

13. THUNDER

(*AL-RA 'D*)

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

¹ *Alif Lam Mim Ra*

These are the verses of the Book. What is sent down to you from your Lord is the truth, yet most men do not believe in it. ² It was God who raised the heavens with no visible supports, and then established Himself on the throne; He has regulated the sun and the moon, so that each will pursue its course for an appointed time; He ordains all things and makes plain His revelations, so that you may be certain of meeting your Lord; ³ it was He who spread out the earth and placed upon it mountains and rivers, and fruits of every kind in male and female pairs. He drew the veil of night over the day. In all this, truly, there are signs for people who reflect.

⁴ On the earth are diverse tracts, adjoining one another: vineyards and cornfields and groves of palm, the single and the clustered. Their fruits are nourished by the same water; yet We make the taste of some excel that of others. In this also are signs for people who understand.

⁵ If anything can astonish you, you should surely be astonished at their asking, 'What? When we become

dust, shall we be created anew?’ These are the ones who deny their Lord: around their necks there shall be fetters. They are the inheritors of the Fire, and shall abide therein forever.

⁶ They demand that you hasten on the evil rather than the good, although there have been many examples of punishment before them—your Lord is full of forgiveness for mankind, despite their wrongdoings, but He is truly severe in punishment.

⁷ Those who deny the truth ask, ‘Why has no sign been sent down to him by His Lord?’ But you are only a warner; every people has its guide.

⁸ God knows what every female bears. He knows of every change within the womb. For everything He has a proper measure; ⁹ He is the knower of the unseen and the visible, the Great, the Most-Exalted. ¹⁰ It makes no difference whether you converse in secret or aloud, whether you hide under the cloak of night or walk about freely in the light of day.

¹¹ Each has guardian angels before him and behind him, who watch him at God’s command. God does not change the condition of a people’s lot, unless they change what is in their hearts. But when God decrees punishment for a people, none can ward it off. Besides Him, they have no protector.

¹² It is He who shows you the lightning, inspiring fear and hope, and gathers up the heavy clouds; ¹³ and the thunder glorifies Him with His praise and the

angels do so too in awe of Him, and He sends His thunderbolts to strike anyone He pleases, yet they dispute about God, who is inexorable in His power.

¹⁴ The only true appeal is to God alone; those they appeal to instead of Him will never respond to them in any way. They are like a man who stretches forth his hands toward the water, so that it may reach his mouth, but it never does. The calls of those who deny the truth are all in vain.

¹⁵ All who dwell in heavens and on the earth submit to God alone, willingly or unwillingly, as do their shadows in the mornings and in the evenings. ¹⁶ Say, 'Who is Lord of the heavens and the earth?' Say, 'God.' Say, 'Why do you take protectors other than Him, who can neither benefit nor harm even themselves?' Say, 'Are the blind and the seeing equal? Is darkness equal to the light? Or have they assigned partners to God who create as He creates, so that both creations appear to them alike?' Say, 'God is the Creator of all things. He is the One, the Almighty.'

¹⁷ He sends down water from the sky that fills riverbeds to overflowing, each according to its measure. The torrent carries along swelling foam, akin to what rises from smelted ore from which man makes ornaments and tools. God thus depicts truth and falsehood. The scum is cast away, but whatever is of use to man remains behind. God thus speaks in parables.

¹⁸ There will be the best of rewards for those who respond to their Lord: while those who do not respond to Him—if they possessed all that is on earth and twice as much, they would surely offer it as ransom [on the Day of Judgement];—will have the worst reckoning and their goal is Hell: and how evil a resting-place!

¹⁹ Can one who knows that whatever has been sent down to you from your Lord is the Truth, be equal to one who is blind? It is only those who are endowed with insight who pay heed; ²⁰ they who are true to their bond with God and never break their covenant; ²¹ and those who join together what God has commanded to be joined, and fear their Lord and dread the harshness of the reckoning; ²² those who are steadfast in seeking the favour of their Lord, and pray regularly and spend secretly and openly out of what We have provided them with, and ward off evil with good. Theirs shall be the final abode. ²³ They shall enter the eternal Gardens of Eden, along with the righteous from among their fathers, wives and descendants. From every gate the angels will come to them, saying, ²⁴ ‘Peace be upon you for all that you have steadfastly endured. How excellent is the final abode!’

²⁵ As for those who break the covenant of God, after having confirmed it, who cut asunder what God has commanded to be joined and spread corruption in the land, a curse shall be laid on them; they shall have an

evil abide.^a ²⁶ God gives abundantly to whom He will and sparingly to whom He pleases—[those who deny the truth] rejoice in the life of this world; yet the life of this world is but a fleeting pleasure compared with the life to come.

²⁷ Those who deny the truth ask, ‘Why has no Sign been sent down to him by his Lord?’ Say, ‘God lets go astray those whom He wills and guides to Himself those who turn to Him,’ ²⁸ those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of God—surely in the remembrance of God hearts can find comfort. ²⁹ ‘As for those who believe and do righteous deeds—blissful is their end.’

³⁰ Thus We have sent you to a people, before whom other peoples have passed away, so that you may recite to them what We have revealed to you. Yet they deny the Gracious God. Say, ‘He is my Lord; there is no god but He. In Him I put my trust and to Him I shall return.’

³¹ Even if there were a Quran by which mountains could be set in motion, by which the earth could be

^a Man is bound to God by the bond of nature and to his fellow beings by the bond of humanity. Breaking both bonds leads to creating an imbalance on God’s earth. Loving a balanced, peaceful life while on God’s earth means making his life subject to the above-mentioned bonds. In liberating himself from these bonds—caring nothing for the rights of God or men—he only creates mischief.

rent asunder, or by which the dead could be made to speak [they would not believe in it]. Surely all things are subject to God's will. Are the faithful unaware that, had He pleased, God could have guided all mankind? Calamity shall not cease to strike those who deny the truth because of their misdeeds or to strike near their homes, until God's promise be fulfilled. God will not fail to keep His promise. ³² Other messengers were also mocked before you; but though I granted respite to those who denied the truth, at last I seized them, and how awful was My punishment.

³³ Is then He who watches over every soul and its actions [like any other]? Yet they ascribe partners to God. Say, 'Name them! Or do you presume to inform Him of something on the earth of which He does not know? Or, is all this only your verbal assertion?' Indeed, their devices seem fair to those who deny the truth, and they are kept back from the right path. There can be no guide for those whom God lets go astray. ³⁴ Punishment awaits them in the present life: but harsher is the punishment of the Hereafter—no one will defend them against God.

³⁵ Such is the Paradise which the righteous have been promised: it is watered by running streams: eternal is its fruit, and eternal is its shade. That is the recompense of those who are righteous, but the recompense of those who deny the truth is the Fire.

³⁶ Those to whom We sent the Scriptures rejoice in

what has been revealed to you, while some factions deny parts of it. Say to them, 'I have been commanded only to worship God and not to associate partners with Him: to Him I pray and to Him I shall return.'³⁷ Thus We have revealed it as a [clear] commandment in Arabic. If you followed their desires after all the knowledge which has come to you, you would have no protector or shield against God.³⁸ We sent down messengers before you and gave them wives and children. Yet it was not possible for a messenger to bring a sign, save by the command of God. Every age has had its revelation.³⁹ God abrogates or confirms what He pleases; with Him is the source of all commandments.

⁴⁰ Whether We show you part of what We have promised them or cause you to pass away [before that], your mission is only to give warning; it is for Us to do the reckoning.⁴¹ Do they not see how We come to [their] land and shrink its borders? God decides—no one can reverse His decision—and He is swift in reckoning.⁴² Those before them did also devise plots; but in all things the master planning is God's. He knows what each soul does. Those who deny the truth shall soon know for whom is the final abode.

⁴³ Those who deny the truth say, 'You are not God's messenger.' Say, 'Sufficient is God as my witness between me and you, and those who have knowledge of the Book.'

14. ABRAHAM (*IBRAHIM*)

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

¹ *Alif Lam Ra*

We have revealed to you this Book so that, by their Lord's command, you may lead men from darkness to the light: to the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy One, ² to God, who possesses whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth. Woe to those who deny the truth, for they shall be sternly punished! ³ Woe to those who love this life more than the Hereafter; who turn others away from the path of God and seek to make it crooked. They have gone far astray.

⁴ Each messenger We have sent has spoken in the language of his own people, so that he might make the message clear to them. But God lets go astray whom He will and guides whom He pleases. He is the Almighty, the All Wise.

⁵ We sent Moses with Our signs, saying, 'Lead your people out of the darkness into the light, and remind them of God's Days. In that there are signs for every patient, grateful person.'

⁶ Moses said to his people, 'Remember God's goodness to you when He delivered you from Pharaoh's people who were treating you cruelly, putting your

sons to death and sparing only your daughters. Surely that was a great trial from your Lord.⁷ Remember also the time when your Lord declared, “If you are grateful, I will surely bestow more favours on you; but if you are ungrateful, then know that My punishment is severe indeed.”⁸ Moses said, ‘Even if you should deny the truth, and all who dwell on earth together, God is self-sufficient, praiseworthy.’

⁹ Has not news come to you concerning those who preceded you, such as Noah’s people, and the ‘Ad and Thamud, as well as those who came after them? Only God knows who they were. The messengers came to them with clear signs, but they put their hands to their mouths saying, ‘We deny the message you have been sent with. We have grave doubts about what you are inviting us to do.’

¹⁰ Their messengers said, ‘Is there any doubt about God, the Originator of the heavens and earth? He calls you to Him in order to forgive you some of your offences and to reprieve you for a specific period.’ They said, ‘You are only human beings like ourselves! You want to divert us from what our forefathers have been worshipping, so bring us some clear authority.’

¹¹ Their messengers replied, ‘We are indeed mortals like yourselves. But God bestows His grace on such of His servants as He chooses. We cannot give you miracles, except by God’s leave. In God let true believers put their trust—¹² and why should we not put

our trust in God when He has already guided us to our paths? We will, surely, bear with patience all the harm you do us. So in God let those who trust put their trust.’

¹³ Those who deny the truth said to their messengers, ‘We shall banish you from our land unless you return to our ways.’ But their Lord inspired the messengers, saying, ‘We shall destroy the evil-doers, ¹⁴ and settle you on the land to succeed them. That is [in store] for anyone who is in awe of meeting Me, and who heeds My warnings.’

¹⁵ When they sought Our Judgement, every stubborn oppressor was frustrated. ¹⁶ Beyond him is Hell, and he shall drink putrid water; ¹⁷ he will sip and will not find it easy to swallow it. Death will approach him from every quarter, yet he will not die. More intense suffering will lie ahead of him.

¹⁸ The works of those who deny their Lord are like ashes which the wind scatters on a stormy day: they shall gain nothing from what they do. To act thus is to stray far into error. ¹⁹ Do you not see that God has created the heavens and the earth for a purpose? He can eliminate you if He wills and bring into being a new creation: ²⁰ that is no difficult thing for God.

²¹ They shall all appear before God and the weak will say to those who behaved proudly, ‘We were your followers. Can you protect us from God’s punishment?’ They will reply, ‘Had God given us guidance, we would have guided you. It is all the

same whether we are patient or impatient; there is no escape for us.’

²² When the Judgement has been passed, Satan will say to them, ‘God made you a true promise; I too made you promises, but I failed you. I had no authority over you, except that I called you and you responded to me. Do not now blame me, but blame yourselves! I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I reject your former act in associating me with God.’ The wrongdoers will have a painful punishment.

²³ But those who believed and did good deeds will be brought into Gardens with rivers flowing through them. They shall abide there forever by their Lord’s permission, and will be welcomed with the greeting, ‘Peace’!

²⁴ Do you not see how God compares a good word to a good tree? Its root is firm and its branches are in the sky, ²⁵ it yields its fruit each season with its Lord’s permission—God makes such comparisons for people, in order that they may take heed—²⁶ but an evil word is like an evil tree torn out of the earth; it has no foothold.

²⁷ God will strengthen the believers with His steadfast word, both in the present life and in the Hereafter. God lets the wrongdoers go astray. He does what He wills.

²⁸ Do you not see those who, in exchange for God’s favour, offer only ingratitude and cause their people

to descend into the Abode of Ruin? ²⁹ In Hell shall they burn; an evil place to stay. ³⁰ They have set up rivals to God to lead people away from His path. Say, ‘Enjoy yourselves awhile: you will then proceed to the Fire.’

³¹ Tell My servants, those who are true believers, to keep up prayer and to give alms secretly and openly out of what We have given them, before the Day comes when there will be neither trading nor befriending.

³² It was God who created the heavens and the earth. He sends down water from the sky with which He brings forth fruits for your sustenance; He has made ships subservient to you, so that they may sail across the sea by His command; and has subjected the rivers to you. ³³ He has also subjected to you the sun and the moon, both steadfastly pursuing their courses. He has subjected to you the night as well as the day; ³⁴ He has given you all that you asked of Him; and if you try to reckon up God’s favours, you will not be able to count them. Truly man is very unjust, very ungrateful.

³⁵ [Remember] when Abraham said, ‘My Lord, make this a city of peace and help me and my children to keep away from worshipping idols. ³⁶ My Lord, they have led so many men astray! Anyone who follows me is with me, but if anyone turns against me, You are surely forgiving and merciful.

³⁷ O Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in an uncultivable valley near Your Sacred House, Lord, so

that they might establish their prayers. So, make people's hearts incline towards them and provide them with fruits so that they may be grateful.

³⁸ Lord, You have knowledge of all that we hide and all that we reveal: nothing in heaven or on earth is hidden from God. ³⁹ Praise be to God who has bestowed upon me, despite my old age, Ishmael and Isaac. Surely my Lord is the hearer of prayer. ⁴⁰ Lord, grant that I may keep up the prayer, and so may my offspring. My Lord, accept my prayer. ⁴¹ Forgive me, Lord, and forgive my parents and all the believers on the Day of Reckoning.'

⁴² Do not think God is unaware of the wrongdoers' actions. He only gives them respite till the Day on which all eyes will stare fixedly in horror. ⁴³ They will hurry on in fright, their heads lifted up, their gaze directed forward, their minds utterly void.

⁴⁴ Warn men of the Day when the punishment will come upon them, and when the wrongdoers will say, 'Our Lord, grant us respite for a short while. We will respond to Your call and will follow the messengers.' [But God will answer], are you not those who swore that you would never suffer any decline? ⁴⁵ You lived in the dwellings of those who wronged themselves, and it was made clear to you how We had dealt with them and We gave you many examples. ⁴⁶ They hatched their plots; but these plots were all within God's knowledge. Though their plots were such as to

shake the mountains, [God will bring their plots to nothing].

⁴⁷ Never think that God will fail in His promise to His messengers. God is mighty and capable of retribution. ⁴⁸ On the Day when the earth shall be changed into another earth, as shall be the heavens, they will all appear before God, the One, the Most Supreme. ⁴⁹ On that Day you shall see the guilty bound in chains, ⁵⁰ their garments shall be of pitch and the fire shall envelop their faces. ⁵¹ God will requite each soul according to its deeds. Swift is God's reckoning. ⁵² This is a message for mankind. Let them take warning from it and know that He is but one God. Let those possessed of understanding may take heed.

15. THE ROCKY TRACT (*AL-HIJR*)

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

¹ *Alif Lam Ra*

These are the verses of a clear Book, the Quran. ² A time will surely come when those who are bent on denying the truth will wish that they had surrendered themselves to God, ³ so leave them to eat and enjoy themselves and let them be beguiled by vain hopes; for soon they will realise [the truth]. ⁴ We have never

destroyed a township without a definite decree having been issued; ⁵ no people can forestall their doom, nor can they delay it.

⁶ They say, ‘You to whom the Reminder [the Quran] has been sent down, you are surely possessed. ⁷ Why do you not bring down the angels upon us, if you are truthful?’ ⁸ But We send down the angels only to bring justice and then they will not be reprieved.

⁹ It is We who have sent down the Reminder and We will, most surely, safeguard it.

¹⁰ We sent messengers before you to the previous peoples, ¹¹ but there was never a messenger who came to them but they mocked him: ¹² thus We cause this [habit of mocking] to enter into the hearts of the sinful. ¹³ They will not believe in it, though they have before them the example of former peoples, ¹⁴ and even if We opened to them a door from heaven, and they began ascending through it, ¹⁵ they would still say, ‘Our eyes have been dazzled. We are bewitched.’

¹⁶ We have placed constellations in heaven and have beautified it for beholders, ¹⁷ and We have guarded it from every accursed devil: ¹⁸ but if anyone eavesdrops, he is pursued by a bright flaming fire.

¹⁹ We have spread out the earth, and set upon it firm mountains and caused everything to grow in due proportion. ²⁰ We have provided therein a means of livelihood for you and for all those creatures for whom you do not provide.

²¹ There is not a thing but its storehouses are with Us. But We only send down each thing in an appropriate measure: ²² We let loose fertilizing winds, and bring water from the sky for you to drink; and you could not have stored it up for yourselves.

²³ Truly, it is We who bring to life and We who cause death and We are the inheritor of all things. ²⁴ We know those who lived before you and those who will come after you. ²⁵ It is your Lord who will gather them. He is all wise and all knowing.

²⁶ We created man out of dry clay, from moulded mud, ²⁷ and the jinn We had created before from flaming fire.

²⁸ Your Lord said to the angels, ‘I am about to bring into being a man wrought from mud. ²⁹ When I have formed him and breathed My spirit into him, fall down in prostration before him,’ ³⁰ then the angels all prostrated themselves together. ³¹ But Satan did not; he refused to join those who prostrated themselves. ³² God asked him, ‘What is the matter with you, that you are not among those who have prostrated themselves?’ ³³ He replied, ‘I am not one to prostrate myself to a man whom You have created out of a clay of moulded mud.’

³⁴ God said, ‘Then get out of here; for you are accursed, ³⁵ and the curse shall be on you till the Day of Judgement!’ ³⁶ Satan said, ‘O my Lord! Grant me

respite till the Day of Resurrection.’³⁷ He said, ‘You are granted respite³⁸ till that Appointed Day.’

³⁹ He said, ‘My Lord, since You have let me go astray. I shall make the path of error seem alluring to them on the earth and shall mislead them all,⁴⁰ except for Your chosen servants.’

⁴¹ God said, ‘This is the path which leads straight to Me.⁴² Surely, you shall have no power over My true servants, except those misguided ones who choose to follow you.⁴³ Surely, Hell is the place to which they are destined,⁴⁴ it has seven gates: and each gate has a portion of them allotted to it.

⁴⁵ Truly, the God-fearing shall dwell amid gardens and fountains—⁴⁶ “Enter therein in peace and security!”—⁴⁷ We shall cleanse their hearts of all traces of ill-will; they will be like brethren seated on couches facing one another.⁴⁸ They will not be affected by any weariness there, and they will never be made to leave.’⁴⁹ Tell My servants that I alone am the Forgiving, the Merciful One,⁵⁰ and that My punishment is a painful punishment.

⁵¹ Tell them about Abraham’s guests:⁵² when they came to him they greeted him with: ‘Peace.’ He said, ‘We feel afraid of you.’⁵³ They said, ‘Do not be afraid. We come to you with good news. You shall have a son who shall be endowed with great knowledge.’⁵⁴ He said, ‘Do you bring me such news despite my old age? What kind of good news are you

bringing me?’ ⁵⁵ They said, ‘We have, indeed, given you glad tidings in truth; do not therefore despair.’ ⁵⁶ He said, ‘Who but the misguided despair of the mercy of their Lord?’

⁵⁷ Then he asked, ‘What then is your business, O messengers?’ ⁵⁸ They said, ‘We have been sent forth to a guilty people.’ ⁵⁹ Except for Lot’s household, all of whom we shall rescue, ⁶⁰ except his wife. We have decreed that she will be among those who remain behind [and will be lost].

⁶¹ When the messengers came to Lot and his family, ⁶² he said, ‘You are strangers [to me].’ ⁶³ They said, ‘No, but we bring you news about what they disputed, ⁶⁴ and we have come to you with the truth, and surely we are truthful, ⁶⁵ so leave with your family some time in the latter part of the night, and walk behind them. Let none of you look back. Go where you are commanded.’ ⁶⁶ We communicated to him Our decree that the guilty ones would be destroyed by the morning.

⁶⁷ The people of the town came along, revelling, ⁶⁸ and he told them, ‘These are my guests, so do not disgrace me. ⁶⁹ Fear God and do not shame me.’ ⁷⁰ They said, ‘Did we not forbid you to extend hospitality to strangers?’ ⁷¹ He said, ‘Here are my daughters, if you must act in this way.’

⁷² By your life, they wandered on in their wild intoxication ⁷³ and thereupon the blast [of Our

punishment] overtook them at sunrise. ⁷⁴ We turned the town upside down and rained upon them stones of clay. ⁷⁵ There are certainly signs in that for those who can learn a lesson—⁷⁶ it is still there on the highway—⁷⁷ surely in this there is a sign for those who believe.

⁷⁸ The people of the Wood were also surely wrongdoers. ⁷⁹ So We took vengeance on them. Both are still there on the highway, plain for all to see. ⁸⁰ The people of al-Hijr also rejected Our messengers: ⁸¹ We gave them Our signs, but they turned away from them. ⁸² They carved out dwellings in the mountains, and lived in security—⁸³ the blast overtook them early one morning. ⁸⁴ All that they had acquired was of no avail to them.

⁸⁵ We have created the heavens and the earth and all that is between the two in accordance with the requirements of truth and wisdom. The Hour is surely coming. So overlook [their faults] with gracious forgiveness. ⁸⁶ Surely your Lord is the All Knowing Creator!

⁸⁷ We have given you the seven oft-recited verses and the great Quran. ⁸⁸ Do not strain your eyes towards the worldly benefits We have bestowed on some of them, nor grieve on their account. Lower your wing of mercy for the believers ⁸⁹ and say, 'I am, indeed, a plain warner,' ⁹⁰ such as We send down for those who are divisive, ⁹¹ and who have broken the Scripture into

fragments—⁹² by your Lord, We shall question them all ⁹³ about whatever they had been doing!

⁹⁴ Proclaim openly what you are commanded, and avoid the polytheists. ⁹⁵ We will, surely, suffice you against those who mock, ⁹⁶ who set up another god with God, but they shall soon learn. ⁹⁷ We do indeed know how your heart is distressed at what they say. ⁹⁸ But glorify your Lord with His praise, and prostrate yourself: ⁹⁹ and worship your Lord until what is certain [death] comes to you.

16. BEES (*AL-NAHL*)

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

¹ The decree of God is at hand, so do not seek to hasten it. Holy is He, and exalted far above what they associate with Him. ² He sends down the angels with revelations by His command to whoever of His servants He pleases, saying, ‘Warn mankind that there is no god save Me, so fear Me.’ ³ He created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose. He is exalted above anything they associate with Him.

⁴ He created man out of a [mere] drop of sperm: yet he shows himself to be openly contentious! ⁵ He has created cattle for you: from them you derive food and clothing and numerous other benefits; ⁶ how pleasant

they look when you bring them home in the evenings and when you take them out to pasture in the mornings.⁷ They carry your loads to places which you could otherwise not reach without great hardship—surely, your Lord is compassionate and merciful—⁸ He has created horses, mules and donkeys, so that you may ride them, and also so that they may be put on show, and He creates other things beyond your knowledge.

⁹ The straight way leads to God and there are ways which deviate from the right course. If He so wished, He would guide you all.

¹⁰ It is He who sends down water from the sky. From it you drink and with it trees grow on which you pasture your cattle. ¹¹ And with it He grows for you corn, and the olive and the date-palm and the grape, and all kinds of fruits. Surely, in that is a sign for a people who reflect.

¹² He has made the night and the day and the sun and the moon subservient to you; and all the stars are subservient to His command. Surely in this there are signs for men of understanding. ¹³ On the earth He has fashioned for you objects of various hues: there is certainly a sign in that for people who pay heed.

¹⁴ It is He who subjected to you the sea, so that you may eat its fresh seafood and bring forth from it ornaments to wear. You see the ships cleaving through

it. All this, so that you may seek His bounty and feel grateful.

¹⁵ He has set up on the earth firm mountains, lest it shake under you, and rivers and tracks, so that you may find your way, ¹⁶ and He has set up other landmarks. By these and by the stars people set their course.

¹⁷ Is He, then, who creates like him who does not create? Will you not, then, take heed? ¹⁸ If you tried to count God's blessings, you would never be able to number them. God is ever forgiving and most merciful. ¹⁹ God knows all that you conceal and all that you reveal.

²⁰ Those you call on besides God cannot create anything. They are themselves created. ²¹ They are dead, not living; nor do they know when they will be raised to life. ²² Your God is the One God. As for those who do not believe in the Hereafter, their hearts refuse to admit the truth and they are arrogant. ²³ God surely knows what they conceal and what they reveal. He does not love the arrogant.

²⁴ When they are asked, 'What is it that your Lord has sent down?' they say, 'Stories of the ancients.'
²⁵ Let them bear all their own burdens on Resurrection Day as well as some of the burdens of those whom they lead astray without any knowledge. How evil the load with which they shall be burdened!

²⁶ Those who went before them also plotted. But

God struck at the foundations of their building, and the roof fell down upon them from above. The punishment came upon them from where they did not expect.

²⁷ Then on the Day of Resurrection He will disgrace them, and say, ‘Where are My partners for whose sake you opposed [My guidance]?’ Those given knowledge will say, ‘This Day humiliation and affliction will surely befall those who have been denying the truth.’

²⁸ Those whose lives the angels take while they are wronging their own souls will offer submission saying, ‘We were not doing anything evil!’ ‘Indeed!’ the angels will reply, ‘God is aware of what you have been doing,’ ²⁹ so enter the gates of Hell. There you shall abide forever.’ Evil indeed is the abode of the arrogant.

³⁰ When those who fear God are asked, ‘What has your Lord sent down?’ Their reply is, ‘Goodness!’ The reward of those who do good works in this world is good, but the abode of the Hereafter is even better. The home of the righteous is indeed excellent. ³¹ They will enter Gardens of Eternity, where rivers will flow at their feet. There they will have all that they wish for. Thus God rewards the righteous, ³² those whose lives the angels take in a state of purity, saying [to them], ‘Peace be on you; enter the Garden, because of [the good] which you did [in the world].’

³³ Are they waiting for the angels to come to them, or the fulfillment of your Lord’s will? Those who went before them did the same. God did not wrong them;

rather they wronged themselves.³⁴ The evil results of their deeds overtook them, and that which they used to mock at encompassed them.

³⁵ Those who associate [others with God] say, ‘If God had so willed we would not have worshipped anything besides Him, neither we nor our fathers, nor would we have forbidden anything without His sanction.’ So did those who went before them. The duty of the messengers is only to convey the message clearly.

³⁶ We raised among every people a messenger who enjoined, ‘Worship God alone and shun the evil one.’ Then among them were some whom God guided and among them were others who became deserving of ruin. So travel across the earth and observe what was the end of those who rejected the messengers.³⁷ Though you [Prophet] may be eager to guide them, God does not guide those whom He lets go astray, [because of their refusal to give a positive response to the truth]. They will have no supporters.

³⁸ They swear their strongest oaths by God that God will never raise the dead to life—nonetheless, it is a promise truly binding on Him, even though most people do not realize it—³⁹ this is so that He may make clear to them what they have differed about and so that those who are bent on denying the truth may realize that they were lying.⁴⁰ When We will something to happen, all that We say is, ‘Be!’ and it is.

⁴¹ As for those who, after persecution, migrated from their homes for the cause of God, We will provide them with a goodly abode in this life: but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater, if they only knew it. ⁴² They are the ones who are steadfast and put their trust in their Lord.

⁴³ Before you also the messengers We sent were but [mortal] men to whom We vouchsafed revelation. Ask the People of the Book, if you do not know. ⁴⁴ [We sent them] with clear signs and scriptures. We have sent down the Reminder to you, to enable you to make clear to mankind what has been sent down to them, so that they may reflect upon it.

⁴⁵ Do those who devise evil plans feel secure that God will not make them sink into the land, or that a punishment will not come upon them from where they least expect? ⁴⁶ Or that He will not seize them suddenly in their daily activities and they will not be able to frustrate Him? ⁴⁷ Or that He will not punish them by giving them a fright? Indeed, your Lord is kind and merciful.

⁴⁸ Have they not observed the things God has created, casting their shadows right and left, prostrating themselves before God in all humility? ⁴⁹ Everything in the heavens and all the creatures on the earth prostrate themselves before God, as do the angels, and they do not behave proudly: ⁵⁰ they fear their Lord above them, and do what they are commanded.

⁵¹ God says, ‘Do not take two gods. He is only One God. So fear Me alone.’ ⁵² To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and on the earth, and obedience is due to Him alone. Will you then fear anyone other than God?

⁵³ Whatever blessing you have is from God, and to Him you turn for help when distress befalls you, ⁵⁴ yet no sooner does He relieve your distress than some among you set up other partners besides their Lord, ⁵⁵ showing no gratitude for what We have given them. Enjoy yourselves awhile; but soon you will know! ⁵⁶ They even appoint a share of what We have provided for them [to false gods] they know nothing of. You shall surely be questioned about the lies you have been fabricating.

⁵⁷ They assign daughters to God—glory be to Him!—but for themselves [sons] that they desire to have. ⁵⁸ When the birth of a girl is announced to any of them, his face darkens and he is filled with gloom. ⁵⁹ In his shame he hides himself away from his people, because of the bad news he has been given. Should he keep her and feel disgraced or bury her in the dust? How ill they judge! ⁶⁰ The attribute of evil applies to those who do not believe in the Hereafter, while to God applies the highest attribute, for He is Mighty, the Wise.

⁶¹ If God were to take people to task for their wrongdoing, He would not leave even one living

creature on earth, but He gives them respite till an appointed time: when their time comes they cannot delay it for an hour, nor can they bring it forward.

⁶² They attribute to God what they themselves dislike and their tongues utter the lie that all good things are for themselves. Without doubt, the Fire awaits them, and they shall be hastened on into it.

⁶³ By God! We have sent messengers before you to other nations. But Satan made their [foul] deeds seem fair to them and today he is their patron. They shall have a painful punishment. ⁶⁴ We have only sent down the Book to you so that you can make clear to them that concerning which they differ, and as a guidance and a mercy to people who believe.

⁶⁵ God sends down water from the sky and with it revives the earth when it is dead. There is truly a sign in this for people who listen.

⁶⁶ There is also a lesson for you in cattle. From the contents of their bellies, from between the dung and blood, We give you pure milk to drink, pleasant for those who drink it. ⁶⁷ From the fruit of the date palm and the grapes you derive intoxicants as well as wholesome food. Surely in this there is a sign for men of understanding.

⁶⁸ Your Lord inspired the bee, saying, ‘Make your homes in the mountains, in the trees, and also in the structures which men erect. ⁶⁹ Then feed on every kind of fruit, and follow the trodden paths of your Lord.’

From its belly comes a drink with different colours which provides healing for mankind. Indeed, in this there is a sign for people who give thought.

⁷⁰ God created you; then He shall cause you to die: and some shall have their lives prolonged to abject old age, ceasing to know anything after once having had knowledge. God is all knowing and powerful.

⁷¹ God has given some of you more provision than others. Those who have been given more are unwilling to pass their provision to the servants they possess so that they become their equals. Will they then deny the favour of God?

⁷² God has given you wives from among yourselves, and given you children and grandchildren from your wives, and provided wholesome things for you. Will they then believe in falsehood and deny God's favours?

⁷³ They worship, instead of God, things that have no control over their provision from the heavens or the earth in any way, nor do they have any power [to do so]. ⁷⁴ Do not compare God with anyone. God has knowledge, but you have not.

⁷⁵ God makes a comparison between an owned slave possessing no power over anything, and someone to whom We have given plentiful provision, who gives out from it privately and openly. Are they equal? Praise be to God! But most people do not know it.

⁷⁶ God makes another comparison between two men, one of whom is dumb and cannot do a thing, and

is a burden on his master. Wherever he sends him on an errand, he brings [him] no good. Is he equal to someone who commands justice and is on a straight path?

⁷⁷ God alone has knowledge of the hidden reality of the heavens and the earth; and the coming of the Hour [of Judgement] is like the twinkling of an eye, or even quicker. Surely God has full power over everything.

⁷⁸ God brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts, so that you might be grateful.

⁷⁹ Do they not see the birds held poised in the vault of heaven? Nothing holds them up except God. Truly, there are signs in this for those who believe. ⁸⁰ God has made your houses places of rest for you and made tents for you out of cattle hides, which are light for you to carry, both when you are travelling and when you are staying in one place. He provides for you from the wool and fur and hair of cattle, household goods and articles for use for a time.

⁸¹ God has granted you shade out of what He has created, places of shelter in the mountains, garments with which to protect yourselves from the heat and coats of mail to shield you in battle. Thus He completes His favour to you, so that you may submit wholly to Him. ⁸² But if they turn away, you are

responsible only for conveying the message clearly. ⁸³ They recognize the favour of God, yet they deny it; and most of them are ungrateful.

⁸⁴ On the Day when We raise up a witness from every people, those who were bent on denying the truth will not be permitted to put forward excuses, or to make amends. ⁸⁵ When the wrongdoers face their punishment, it shall not be lightened for them, nor shall they be granted any reprieve.

⁸⁶ When those who associate partners with God see their associate gods, they will say, 'Our Lord, these are our associate gods whom we used to call upon instead of You.' But they will throw back their words at them, [saying], 'Indeed you are liars,' ⁸⁷ and on that Day they will offer total submission to God: and all that they used to devise will fail them. ⁸⁸ Upon all who were bent on denying the truth and who turned others away from the path of God, We will heap punishment upon punishment, in return for all the corruption that they brought about.

⁸⁹ The Day will come when We raise up in every people a witness against them from amongst themselves, and We will bring you as a witness against these people. We have sent down the Book to you to make everything clear, a guidance, and a mercy, and glad tidings for those who submit to God.

⁹⁰ God commands justice, kindness and giving their [due to] near relatives, and He forbids all shameful

deeds, and injustice and transgression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed!

⁹¹ Fulfill the covenant of God when you have made one; and do not break your pledges after their confirmation. Indeed you have made God your surety; for God knows all that you do. ⁹² Do not, like the woman who unravels her yarn after its strands have been firmly spun, use your oaths as a means of deceiving one another, just because one community could become bigger than another. God is only testing you by means of this. On the Day of Resurrection He will make it clear to you what you differed about.

⁹³ Had God pleased, He would have united you in one community; but He lets go astray whoever He will, and guides whoever He will, and you will surely be called upon to account for all your actions.

⁹⁴ Do not use your oaths to deceive each other lest any foot should slip after being firmly placed and lest you should taste the penalty for having hindered others from the path of God, for then you will have a terrible punishment. ⁹⁵ Do not sell God's covenant for a paltry price. What is with God is better for you if you only knew.

⁹⁶ What you have shall pass away, but what is with God is lasting. We will certainly give those who are patient their reward according to the best of their actions. ⁹⁷ To whoever does good deeds, man or woman, and is a believer, We shall assuredly give a

good life; and We will bestow upon them their reward according to the best of their works.

⁹⁸ When you read the Quran, seek God's protection from Satan, the rejected one. ⁹⁹ Surely, he has no power over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord; ¹⁰⁰ he has power only over those who are willing to follow him and associate others with God.

¹⁰¹ When We substitute one revelation for another—and God knows best what He reveals—they say, 'You are but a fabricator.' Indeed, most of them have no knowledge. ¹⁰² Say, 'The Holy Spirit has brought it down as truth from your Lord, so that He may strengthen those who believe, and also as guidance and as good tidings for those who submit.'

¹⁰³ Indeed, We know what they say, 'It is only a human being who imparts [all] this to him!' But the tongue of him to whom they point is foreign, whereas this is plain Arabic speech. ¹⁰⁴ God will not guide those who will not believe in the signs of God; and theirs will be a painful punishment. ¹⁰⁵ Only those fabricate lies concerning God who do not believe in the signs of God, and these are the liars.

¹⁰⁶ As for one who denies God after he has believed, with the exception of one who is forced to do it, while his heart rests securely in faith, but one who opens his heart to a denial of truth shall incur the wrath of God; such as these will have a terrible punishment. ¹⁰⁷ This is because they prefer the life of this world to the

Hereafter and because God does not guide those who deny the truth. ¹⁰⁸ These are the ones upon whose hearts and hearing and sight God has set a seal. It is they who are heedless, ¹⁰⁹ and in the life to come, they will surely be the losers.

¹¹⁰ Surely, your Lord will be forgiving and merciful towards those who migrated after persecution and strove hard for the cause of God and remained steadfast. ¹¹¹ On the Day each soul will come pleading for itself, and every soul will be repaid according to whatever it has done, and they will not be wronged.

¹¹² God makes an example of a town that was secure and at ease, with provisions coming to it abundantly from every quarter. Then it showed ingratitude for God's blessings and God afflicted it with hunger and fear because of what they did. ¹¹³ There came to them a messenger from among themselves, but they rejected him as false, so punishment overtook them, as they were wrongdoers.

¹¹⁴ So eat the lawful and good things which God has provided for you, and be thankful for the blessing of God, if it is Him you worship. ¹¹⁵ He has forbidden you only carrion, blood and the flesh of swine; also any [flesh] consecrated in the name of any but God. But if anyone is forced by dire necessity, not desiring it or exceeding his immediate need, God is forgiving and merciful towards him.

¹¹⁶ Do not falsely declare, 'This is lawful, and this

is forbidden,' so as to invent a lie against God. Surely, those who invent a lie against God do not prosper—¹¹⁷ their enjoyment of this life is brief, and they shall have a painful punishment.

¹¹⁸ We forbade the Jews those things We told you about before. We did not wrong them; rather they wronged themselves. ¹¹⁹ Surely, your Lord is most forgiving and ever merciful towards those who do evil in ignorance and truly repent thereafter and make amends.

¹²⁰ Abraham was a community in himself devoted to God and true in faith, He was not one of the polytheists; ¹²¹ he was thankful for His blessings. God chose him and guided him to a straight path. ¹²² We gave him blessings in this world, and in the Hereafter he shall be among the righteous. ¹²³ Then We revealed Our will to you [O Muhammad], saying, 'Follow the religion of Abraham, the upright in faith; he was not one of the polytheists.'

¹²⁴ The Sabbath was only enjoined on those who differed about it. Your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection regarding the things about which they differed.

¹²⁵ Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation and reason with them in a way that is best. Your Lord knows best those who have strayed away from His path, and He knows best those who are rightly guided.

¹²⁶ If you want to retaliate, retaliate to the same degree as the injury done to you. But if you are patient, it is better to be so. ¹²⁷ Endure with patience; truly, your patience is possible only with the help of God. Do not grieve for them, or feel distressed because of their plottings, ¹²⁸ for God is with those who are righteous and those who do good.

17. THE NIGHT JOURNEY (*AL-ISRA'*)

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

¹ Holy is He who took His servant by night from the sacred place of worship [at Makkah] to the remote house of worship [at Jerusalem]—the precincts of which We have blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs. Surely, it is He who is All Hearing, and All Seeing.

² We gave Moses the Book and made it a guide for the Children of Israel saying, ‘Do not take anyone besides Me as a guardian,³ you who are the descendants of those whom We carried in the Ark with Noah. He was a truly thankful servant.’

⁴ We forewarned the Children of Israel in the Scripture, ‘Twice you shall commit evil in the land. You shall become great transgressors.’ ⁵ When the

time of the first of these warnings came, We sent against you servants of Ours, of great might, who ravaged your homes. So the warning was fulfilled,⁶ and after a time We allowed you to prevail over them once again and aided you with wealth and offspring and made you greater in number.

⁷ [We said], ‘If you persevere in doing good, you will be doing good to yourselves; but if you do evil, it will go against you.’ When the time of the second warning came, [We roused against you others] to disgrace you utterly and to enter the place of worship as they had entered it before, utterly destroying all that they laid their hands on.⁸ We said, ‘Your Lord may yet have mercy on you, but if you do the same again, so shall We: We have made Hell a prison for those who deny the truth.’

⁹ Surely, this Quran guides to the most upright way and gives good news to the believers who do good deeds, so that they will have a great reward¹⁰ and warns those who deny the life to come with grievous punishment.

¹¹ Yet man asks for evil as eagerly as he should ask for good. Truly, man is indeed hasty.^a ¹² We have made

^a God wants man to be patient about acquiring the immediate luxuries of the world, so that he should keep to the right path on his journey towards the Hereafter. But man, due to his hasty nature, rushes to acquire ephemeral worldly luxuries, which prove to be impediments to his continuing his onward journey. Man’s desire for instant gratification is the greatest reason for his being deprived of the bounties of the Hereafter.

the night and the day as two signs. We blotted out the sign of night and made the sign of the day illuminating, so that you may seek the bounty of your Lord and learn to compute the seasons and the years. We have set everything forth in detail.

¹³ We have tied the fate of every man about his neck; and We shall produce a book for him on Resurrection Day that he will find spread open. ¹⁴ It will say, 'Read your record, today there will be none but yourself to call you to account!' ¹⁵ Whoever chooses to follow the right path, follows it for his own good; and whoever goes astray, goes astray at his own peril; no bearer of burdens shall bear the burdens of another. Nor do We punish until We have sent forth a messenger to forewarn them.

¹⁶ When We decide to destroy a town, We command the affluent section of its people, but they transgress therein; thus the word [sentence of punishment] is justified, then We destroy the town utterly. ¹⁷ How many generations have We destroyed since Noah's time. Your Lord is well aware of the sins of His servants and observes them all.

¹⁸ We give whatever We will to whoever desires immediate gains; but then We have prepared Hell for him which he will enter, disgraced and rejected. ¹⁹ Anyone who desires the Hereafter and makes a proper effort to achieve it, being a true believer, shall find favour with God for his endeavours.

²⁰ Upon all, both these [who desire the world] and those [who desire the Hereafter] We bestow the bounty of your Lord: none shall be denied the bounty of your Lord—²¹ see how We have exalted some above others [in the present life]. Yet the Hereafter shall be greater in degrees of rank and greater in excellence.

²² Do not set up any other deity beside God, lest you incur disgrace, and be forsaken. ²³ Your Lord has commanded that you should worship none but Him, and show kindness to your parents. If either or both of them attain old age with you, say no word of contempt to them and do not rebuke them, but always speak gently to them ²⁴ and treat them with humility and tenderness and say, ‘Lord, be merciful to them both, as they raised me up when I was little.’ ²⁵ Your Lord knows best what is in your hearts; if you are righteous, He is most forgiving to those who constantly turn to Him.

²⁶ Give to your relatives their due, and also to the needy and the wayfarer. Yet do not spend extravagantly; ²⁷ spendthrifts are the brothers of Satan, and Satan is ever ungrateful to his Lord—²⁸ but if, while waiting for your Lord’s bounty which you are expecting, you turn them down, then at least speak to them kindly.

²⁹ Be neither miserly, nor so open-handed that you suffer reproach and become destitute. ³⁰ Your Lord gives abundantly to whom He will and sparingly to whom He pleases. He is informed and observant about His servants.

³¹ You shall not kill your offspring for fear of want. It is We who provide for them, and for you. Indeed, killing them is a great sin. ³² Do not commit adultery,^a for it is an indecent thing and an evil course.

³³ Do not take life which God has made inviolate—except by right. If anyone is killed wrongfully, We have given authority to his heirs to demand retribution, but let them not transgress the prescribed limits in exacting retribution; for then he will be assisted [by the law].

³⁴ Do not go near the orphans' property, except with the best of intentions, until they reach maturity. Keep your promises; you will be called to account for every promise which you have made! ³⁵ Give full measure, when you measure, and weigh with accurate scales. That is fair, and better in the end.

³⁶ Do not follow what you do not know; for the ear and the eye and the heart shall all be called to account.

³⁷ Do not walk proudly on the earth. You cannot cleave the earth, nor can you rival the mountains in height.

³⁸ All that is evil in the sight of your Lord, and is detestable.

^a One of the evils, which God wants to root out completely, is adultery, or *zina*. That is, adultery is such a great evil and is proof of such shamelessness, that man should abstain even from its initial stages. Here, only a basic command has been given on this subject.

³⁹ This is part of the wisdom that your Lord has revealed to you. Do not set up any other deity with God, lest you be cast into Hell, condemned and rejected.

⁴⁰ What! Has your Lord then favoured you with sons and Himself adopted females from among the angels? What you say is monstrous. ⁴¹ We have explained [the truth] in this Quran in various ways, so that they may take heed, but it has only increased their aversion. ⁴² Say, 'If there were [other] deities along with Him, as they claim, then they would surely have tried to find a way to the Lord of the Throne. ⁴³ Glory be to Him! Exalted above all that they say! ⁴⁴ The seven heavens and the earth and all who dwell therein glorify Him. There is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise; but you do not understand their glorification. Truly, He is forbearing and most forgiving.'

⁴⁵ When you recite the Quran, We place an invisible barrier between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter. ⁴⁶ We put veils over their hearts to prevent them from comprehending it, and We afflict their ears with deafness. When you mention your one and only Lord in your recitation of the Quran, they turn their backs in aversion.

⁴⁷ We are fully aware of what they wish to hear when they listen to you; and what they say when they converse in private; and when the wrongdoers say, 'You are only following a man who is bewitched!'

⁴⁸ See to what they liken you! But they are lost and cannot find the right path.

⁴⁹ 'What!' they say, 'When we are turned to bones and dust, shall we be restored to life?' ⁵⁰ Say, '[Yes] even if you turned to stones or iron, ⁵¹ or any other substance which you think unlikely to be given life.' Then they will ask, 'Who is it that shall restore us to life?' Answer them, 'He who created you the first time.' They will then shake their heads at you and say, 'When will that be?' Say, 'It may well be very soon. ⁵² On that Day He will call you, and you will answer by praising Him, thinking that you have stayed for only a little while.'

⁵³ Tell My servants that they should always say what is best. Satan stirs up discord among them. Surely, Satan is an outright enemy to man.

⁵⁴ Your Lord is fully aware of you. He may show you mercy if He will, or punish you if He will. We have not sent you as their guardian. ⁵⁵ Your Lord knows best about everyone in the heavens and on the earth. We gave some prophets more than others: We gave David the Psalms.

⁵⁶ Call upon those you claim to be deities besides God and you will know that they have no power to remove affliction from you or to bring about any change [that you may desire]. ⁵⁷ Those whom they invoke are themselves seeking a way of approach to their Lord, vying with each other to be near Him. They

hope for His mercy and fear His punishment. Surely, the punishment of your Lord is to be feared: ⁵⁸ there is not a town [community] but We shall destroy or sternly punish it before the Day of Judgement. That is recorded in the Book.

⁵⁹ Nothing has prevented Us from sending signs, except the fact that previous peoples denied them. We gave the people of Thamud the she-camel as a clear sign, yet they mistreated her. We give signs only by way of warning.

⁶⁰ We told you that your Lord encompasses mankind. We granted the vision which We showed you, as well as the tree that is cursed in the Quran, only as a test for mankind. We warn them, but this only increases their insolence.

⁶¹ When We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate yourselves before Adam,’ they all prostrated themselves except Iblis. He said, ‘Am I to prostrate myself to someone You have created out of clay?’ ⁶² and [further] said, ‘Do you see this being whom You have exalted above me? If You reprieve me until the Day of Resurrection, I will bring all but a few of his descendents under my sway.’

⁶³ God said, ‘Go away! Hell will be your reward and the reward of any of them who follow you—an ample recompense. ⁶⁴ Go ahead and entice whomsoever of them you can, with your voice, and mount assaults against them with your cavalry and infantry and be

their partner in wealth and offspring, and make promises to them—Satan promises nothing but delusion—⁶⁵ but over My true servants you shall have no power. Your Lord will be their all-sufficient guardian.'

⁶⁶ Your Lord is He who causes the ships to move onward for you across the sea, so that you may go in quest of His bounty: He is most merciful towards you.

⁶⁷ When danger threatens you at sea, you call upon Him, and forget all others you are wont to invoke. But when He brings you safe to land, you turn away from Him. Man is ever ungrateful.

⁶⁸ Do you then feel secure against His causing you to be swallowed up by the earth when you are back on land, or His sending a deadly sand storm upon you? Then you will find none to protect you. ⁶⁹ Or do you feel secure against His sending you back to sea once again, and raising a fierce gale against you and causing you to drown in requital for your ingratitude? You will find no helper against Us there.

⁷⁰ We have honoured the children of Adam, and have borne them on the land and the sea, given them for sustenance things which are good and pure; and exalted them above many of Our creatures.

⁷¹ The Day will surely come when We shall summon every people with their leader. Then those who are given their records in their right hands will read their records [eagerly] and shall not in the least be wronged:

⁷² but whoever has been blind in this life will be blind in the life to come, and still farther astray from the path [of truth].

⁷³ They indeed sought to entice you away from what We revealed to you, hoping that you might invent something else in Our name; and then they would have accepted you as a close friend. ⁷⁴ If We had not made you stand firm, you would almost have inclined towards them a little. ⁷⁵ In that case, We should have inflicted a double punishment in this life, and a double punishment after death. Then you would have found no one to help you against Us.

⁷⁶ Indeed they came near to unsettling you, so that they might expel you from the land, but in that case they themselves would not have stayed on for very long after you. ⁷⁷ Such was Our way with the messengers We sent before you, and you will find no change in Our ways.

⁷⁸ Say your prayers from the decline of the sun, until nightfall; and at dawn—the recitation at dawn is indeed witnessed. ⁷⁹ And during the night wake up and pray, as an additional prayer: it may well be that your Lord will raise you to a station of praise and glory.’

⁸⁰ Say, ‘Lord, grant me an honourable entrance and an honourable exit, and sustain me with Your power.’

⁸¹ Say, ‘Truth has come and falsehood has disappeared. Falsehood is always bound to wither away.’

⁸² We send down in the Quran that which is healing

and a mercy to those who believe; as for the evil-doers, it only increases their loss.

⁸³ When We bestow a favour upon a person, he turns his back and draws aside; and when evil afflicts him he gives himself up to despair. ⁸⁴ Say to them, 'Everyone acts in his own way, and your Lord knows best who is rightly guided.'

⁸⁵ They question you about the Spirit. Say, 'The Spirit is at my Lord's command, and you have been granted but little knowledge.'

⁸⁶ If We pleased, We would certainly take away that which We have revealed to you—then you would find no guardian for you against Us—⁸⁷ except through the special mercy of your Lord. His favours towards you has been great indeed. ⁸⁸ Say, 'If all men and jinn gathered together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce one like it, however much they helped one another.'

⁸⁹ In this Quran, We have set out all kinds of examples for people, yet most of them persist in denying the truth. ⁹⁰ They declare, 'We will never believe in you until you cause a spring to flow for us from the earth; ⁹¹ or you have a garden of date palms and vines, and cause streams to flow plentifully in the midst of them; ⁹² or you cause the heavens to fall down on us in pieces, as you have claimed; or you bring God and the angels before us face to face; ⁹³ or you have a house made of gold; or you ascend to heaven; and

we will not believe in your ascension until you send down to us a Book that we can read.' Tell them, 'Holy is my Lord. I am but a human being sent as a messenger.'

⁹⁴ Nothing has prevented men from believing whenever guidance came to them, save their query, 'Has God sent a human being as a messenger?' ⁹⁵ Say, 'If there had been angels walking around on earth, We would have sent an angel down from Heaven as a messenger for them.' ⁹⁶ Say, 'God suffices as a witness between me and you [all]. He is informed about and observant of His servants.'

⁹⁷ Those whom God guides are the truly guided, and for those whom He lets go astray, you will find no helper besides Him, on the Day of Judgement. We shall gather them together, lying upon their faces, blind, dumb and deaf. Their abode shall be Hell. Every time the fire dies down, We will make it blaze up again for them. ⁹⁸ That is their recompense, because they rejected Our signs and asked, 'When we are reduced to bones and dust, shall we indeed be raised up as a new creation?'

⁹⁹ Do they not see that God, who has created heavens and earth, is able to create the like of them? He has appointed a definite term for them; there is no doubt about it, but the wrongdoers persist in denying the truth. ¹⁰⁰ Say, 'Even if you possessed the treasures of the mercy of my Lord, you would

surely hold them back for fear of spending. Man is indeed niggardly!'

¹⁰¹ We did indeed give Moses nine manifest signs; you can enquire from the Children of Israel. When he came to them, Pharaoh said to him, 'Moses, I can see that you are bewitched.'¹⁰² He said, 'You know full well that none has sent down these signs but the Lord of the heavens and the earth as eye-opening evidence. Indeed, Pharaoh, I can see that you are doomed.'¹⁰³ So he resolved to scare them out of the land: but We drowned him along with all those who were with him.¹⁰⁴ Thereafter, We said to the Israelites, 'Dwell in the land. When the promise of the Hereafter comes to be fulfilled, We shall assemble you all together.'

¹⁰⁵ We have revealed the Quran with the truth, and with the truth it has come down. We have sent you forth only to give good news and to give warning—¹⁰⁶ We have revealed the Quran bit by bit so that you may recite it to the people slowly and with deliberation. We have imparted it by gradual revelation.

¹⁰⁷ Say to them, 'You may believe in it or not. Those to whom knowledge had been revealed, fall on their faces in prostration when it is recited,¹⁰⁸ and say, "Glory to our Lord! Our Lord's promise is bound to be fulfilled."¹⁰⁹ They fall down upon their faces weeping, and [the Quran] increases their humility.'

¹¹⁰ Say, 'Whether you call on God or on the Merciful One: His are the finest names.' Pray neither

in too loud a voice nor in silence, but between these two extremes. Seek a middle way ¹¹¹ and say, ‘All praise is due to God who has never begotten a son and who has no partner in His kingdom; nor does anyone aid Him because of any weakness of His. Proclaim His greatness.’

18. THE CAVE (*AL-KAHF*)

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

¹ Praise be to God who has sent down to His servant—the Book, which is free from any ambiguity ² and which rightly directs, to give warning of stern punishment from Him, and to proclaim to the believers who do righteous deeds that they shall have an excellent recompense, ³ wherein they will remain [in a state of bliss] forever. ⁴ And to warn those who say, ‘God has taken to Himself a son.’ ⁵ They have no knowledge of this, nor did their forefathers have any either. What they say is monstrous: they are merely uttering falsehoods!

⁶ Perhaps you may destroy yourself with grief if they do not believe in this message. ⁷ We have adorned the earth with attractive things, so that We may test mankind as to which one is best in conduct, ⁸ but We shall reduce all this to barren waste.

⁹ Do you think that the Men of the Cave and the Inscription were one of Our wondrous signs? ¹⁰ When the young men sought refuge in the cave, they said, ‘Our Lord, grant us Your special mercy and give us right guidance in our affair.’ ¹¹ Then We caused them to fall into a deep sleep for many years inside the cave. ¹² Then We woke them up again so that We might see which of the two groups would better calculate the time they had stayed there.

¹³ We shall tell you their story as it really was. They were young men who believed in their Lord, and on whom We bestowed further guidance. ¹⁴ We strengthened their hearts, when they rose up and declared, ‘Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never shall we call upon any deity other than Him: for that would be an outrageous thing to do. ¹⁵ These people of ours have taken deities other than Him. Why do they not produce clear evidence about them? Who is more wicked than the man who invents a falsehood against God?’

¹⁶ Now that you have withdrawn from them and from all that they worship instead of God, take refuge in that cave; your Lord will extend His mercy to you and will make fitting provision for you in your situation.

¹⁷ The sun could be observed to incline away from their cave on the right, as it rose, and to turn away from them on the left, when it set, while they lay in the wide

space inside the cave. This is one of the signs of God. He whom God guides is rightly guided; but for him whom He lets go astray, you will find no helper or guide.

¹⁸ You would have thought they were awake, though they lay asleep. We turned them over, to the right and the left, while their dog lay at the cave's entrance with legs outstretched. Had you looked down and seen them, you would have surely turned your back and fled in terror.

¹⁹ In the course of time, We raised them up again so that they might question one another. One of them asked, 'How long have you stayed [here]?' They said, 'We have stayed a day, or part of a day.' But others said, 'Your Lord knows best how long you have stayed here. Let one of you go then with these silver coins to the town, and let him find out what food is purest there, and bring you back a supply of it. Let him conduct himself with caution and not disclose your whereabouts to anyone: ²⁰ for if they find you out, they will stone you to death, or force you back into their faith. In that case you would never prosper.'

²¹ Thus We disclosed things to them so that they might know that God's promise was true and there was no doubt about the Hour [Judgement Day]. The people argued about them among themselves. They said, 'Build a monument over them. Their Lord knows best concerning them.' Those who prevailed in their affair

said, 'Let us surely build a place of worship over them.'

²² Some will say, 'They were three, the fourth was their dog,' and others will say, 'They were five, the sixth was their dog,' guessing at random. And yet others say, 'They were seven, the eighth was their dog.' Say, 'My Lord knows best their number.' Only a few know anything about them. Therefore, do not enter into controversies over them, nor seek information about them from any of them; ²³ never say of anything, 'I shall certainly do this tomorrow,' ²⁴ without [adding], 'if God so wills.' Remember your Lord whenever you might forget and say, 'I trust my Lord will guide me to that which is even nearer to the right path than this.'

²⁵ [Some say], 'They stayed in their cave three hundred years,' and to that some have added another nine years. ²⁶ Say, 'God knows best how long they stayed in it.' Only God has knowledge of the unseen in the heavens and on the earth. How well He sees and how well He hears! Man has no other guardian besides Him. He allows none to share His sovereignty.

²⁷ Proclaim what has been revealed to you from your Lord's Book. None can change His words. You shall find no refuge besides Him. ²⁸ Keep yourself attached to those who call on their Lord, morning and evening, seeking His pleasure; and do not let your eyes turn away from them, desiring the attraction of worldly life; and do not obey one whose heart We have

made heedless of Our remembrance, one who pursues his own whims and becomes dissolute.

²⁹ Say, ‘This is the truth from your Lord. Let him who will, believe in it, and him who will, deny it.’ For the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire which will cover them like a canopy, and if they beg for water, they will be given water as hot as molten lead, which will scald their faces: how dreadful a drink, and how evil a resting place!

³⁰ As for those who believe and do good deeds—We do not let the reward of anyone who does a good deed go to waste—³¹ they shall dwell in the Gardens of eternity where rivers flow at their feet. Reclining upon raised couches, they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and will wear green robes of fine silk and heavy brocade. An excellent reward and an excellent resting place!

³² Recite to them the parable of two men! One of them We provided with two vineyards which We surrounded with date-palms, and placed a field of grain in between;³³ each garden produced its fruit and did not fail to yield its best; We even caused a river to gush forth in the midst of them,³⁴ and so he had fruit in abundance. While conversing with his companion, he said, ‘I am wealthier than you are, and have a bigger following!’³⁵ Having thus harmed his own soul, he entered his garden saying, ‘I do not think this will ever perish,³⁶ and I do not believe that the Hour will ever

come. Even if I am returned to my Lord, I shall surely find a better place than this.’

³⁷ His companion replied, in the course of their discussion, ‘Do you deny Him who created you from dust, from a small drop of fluid, then formed you into a man?’ ³⁸ But as far as I am concerned, God alone is my Lord and I set up no partners with Him. ³⁹ When you entered your garden, why did you not say, “That which God wills [will surely come to pass], there is no power save with God?” Although you see I have less wealth and offspring than you, ⁴⁰ my Lord may well give me a garden better than yours and send down thunderbolts from heaven upon your vineyard, turning it into a barren waste; ⁴¹ or its water may sink into the earth, so that you will never be able to find it again!’

⁴² So it was, and all his fruit was destroyed. The vines had all fallen down on their trellises, and their owner wrung his hands, bewailing all that he had spent on his garden. He said, ‘Would that I had not associated anyone with my Lord!’ ⁴³ He had no party to help him against God, nor was he able to defend himself. ⁴⁴ The only support is from God, the True God. He is the best in rewarding and the best in respect of the final outcome.

⁴⁵ Give them an example about worldly life. It is like the vegetation of the earth that thrives when watered by the rain, which We send down from the sky, and then it all becomes stubble which the wind

blows away. God has power over all things. ⁴⁶ Wealth and children are an ornament of the life of this world. But deeds of lasting merit are better rewarded by your Lord and a far better source of hope.

⁴⁷ The Day We shall make the mountains move and you will see the earth laid bare, and We shall gather all mankind together and shall not leave any one of them behind. ⁴⁸ They will be ranged before your Lord, standing in rows and He will say to them, ‘Now you have come to Us as We created you at first. But you supposed that We would not appoint the time for the fulfillment of Our promise to you.’

⁴⁹ The Book [of deeds] will be placed before them and you will see the guilty apprehensive about its contents. They will say, ‘Woe to us! What a record this is! It does not leave any deed, small or large, unaccounted for!’ They will find everything they ever did laid in front of them: your Lord will not be unjust to anyone.

⁵⁰ When We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate yourselves before Adam,’ all prostrated themselves except Satan. He was one of the jinn and he disobeyed his Lord’s command. Do you then take him and his offspring as protectors instead of Me, despite their enmity towards you? This is an evil exchange for the wrongdoers!

⁵¹ I did not call them to witness at the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor at their own creation; I do not take as My helpers those who lead others astray.

⁵² On that Day He will say to them, ‘Call on those whom you thought to be My partners.’ And they will call on them, but their prayer will not be heard; and We shall place a barrier [of enmity] between them.

⁵³ The guilty shall see the Fire and realize that they are going to fall into it: they shall find no way of escape from it.

⁵⁴ We have explained in various ways in this Quran, for the benefit of mankind, all kinds of examples, but man is most contentious. ⁵⁵ Nothing prevents people from believing when they are given guidance or from asking forgiveness of their Lord, but the fact that the fate of the previous peoples should befall them or to have the punishment come upon them face to face.

⁵⁶ We only send the messengers to bring good news and to give warning. Those who deny use fallacious arguments to nullify the truth, treating My revelations and My warnings as a jest. ⁵⁷ Who is more wicked than he who has been reminded of the revelations of his Lord, then turns away from them and forgets what his own hands have done? We have cast veils over their hearts lest they understand Our words, and made them hard of hearing. Call them as you may to the right path, they shall never be guided.

⁵⁸ Your Lord is the Forgiving One, the possessor of mercy. If He had to take them to task for the wrongs they have done, He would have hastened their punishment. They have an appointed time beyond

which there will be no escape for them.⁵⁹ We destroyed these communities when they went on doing wrong, and We appointed a time for their destruction.

⁶⁰ Recall how Moses said to his servant, ‘I shall not give up until I reach the place where both seas meet, even if it takes me years!’⁶¹ But when at last they came to the land where the two seas met, they forgot their fish and it swiftly made its way into the sea.⁶² After they had passed the place, Moses said to his young companion, ‘Bring us our morning meal; we have indeed been fatigued by this journey.’

⁶³ He replied, ‘Did you see when we were resting by the rock, that I forgot the fish? Satan made me forget it, so I did not mention it. It made its way to the sea in a miraculous way!’⁶⁴ Moses said, ‘That is just what we were looking for.’ So they went back the way they had come,⁶⁵ and they found one of Our servants to whom We had granted Our mercy and had given a knowledge from Ourselves.

⁶⁶ Moses said to him, ‘May I follow you, so that you may guide me by what you have been taught?’⁶⁷ He replied, ‘You will not be able to bear with me patiently.’⁶⁸ How could you be patient in matters beyond your knowledge?’⁶⁹ Moses said, ‘God willing, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in any thing.’⁷⁰ He said, ‘Well then, if you would follow me, do not ask me about anything till I speak of it to you.’

⁷¹ So they set out, but, when they got into a boat, the man made a hole in it. Moses exclaimed, ‘Have you made a hole in the boat to drown the people in it? You have indeed done a dreadful thing!’ ⁷² He replied, ‘Did I not tell you that you would never be able to bear with me patiently?’ ⁷³ He said, ‘Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten, and do not be hard on me on account of what I have done!’ ⁷⁴ So they travelled on. Then they met a young boy and the man killed him. Moses said, ‘Have you slain an innocent person without his having slain anyone? Indeed, you have done a terrible thing!’

⁷⁵ The man said, ‘Did I not tell you that you would not be able to have any patience with me?’ ⁷⁶ Moses replied, ‘If I ever ask you about anything after this, do not let me accompany you. I will have given you sufficient excuse.’ ⁷⁷ So they went on until they came to a town. They asked its people for food, but were refused hospitality. They found a wall in the town which was about to fall down. His companion buttressed it and Moses said, ‘Had you wished, you could have demanded payment for your labours.’ ⁷⁸ He answered, ‘This is where you and I must part company. But first I will tell you the meaning of the things you could not bear with patiently.

⁷⁹ ‘The boat belonged to some poor people who made their living from the sea. I wanted to damage it

because there was a king coming behind them who was seizing every boat by force.

⁸⁰ As for the youth, his parents were believers and we feared that he would trouble them by rebellion and denial of truth. ⁸¹ We wanted their Lord to replace him with someone purer than him and more compassionate.

⁸² ‘The wall belonged to two young orphans in the town whose father had been a righteous man, and a treasure of theirs lay underneath it. So your Lord wanted them to come of age and then to dig up their treasure as a mercy from Him. I did not do [it] of my own accord. That is the explanation of the things about which you were not able to restrain yourself.’

⁸³ They will ask you about Dhu’l-Qarnayn. Say, ‘I will give you an account of him.’ ⁸⁴ We established him in the land, and gave him the means to achieve all things.

⁸⁵ He travelled on a certain road; ⁸⁶ until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it setting in a spring of murky water and near it he found some people. We said, ‘Dhu’l-Qarnayn! You can either punish them or else you can treat them with gentleness.’

⁸⁷ He said, ‘We shall certainly punish him who does wrong; then he shall be brought back to his Lord who will punish him with a grievous punishment, ⁸⁸ but whoever believes and does good works shall have a good reward and We shall facilitate his matter by Our command.’

⁸⁹ Then he followed yet another path, ⁹⁰ until he came to the rising-place of the sun, where he found it rising on a people for whom We had provided no shelter from it. ⁹¹ Thus indeed it was. We had full knowledge of him.

⁹² Then he followed still another path, ⁹³ until he came between two mountains. He found beside them a people who could scarcely understand a word [of his language]. ⁹⁴ They said, ‘O Dhu’l-Qarnayn! Gog and Magog are causing corruption in the land, so may we pay you tribute on condition that you set a barrier between us and them?’

⁹⁵ He said, ‘What my Lord has given me is better [than any tribute]. Help me with a force of labourers and I will erect a barrier between you and them: ⁹⁶ bring me blocks of iron.’ Then, when he had filled the gap between the mountain sides [he said], ‘Now blow on the fire with your bellows.’ When the iron blocks were red with heat, he said, ‘Bring me molten brass to pour on them.’ ⁹⁷ So they [Gog and Magog] were not able to scale it, nor were they able to bore through it, ⁹⁸ and he said, ‘This is a mercy from my Lord. But when the promise of my Lord comes to pass, He will level it to dust. My Lord’s promise is ever true!’

⁹⁹ On that Day, We shall let them surge against each other like waves and then the Trumpet will be blown and We shall gather them all together. ¹⁰⁰ On that Day

We shall lay Hell bare before those who deny the truth,¹⁰¹ who have turned a blind eye to My reminder and a deaf ear to My warning.

¹⁰² Do those who deny the truth, think that they can make My servants patrons instead of Me? We have reserved Hell as a lodging for those who deny the truth.

¹⁰³ Say, ‘Shall I tell you of those who will lose the most through their actions?’¹⁰⁴ They are those whose efforts have been wasted in the life of the world while they thought they were doing good.¹⁰⁵ They are those who deny their Lord’s signs and the meeting with Him.’ So their works are in vain, and We shall give them no weight on the Day of Resurrection.¹⁰⁶ Hell will be their reward, because they denied the truth, and made a jest of My signs and My messengers.

¹⁰⁷ Those who believe and do good works shall have the gardens of Paradise for their abode.¹⁰⁸ They shall forever dwell in the Gardens of Paradise, desiring no change.

¹⁰⁹ Tell them, ‘If the ocean became ink for writing the words of my Lord, surely the ocean would be exhausted before the words of my Lord came to an end—even if We were to add another ocean to it.’

¹¹⁰ Say, ‘I am only a human being like yourselves. It is revealed to me that your God is One God. So let him who hopes to meet his Lord do good deeds and let him associate no one else in the worship of his Lord.’