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا بَأْسَنَا قَالُوا ءَأَمِنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدُّهُ

(so when they saw Our punishment, they said: "We believe in Allah Alone...") (40:84-85).

أَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ

(Would they then wish for Our torment to be hastened on) This is a denunciation and a threat, because they used to say to the Messenger, by way of denial, thinking it unlikely ever to happen:

اِنْتِنَا بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ

(Bring Allah's torment upon us) (29:29). This is as Allah said:

(وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ)

(And they ask you to hasten on the torment...) (29:53-55). Then Allah says:

(أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُمْ سِنِينَ - ثُمَّ جَاءَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ - مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُمْتَعُونَ)

(Think, if We do let them enjoy for years, and afterwards comes to them that which they had been promised, all that with which they used to enjoy shall not avail them.) meaning, `even if We delay the matter and give them respite for a short while or for a long time, then the punishment of Allah comes upon them, what good will their life of luxury do them then'

(كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا)

(The Day they see it, (it will be) as if they had not tarried (in this world) except an afternoon or a morning) (79:46). And Allah says:

(يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحَّزِحٍ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ)

(Everyone 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 punishment) (2:96).

(وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى)

(And what will his wealth avail him when he goes down) (92:11) Allah says here:

(مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُمْتَعُونَ)

(All that with which they used to enjoy shall not avail them.) According to an authentic Hadith:

«يُوتَىٰ بِالْكَافِرِ فَيُعْمَسُ فِي النَّارِ غَمْسَةً ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: هَلْ رَأَيْتَ خَيْرًا قَطُّ؟ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا قَطُّ؟»

فَيَقُولُ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ، وَيُوتَى بِأَشَدِّ النَّاسِ بُؤْسًا
كَانَ فِي الدُّنْيَا، فَيُصْبَعُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ صَبْغَةً، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ
لَهُ: هَلْ رَأَيْتَ بُؤْسًا قَطُّ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبُّ»

(The disbelievers will be brought and once dipped into the Fire, then it will be said to him: "Did you ever see anything good Did you ever see anything good" He will say, "No, O Lord!" Then the most miserable person who ever lived on earth will be brought, and he will be put in Paradise for a brief spell, then it will be said to him, "Did you ever see anything bad" He will say, "No, O Lord.") meaning: as if nothing ever happened. Then Allah tells us of His justice towards His creation, in that He does not destroy any nation until after He has left them with no excuse, by warning them, sending Messengers to them and establishing proof against them. He says:

(وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا مُنْذِرُونَ)
(ذِكْرَى وَمَا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ)

(And never did We destroy a township but it had its warners by way of reminder, and We have never been unjust.) This is like the Ayat:

(وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّى نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا)

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

(وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَى حَتَّى يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمَّهَاتِهَا
رَسُولًا يَلُوقُ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا)

(And never will your Lord destroy the towns until He sends to their mother town a Messenger reciting to them Our Ayat.) until;

(وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ)

(the people thereof are wrongdoers) (28:59).

(وَمَا تَنْزَلَتْ بِهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ - وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُمْ وَمَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ - إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَعَزُولُونَ)

(210. And it is not the Shayatin (devils) who have brought it down.) (211. Neither would it suit them nor are they able.) (212. Verily, they have been removed far from hearing it.)

The Qur'an was brought down by Jibril, not Shaytan

tells us about His Book, which falsehood cannot approach from before or behind it, sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise. He states that it has been brought down by the trustworthy Ruh (i.e., Jibril) who is helped by Allah,

(وَمَا تَنْزَلَتْ بِهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ)

(And it is not the Shayatin who have brought it down.) Then He tells us that it could not be the case for three reasons that the Shayatin brought it down. One is that it would not suit them, i.e., they have no desire to do so and they do not want to, because their nature is to corrupt and misguide people, but this contains words enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil, and light, guidance and mighty proofs. There is a big difference between this and the Shayatin, Allah says:

(وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُمْ)

(Neither would it suit them)

(وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ)

(nor are they able.) meaning, even if they wanted to, they could not do it. Allah says:

(لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا
مُتَّصِدًّا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ)

(Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rent asunder by the fear of Allah) (59:21). Then Allah explains that even if they wanted to and were able to bear it and convey it, they still would not be able to achieve that, because they were prevented from hearing the Qur'an when it was brought down, for the heavens were filled with guardians and shooting stars at the time when the Qur'an was being revealed to the Messenger of Allah , so none of the Shayatin could hear even one letter of it, lest there be any confusion in the matter. This is a part of Allah's mercy towards His servants, protection of His Laws, and support for His Book and His Messenger . Allah says:

(إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَعْزُورُونَ)

(Verily, they have been removed far from hearing it.) This is like what Allah tells us about the Jinn:

وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَهَا مَلِيئَاتٍ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا
وَشُهْبًا - وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقْعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ فَمَنْ
يَسْتَمِعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا)

(And we have sought to reach the heaven; but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. And verily, we used to sit there in stations, to (steal) a hearing, but any who listens now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush.) until;

(أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا)

(or whether their Lord intends for them a right path))72:8-10(.

(فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُعَذَّبِينَ
- وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ - وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ
لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنَّي
بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ - وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ
الرَّحِيمِ - الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ)
وَتَقْلَبَكَ فِي السَّجْدِينَ- إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ-)

(213. So, invoke not with Allah another god lest you should be among those who receive punishment.) (214. And warn your tribe of near kindred.) (215. And be kind and humble to the believers who follow you.) (216. Then if they disobey you, say: "I am innocent of what you do.") (217. And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful,) (218. Who sees you when you stand up.) (219. And your movements among those who fall prostrate.) (220. Verily, He, only He, is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.)

The Command to warn His Tribe of near Kindred

Here Allah commands (His Prophet) to worship Him alone, with no partner or associate, and tells him that whoever associates others in worship with Him, He will punish them. Then Allah commands His Messenger to warn his tribe of near kindred, i.e., those who were most closely related to him, and to tell them that nothing could save any of them except for faith in Allah. Allah also commanded him to be kind and gentle with the believing servants of Allah who followed him, and to disown those who disobeyed him, no matter who they were. Allah said:

(فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(Then if they disobey you, say: "I am innocent of what you do.") This specific warning does not contradict the general warning; indeed it is a part of it, as Allah says elsewhere:

(لِيُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ ءَابَاؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غَافِلُونَ)

(In order that you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, so they are heedless.) (36:6),

(لِيُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا)

(that you may warn the Mother of the Towns and all around it) (42:7),

(وَأُنذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْ يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ)

(And warn therewith those who fear that they will be gathered before their Lord) (6:51),

(لِيُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَيُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا)

(that you may give glad tidings to those who have Taqwa, and warn with it the most quarrelsome people.) (19:97),

(لَأُنذِرَكُم بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ)

(that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach) (6:19), and

(وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ قَالَنَّارُ مَوْعِدُهُ)

(but those of the sects that reject it, the Fire will be their promised meeting place) (11:17). According to Sahih Muslim,)the Prophet said:(

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَأَسْمَعُ بِي أَحَدٌ مِنْ هَذِهِ
الْأُمَّةِ يَهُودِيٌّ وَلَا نَصْرَانِيٌّ، ثُمَّ لَأُؤْمِنُ بِي إِلَّا
دَخَلَ النَّارَ»

(By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, no one from these nations -- Jewish or Christian -- hears of me then does not believe in me, but he will enter Hell.) Many Hadiths have been narrated

concerning the revelation of this Ayah, some of which we will quote below: Imam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, recorded that Ibn `Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "When Allah revealed the Ayah,

(وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ)

(And warn your tribe of near kindred.), the Prophet went to As-Safa', climbed up and called out,

«يَا صَبَاحَاهُ»

(O people!) The people gathered around him, some coming of their own accord and others sending people on their behalf to find out what was happening. The Messenger of Allah said:

«يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، يَا بَنِي فِهْرٍ، يَا بَنِي لُؤَيٍّ،
أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ أَخْبَرْتُكُمْ أَنَّ خَيْلًا يَسْفَحُ هَذَا الْجَبَلَ تُرِيدُ
أَنْ تُغِيرَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَدَقْتُمُونِي؟»

(O Bani `Abd Al-Muttalib, O Bani Fihr, O Bani Lu'ayy! What do you think, if I told you that there was a cavalry at the foot of this mountain coming to attack you -- would you believe me) They said, "Yes." He said:

«فَإِنِّي نَذِيرٌ لَكُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ»

(Then I warn you of a great punishment that is close at hand.) Abu Lahab said, "May you perish for the rest of the day! You only called us to tell us this" Then Allah revealed:

(تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ)

(Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab and perish he!))111:1(This was also recorded by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i. Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her said: "When the Ayah:

(وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ)

(And warn your tribe of near kindred) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah stood up and said:

«يَا فَاطِمَةَ ابْنَةَ مُحَمَّدٍ، يَا صَفِيَّةَ ابْنَةَ
عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ
مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا سَلُونِي مِنْ مَالِي مَا شِئْتُمْ»

(O Fatimah daughter of Muhammad, O Safiyyah daughter of `Abd Al-Muttalib, O Bani `Abd Al-Muttalib, I cannot help you before Allah. Ask me for whatever you want of my wealth.) This was recorded by Muslim. Imam Ahmad recorded that Qabisah bin Mukhariq and Zuhayr bin `Amr said: "When the Ayah:

(وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ)

(And warn your tribe of near kindred.) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah climbed on top of a rock on the side of a mountain and started to call out:

«يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ مَنَافٍ، إِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ، وَإِنَّمَا مَثَلِي
وَمَثَلُكُمْ كَرَجُلٍ رَأَى الْعَدُوَّ فَذَهَبَ يَرَبُّهُ أَهْلَهُ
يَخْشَى أَنْ يَسْبِقُوهُ، فَجَعَلَ يُنَادِي وَيَهْتَفُ: يَا
صَبَاحَاهُ»

(O Bani `Abd Manaf, I am indeed a warner, and the parable of me and you is that of a man who sees the enemy so he goes to save his family, fearing that the enemy may reach them before he does.) And he started to call out, (O people!) It was also recorded by Muslim and An-Nasa'i. Allah's saying:

(وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ)

(And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful,) means, `in all your affairs, for He is your Helper, Protector and Supporter, and He is the One Who will cause you to prevail and will make your word supreme.'

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ)

(Who sees you when you stand up.) means, He is taking care of you. This is like the Ayah,

(وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا)

(So wait patiently for the decision of your Lord, for verily, you are under Our Eyes) (52:48) Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah,

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ)

(Who sees you when you stand up.) means, "To pray." `Ikrimah said: "He sees him when he stands and bows and prostrates." Al-Hasan said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ)

(Who sees you when you stand up.) "When you pray alone." Ad-Dahhak said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ)

(Who sees you when you stand up.) "When you are lying in bed and when you are sitting." Qatadah said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ)

(Who sees you) "When you are standing, when you are sitting, and in all other situations."

(وَتَقَلُّبِكَ فِي السَّجِدِينَ)

(And your movements among those who fall prostrate.) Qatadah said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ)

(وَتَقَلُّبِكَ فِي السَّجِدِينَ-)

(Who sees you when you stand up. And your movements among those who fall prostrate.) "When you pray, He sees you when you pray alone and when you pray in congregation." This was also the view of `Ikrimah, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Al-Hasan Al-Basri.

(إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ)

(Verily, He, only He, is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.) He hears all that His servants say and He knows all their movements, as He says:

(وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُوا مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْءَانٍ
وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ
نُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ)

(Neither you do any deed nor recite any portion of the Qur'an, nor you do any deed, but We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it) (10:61).

(هَلْ أَنْبَيْتُمْ عَلَىٰ مَنْ نَزَّلَ الشَّيْطَانُ - نَزَّلَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَقَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ - يُلْقُونَ السَّمْعَ وَأَكْثُرُهُمْ
كَذِبُونَ - وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ - أَلَمْ تَرَ
أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ - وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا
يَفْعَلُونَ - إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَانْتَصَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا
وَسَيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ)

(221. Shall I inform you upon whom the Shayatin descend) (222. They descend on every lying, sinful person (Athim).) (223. Who gives ear, and most of them are liars.) (224. As for the poets, the astray follow them,) (225. See you not that they speak about every subject in their poetry) (226. And that they say what they do not do.) (227. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and remember Allah much and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged. And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.)

Refutation of the Fabrications of the Idolators

Here Allah addresses those idolators who claimed that what was brought by the Messenger was not the truth but was merely something that he had made up by himself, or that it came to him in visions from the Jinn. Allah stated that His Messenger was above their claims and fabrications, and that what he had brought did indeed come from Allah, and that it was a revelation and inspiration, brought down by a noble, trustworthy and mighty angel. It did not come from the Shayatin, because they have no desire for anything like this Noble Qur'an -- they descend upon those who are like them, the lying fortune-tellers. Allah says:

(هَلْ أَنْبِئُكُمْ)

(Shall I inform you) meaning, shall I tell you,

(هَلْ أَنْبِئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَنْ تَنْزَلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ - تَنْزَلُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَقَاكٍ أَثِيمٍ)

(upon whom the Shayatin descend They descend on every lying, sinful person (Athim))
meaning, one whose speech is lies and fabrication.

(أَثِيمٍ)

(Athim) means, whose deeds are immoral. This is the person upon whom the Shayatin descend,
fortune-tellers and other sinful liars. The Shayatin are also sinful liars.

(يُلْقُونَ السَّمْعَ)

(Who gives ear,) means, they try to overhear what is said in the heavens, and they try to hear
something of the Unseen, then they add to it a hundred lies and tell it to their human
comrades, who then tell it to others. Then the people believe everything they say because they
were right about the one thing which was heard from the heavens. This was stated in an
authentic Hadith recorded by Al-Bukhari from `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, who
said, "The people asked the Prophet about fortune-tellers, and he said:

«إِنَّهُمْ لَيْسُوا بِشَيْءٍ»

(They are nothing.) They said: "O Messenger of Allah, they say things that come true." The
Prophet said:

«تِلْكَ الْكَلِمَةُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَخْطُفُهَا الْجِنُّ فَيُقْرِقِرُهَا
فِي أُذُنِ وَلِيِّهِ كَقْرِقَرَةِ الدَّجَاجِ، فَيَخْلِطُونَ مَعَهَا
أَكْثَرَ مِنْ مِائَةِ كَذْبَةٍ»

(That is a word of truth which the Jinn snatches, then he gabbles it like the clucking of a
chicken into the ear of his friend, but he mixes it with more than one hundred lies.) Al-Bukhari
also recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "The Prophet said:

«إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ الْأَمْرَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ضَرَبَتِ
الْمَلَائِكَةُ بِأَجْنِحَتِهَا خُضْعَانًا لِقَوْلِهِ، كَأَنَّهَا سِلْسِلَةٌ
عَلَى صَفْوَانٍ، فَإِذَا فُزِعَ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ قَالُوا: مَاذَا
قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ؟ قَالُوا (لِلَّذِي قَالَ): الْحَقُّ، وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ
الْكَبِيرُ، فَيَسْمَعُهَا مُسْتَرْقُو السَّمْعِ، وَمُسْتَرْقُو
السَّمْعِ هَكَذَا بَعْضُهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ وَصَفَ سُقْيَانُ
بِيَدِهِ، فَحَرَفَهَا وَبَدَّدَ بَيْنَ أَصَابِعِهِ فَيَسْمَعُ الْكَلِمَةَ
فَيُلْقِيهَا إِلَى مَنْ تَحْتَهُ، ثُمَّ يُلْقِيهَا الْآخِرُ إِلَى مَنْ
تَحْتَهُ، حَتَّى يُلْقِيهَا عَلَى لِسَانِ السَّاحِرِ أَوْ الْكَاهِنِ،
فَرُبَّمَا أَدْرَكَهُ الشَّهَابُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُلْقِيَهَا، وَرُبَّمَا
أَلْقَاهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يُدْرَكَهُ، فَيَكْذِبُ مَعَهَا مِائَةَ
كَذِبَةٍ، فَيُقَالُ: أَلَيْسَ قَدْ قَالَ لَنَا يَوْمَ كَذَا وَكَذَا: كَذَا
وَكَذَا؟ فَيُصَدَّقُ بِتِلْكَ الْكَلِمَةِ الَّتِي سُمِعَتْ مِنْ
السَّمَاءِ»

(When Allah decrees a matter in heaven, the angels beat their wings in submission to His decree, a chain beating on a rock. And when the fear in their hearts subsides, they say: "What is it that your Lord has said" They say: "The truth. And He is the Most High, the Most Great." Then when the Jinn who are listening out, one above the other) -- and Sufyan illustrated this with a gesture, holding his hand vertically with his fingers outspread -- (when they hear this, they throw it down from one to another, until it is passed to the fortune-teller or soothsayer. The shooting star may strike the Jinn before he passes it on, or he may pass it on before he is struck, and he adds to it one hundred lies, thus it is said: "Did he not tell us that on such and such a day, such and such would happen" So they believe him because of that one thing which was heard from the heavens.) This was recorded by Al-Bukhari. Al-Bukhari recorded from `Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her, that the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَحَدَّثُ فِي الْعَنَانِ وَالْعَنَانُ: الْغَمَامُ
بِالْأَمْرِ (يَكُونُ) فِي الْأَرْضِ، فَتَسْمَعُ الشَّيَاطِينُ
الْكَلِمَةَ، فَتَقْرُهَا فِي أُذُنِ الْكَاهِنِ كَمَا تُقْرُ
الْقَارُورَةُ، فَيَزِيدُونَ مَعَهَا مِائَةَ كَذِبَةٍ»

(The angels speak in the clouds about some matter on earth, and the Shayatin overhear what they say, so they tell it to the fortune-teller, gurgling into his ear like (a liquid poured) from a glass bottle, and he adds to it one hundred lies.)

Refutation of the Claim that the Prophet was a Poet

(وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ)

(As for the poets, the astray ones follow them.) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn `Abbas that this means: "The disbelievers follow the misguided among mankind and the Jinn." This was also the view of Mujahid, `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam, and others. `Ikrimah said, "Two poets would ridicule one another in verse, with one group of people supporting one and another group supporting the other. Hence Allah revealed the Ayah,

(وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ)

(As for the poets, the erring ones follow them.)

(أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ)

(See you not that they speak about every subject in their poetry) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn `Abbas that this means: "They indulge in every kind of nonsense." Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "They engage in every kind of verbal art." This was also the view of Mujahid and others.

(وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ)

(And that they say what they do not do.) Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said that at the time of the Messenger of Allah , two men, one from among the Ansar and one from another tribe, were ridiculing one another in verse, and each one of them was supported by a group of his own people, who were the foolish ones, and Allah said:

وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ - أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ
وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ - وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ)

(As for the poets, the erring ones follow them. See you not that they speak about every subject in their poetry And that they say what they do not do.) What is meant here is that the Messenger , to whom this Qur'an was revealed, was not a soothsayer or a poet, because his situation was quite obviously different to theirs, as Allah says:

وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشُّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ
وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ)

(And We have not taught him poetry, nor is it suitable for him. This is only a Reminder and a plain Qur'an.) (36:69),

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ - وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ
قَلِيلًا مَّا تُوْمِنُونَ - وَلَا يَقُولُ كَمَا هِن قَلِيلًا مَّا
تَذْكُرُونَ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(That this is verily, the word of an honored Messenger. It is not the word of a poet, little is that you believe! Nor is it the word of a soothsayer, little is that you remember! This is the Revelation sent down from the Lord of all that exists.) (69:40-43)

The Exception of the Poets of Islam

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ)

(Except those who believe and do righteous deeds,) Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated from Yazid bin `Abdullah bin Qusayt, that Abu Al-Hasan Salim Al-Barrad, the freed servant of Tamim Ad-Dari said: "When the Ayah --

وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ)

(As for the poets, the erring ones follow them.) was revealed, Hassan bin Thabit, `Abdullah bin Rawahah and Ka' b bin Malik came to the Messenger of Allah , weeping, and said: "Allah knew when He revealed this Ayah that we are poets. The Prophet recited to them the Ayah,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ)

(Except those who believe and do righteous deeds,) and said:

«أَنْتُمْ»

((This means) you.)

وَذَكِّرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا)

(and remember Allah much). He said:

«أَنْتُمْ»

((This means) you.)

وَأَنْتَصِرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا)

(and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged.) He said:

«أَنْتُمْ»

((This means) you.) This was recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir from the narration of Ibn Ishaq. But this Surah was revealed in Makkah, so how could the reason for its revelation be the poets of the Ansar This is something worth thinking about. The reports that have been narrated about this are all Mursal and cannot be relied on. And Allah knows best. But this exception could include the poets of the Ansar and others. It even includes those poets of the Jahiliyyah who indulged in condemning Islam and its followers, then repented and turned to Allah, and gave up what they used to do and started to do righteous deeds and remember Allah much, to make up for the bad things that they had previously said, for good deeds wipe out bad deeds. So they praised Islam and its followers in order to make up for their insults, as the poet (`Abdullah bin Az-Zab`ari said when he became Muslim: "O Messenger of Allah, indeed my tongue will try to make up for things it said when I was bad -- When I went along with the Shaytan during the years of misguidance, and whoever inclines towards his way is in a state of loss." Similarly, Abu Sufyan bin Al-Harith bin `Abd Al-Muttalib was one of the most hostile people towards the Prophet , even though he was his cousin, and he was the one who used to mock him the most. But when he became Muslim, there was no one more beloved to him than the Messenger of Allah . He began to praise the Messenger of Allah where he had mocked him, and take him as a close friend where he had regarded him as an enemy.

وَأَنْتَصِرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا)

(and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged.) Ibn ` Abbas said, "They responded in kind to the disbelievers who used to ridicule the believers in verse." This was also the view of Mujahid, Qatadah and several others. It was also recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said to Hassan:

«اهْجُهُمْ»

(Ridicule them in verse.) Or he said:

«هَاجِهِمْ وَجِبْرِيلُ مَعَكَ»

(Ridicule them in verse, and Jibril is with you.) Imam Ahmad recorded that Ka` b bin Malik said to the Prophet , "Allah has revealed what He revealed about the poets. The Messenger of Allah said:

«إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ يُجَاهِدُ بِسَيْفِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي
بِيَدِهِ لَكَأَنَّ مَا تَرْمُونَهُمْ بِهِ نَضْحُ النَّبْلِ»

(The believer wages Jihad with his sword and with his tongue, By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, it is as if you are attacking them with arrows.)

(وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ)

(And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.) This is like the Ayah,

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعذِرَتُهُمْ)

(The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to wrongdoers) (40: 52). According to the Sahih, the Messenger of Allah said:

«إِيَّاكُمْ وَالظُّلْمَ، فَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ظُلُمَاتٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(Beware of wrongdoing, for wrongdoing will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection.) Qatadah bin Di` amah said concerning the Ayah --

(وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ)

(And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.) this refers to the poets and others. This is the end of the Tafsir Surat Ash-Shu` ara'. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.