

23. THE BELIEVERS (*AL-MU'MINUN*)

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

¹ Successful indeed are the believers; ² those who are humble in their prayer; ³ those who turn away from all that is frivolous; ⁴ those who pay the *zakat*; ⁵ those who safeguard their chastity ⁶ except with their wives, and what their right hands possess—for then they are free from blame, ⁷ but those who seek to go beyond that are transgressors—⁸ those who are faithful to their trusts and promises; ⁹ and those who attend to their prayers; ¹⁰ these are the heirs of Paradise ¹¹ they shall abide in it forever.

¹² We created man from an essence of clay, ¹³ then We placed him as a drop of fluid in a safe place, ¹⁴ then We developed that drop into a clinging form, and We developed that form into a lump of flesh, and We developed that lump into bones, and clothed the bones with flesh. Then We brought him into being as a new creation—glory be to God, the best of creators—¹⁵ after this you shall surely die. ¹⁶ Then you will be raised up again on the Resurrection Day.

¹⁷ We have created seven paths above you; We have never been unmindful of Our creation. ¹⁸ We sent down water from the sky in due measure and lodged it in the earth—but if We please, We have the power

to take it away—¹⁹ We have produced palm-groves and vineyards for you, in which there are abundant fruits for you; and you eat these, ²⁰ also a tree growing on Mount Sinai which produces oil and a condiment for those who eat it. ²¹ You have a lesson in livestock. We provide you with drink from what is in their bellies, and you have many other benefits from them; some of them you eat, ²² and you ride on them as you do in ships.

²³ We sent Noah to his people, and he said, ‘My people, worship God; you have no other deity except Him. Will you not fear Him?’ ²⁴ The leaders of his people who denied the truth, said, ‘He is only a human being like yourselves who wants to make himself superior to you. If God had wished, He would have sent down angels. We never heard about this from our forefathers. ²⁵ He is only a madman, so, as far as he is concerned wait for a while.’

²⁶ Noah said, ‘My Lord, help me! for they have rejected me,’ ²⁷ then We revealed Our will to him: ‘Build the Ark under Our watchful eye according to Our instructions. When Our command comes, and waters gush up out of the earth, take on board pairs of every species and members of your household, except for any of them on whom sentence has already been passed—do not plead with Me for those who have done wrong: they shall be drowned.

²⁸ When you and all your followers have settled in

the Ark, say, “Praise be to God who has delivered us from a wicked people,”²⁹ and say, “My Lord, let me land with Your blessing in a blessed landing place. You alone can provide the best landings”.³⁰ Surely there are clear signs in that. In this way We put people to the test.

³¹ Then We raised another generation after them,³² and sent a messenger to them from among themselves: ‘Worship God alone. You have no deity other than Him. Will you not then fear God?’³³ But the leaders of his people who denied the truth and denied the Meeting in the Hereafter, because We had granted them ease and plenty in their worldly life, said, ‘This is only a human being like yourselves—he eats what you eat, and drinks what you drink—³⁴ if you obey a human being just like yourselves, then you will surely be lost.

³⁵ Does he promise you that when you die and have become dust and bones, that you will be brought forth again?³⁶ What you are promised is indeed far-fetched.³⁷ There exists only our present life: we die and we live [but once], and shall never be raised up again.³⁸ He is only a man who has invented a lie about God, and we are not going to believe him!’

³⁹ The messenger said, ‘My Lord, help me, for they have rejected me.’⁴⁰ God said, ‘Before long they will be filled with regret.’⁴¹ The blast justly struck them and We reduced them to rubble. Away with such wicked people!

⁴² Then We raised up other generations after them—
⁴³ no community can advance or postpone its appointed time—⁴⁴ then We sent Our messengers in succession. Every time their messenger came to a people, they rejected him. So We destroyed them one after the other, and let them become mere tales. So away with the people who will not believe!

⁴⁵ Then We sent Moses and his brother Aaron with Our signs and clear authority ⁴⁶ to Pharaoh and his courtiers, but they behaved insolently, for they were an arrogant people. ⁴⁷ They said, ‘Are we to believe in two human beings like ourselves, while their people are subject to us?’ ⁴⁸ So they rejected them both, and became those who were destroyed. ⁴⁹ We gave Moses the Book so that they might be guided.

⁵⁰ We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign and gave them shelter on a peaceful hillside watered by a fresh spring.

⁵¹ Messengers, eat what is wholesome and do good deeds: I am well aware of what you do. ⁵² Your religion is but one religion—and I am your only Lord, therefore, fear Me.

⁵³ Yet they divided themselves into factions, each rejoicing in what they had. ⁵⁴ So leave them in their bewilderment for a while. ⁵⁵ Do they imagine that the wealth and children We have provided ⁵⁶ have no other purpose except to help them in acquiring material benefits? No indeed. But they do not understand.

⁵⁷ Those who tremble with fear of their Lord; ⁵⁸ and believe in His messages ⁵⁹ and do not ascribe partners to Him; ⁶⁰ and those who give to others what has been bestowed upon them with their hearts trembling at the thought that they must return to their Lord; ⁶¹ it is they who vie with one another in doing good works and shall be the foremost in doing so. ⁶² We charge no soul with more than it can bear. We have a record which clearly shows the truth and they will not be wronged.

⁶³ But their hearts are heedless of this. Moreover, there are other deeds besides this which they do. ⁶⁴ But then when We seize the affluent among them, they will cry out for help. ⁶⁵ Do not cry out for help this day, for surely you shall not be helped by Us. ⁶⁶ My revelations were recited to you, but you turned your backs ⁶⁷ in arrogance, as if you were abandoning a story-teller.

⁶⁸ Have they not pondered over the word of God? Has something come to them that did not come to their forefathers? ⁶⁹ Or do they not recognize their Messenger, and so deny him? ⁷⁰ Do they say he is possessed? Rather he has brought them the truth, but most of them are averse to the truth. ⁷¹ If truth had followed their whims and desires, heavens and earth and all that lives in them would have been brought to ruin. Rather We have brought them their Reminder. Yet they keep avoiding their Reminder.

⁷² Or are you asking them for any reward? But the reward of your Lord is the best, for He is the Best of

Providers, ⁷³ and, most surely, you are calling them to a straight path. ⁷⁴ But those who do not believe in the Hereafter have indeed deviated from that path.

⁷⁵ Even if We showed them mercy and relieved them of their afflictions, they would still persist in their transgression, wandering blindly. ⁷⁶ We seized them with the punishment, but they did not surrender to their Lord, nor will they humble themselves ⁷⁷ until We open before them a gate of harsh punishment and then they will be dumbfounded.

⁷⁸ It is He who gave you ears, eyes and hearts, yet how seldom you are grateful!^a ⁷⁹ He it is who has multiplied you on the earth and to Him you shall all be gathered: ⁸⁰ He is the One who gives life and causes death and He controls the alternation of night and day. Will you not then understand?

⁸¹ But they say the same as the ancients said,

^a In this universe the human being is a special creation who has been given the exceptional powers of hearing, seeing and thinking. These capacities have been given to man for a special purpose, namely, to understand the reality of life. He should use his ears to hear the voice of Truth. With his eyes he should see the signs of God that are spread all around him. He should use his thinking powers for an in-depth study of all these things. This, in reality, is the way of thankfulness of the ears, the eyes and the heart. Those who do not give evidence of such thankfulness in this world risk losing their entitlement to these gifts forever.

⁸² ‘When we have died and become dust and bones, will we be raised up again?’ ⁸³ We and our forefathers were promised this before. This is nothing but fables of the ancients.’

⁸⁴ Say, ‘To whom do the earth and all therein belong? Tell me, if you have any knowledge?’ ⁸⁵ They will say, ‘To God.’ Say, ‘So will you not pay heed?’ ⁸⁶ Say, ‘Who is the Lord of the seven heavens, and of the Glorious Throne?’ ⁸⁷ They will say, ‘They belong to God.’ Say, ‘So do you not fear Him?’ ⁸⁸ Say, ‘In whose hands lies sovereignty over all things, protecting all, while none can seek protection against Him? Tell me, if you have any knowledge.’ ⁸⁹ They will say, ‘All this belongs to God.’ Say to them, ‘How are you then deluded?’

⁹⁰ We have revealed to them the truth. But they are certainly liars. ⁹¹ God has not taken to Himself a son, nor is there any other deity besides Him; otherwise, each god would have walked away with what he had created. They would surely have tried to overcome one another. Glory be to God, above all that they ascribe to Him. ⁹² Knower of the unseen and the visible; He is exalted above all that which they associate with Him.

⁹³ Pray, ‘Lord, if you would show me that [the punishment] of which they have been warned, ⁹⁴ then do not place me, Lord, with the wrongdoers.’ ⁹⁵ We certainly have the power to show you what they have been warned about.

⁹⁶ Repel evil with what is best—We are well aware of the things they say—⁹⁷ and say, ‘My Lord, I seek refuge with You from the prompting of the devils. ⁹⁸ I seek refuge with You, Lord, lest they should come near me.’

⁹⁹ When death comes to any of them, he says, ‘My Lord, send me back ¹⁰⁰ so that I may do good works in the world I have left behind.’ Never! It is indeed but a meaningless word that he utters. A barrier shall stand behind such people till the Day they are raised up again. ¹⁰¹ When the trumpet is blown, on that Day there will be no ties of relationship between them; neither will they ask about one another: ¹⁰² then those whose scales weigh heavy with good works will be successful. ¹⁰³ But those whose scales weigh light will have ruined their souls; in Hell will they abide. ¹⁰⁴ The Fire will scorch their faces and they will abide therein with their faces distorted.

¹⁰⁵ Were not My messages recited to you and did you not reject them? ¹⁰⁶ They will answer, ‘Lord, misfortune overcame us and we became an erring people. ¹⁰⁷ Lord, deliver us from Hell. Then, if we revert again, we shall definitely be wrongdoers.’ ¹⁰⁸ God will say, ‘Stay there and do not speak to Me. ¹⁰⁹ Among My servants, there were those who said, “Lord, We believe, so forgive us and have mercy on us. You are the best one to show mercy.” ¹¹⁰ But you made a laughing stock of them to the point where it

made you forget My remembrance; and you went on laughing at them. ¹¹¹ I have rewarded them this Day for their steadfastness, and it is they who have triumphed.’

¹¹² He will ask, ‘How many years did you stay on earth?’ ¹¹³ They will say, ‘We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask those who have kept count.’ ¹¹⁴ He will say, ‘You only stayed for a little while, if only you knew.’

¹¹⁵ ‘Do you imagine that We created you without any purpose and that you would not be brought back to Us?’ ¹¹⁶ Then, exalted be God, the true King, there is no deity except Him, the Lord of the Glorious Throne. ¹¹⁷ He, who invokes another deity along with God—a deity of whose divinity he has no proof—will be brought to account by his Lord. Certainly, those who deny the truth shall never prosper. ¹¹⁸ Say, ‘Lord, forgive us and have mercy. You are the best of those who show mercy.’

24. LIGHT (*AL-NUR*)

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

¹ This is a chapter which We have revealed and which We have made obligatory; We have sent down clear revelations in it, so that you may take heed. ² Flog the

adulteress and the adulterer, each one of them, with a hundred lashes. Let no pity for them cause you to disobey God, if you truly believe in God and the Last Day; and let their punishment be witnessed by a number of believers. ³ The adulterer shall marry only an adulteress or a polytheist woman, and an adulteress shall marry only an adulterer or a polytheist man; such marriages are forbidden for believers.

⁴ Those who defame chaste women, but cannot produce four witnesses, shall be given eighty lashes. Do not accept their testimony ever after, for they are transgressors, ⁵ save those who afterwards repent and make amends, for truly God is forgiving and merciful.

⁶ One who accuses his wife and has no witnesses except himself shall swear four times by God that his charge is true, ⁷ and the fifth time, that God's curse may be upon him if he is telling a lie. ⁸ The wife shall receive no punishment, if she bears witness four times in the name of God that her husband has lied ⁹ and, a fifth time that God's wrath will be upon her if he is telling the truth. ¹⁰ Were it not for God's grace and His mercy upon you, [you would have come to grief] and God is wise, acceptor of repentance.

¹¹ Those who brought up that slander were a band from among you. Do not regard it as a misfortune, for it is good for you. Every one of them shall be held to account for the sin he has committed; and he who took the greater part in it shall have a terrible punishment.

¹² When you heard of it, why did not the believing men and believing women think well of their own people, and say, ‘This is a manifest slander?’ ¹³ Why did they not produce four witnesses? If they could not produce any witnesses, they were indeed liars in the sight of God!

¹⁴ Had it not been for the grace of God and His mercy on you in this world and the Hereafter, a terrible punishment would have afflicted you for your plunging headlong into slander. ¹⁵ When you were spreading it with your tongues and saying with your mouths things of which you had no knowledge, you considered it to be a trivial matter, but, in God’s sight, it was very serious. ¹⁶ When you heard it, why did you not say, ‘It is not right for us to speak of this. God forbid! This is a monstrous slander.’ ¹⁷ God warns you never to repeat the like of it again, if you are true believers. ¹⁸ God explains the commandments to you. God is all knowing and wise.

¹⁹ Those who desire that indecencies should spread among the believers, will have a painful chastisement in this world and the Hereafter. God knows, and you do not know. ²⁰ But for the grace of God and His mercy upon you, and were not God compassionate and merciful, [you would have come to grief].

²¹ O you who believe, do not follow in the footsteps of Satan, and whoever follows in the footsteps of Satan should know that he enjoins only indecency and

evil. But for the grace of God and His mercy upon you, not one of you would ever be purified; but God purifies whom He pleases. God is all hearing and all knowing.

²² Let not those who are possessed of means and plenty among you resolve to withhold their bounty from their kindred and the needy and those who have migrated from their homes in the cause of God. Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not wish God to forgive you? God is forgiving and merciful.

²³ Truly, those who accuse chaste, unwary, believing women are cursed in this world and the Hereafter. For them awaits a terrible chastisement. ²⁴ On the Day when their own tongues, hands and feet shall bear witness against them about what they did—²⁵ on that Day God will justly requite them—and they will realize that God is the truth, that makes all things manifest.

²⁶ Corrupt women are for corrupt men, and corrupt men are for corrupt women; good women are for good men and good men are for good women. The latter are absolved from anything they may say; forgiveness and an honourable provision await them.

²⁷ Believers, do not enter other people's houses until you have asked their owners' permission and greeted them. That will be the better for you, so that you may be heedful. ²⁸ If you find no one at home, do not go in until permission has been granted you. If you are told

to go away, then go away. That is more proper for you. God knows well what you do. ²⁹ There is nothing wrong in your entering uninhabited houses if that serves a useful purpose: God knows all that you do openly, and all that you would conceal.

³⁰ Tell believing men to lower their gaze and remain chaste. That is purer for them. God is aware of what they do.

³¹ Say to believing women that they should lower their gaze and remain chaste and not to reveal their adornments—save what is normally apparent thereof, and they should fold their shawls over their bosoms. They can only reveal their adornments to their husbands or their fathers or their husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons or their brothers or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons or maidservants or those whom their right hands possess or their male attendants who have no sexual desire or children who still have no carnal knowledge of women. Nor should they swing their legs to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. Believers, turn to God, every one of you, so that you may prosper.

³² Marry those among you who are single, and those of your male and female slaves who are fit [for marriage]. If they are poor, God will provide for them from His bounty, for God's bounty is infinite and He is all knowing. ³³ Those who do not have the means to marry should keep themselves chaste until God grants

them enough out of His bounty. If any of your slaves desire a deed of freedom, write it out for them, if you find any promise in them, and give them some of the wealth God has given you. Do not force your [slave] maids into prostitution, in order to enrich yourself, when they wish to preserve their chastity. Yet if anyone forces them, once they have been forced, God will be forgiving and merciful to them.³⁴ We have sent down clear revelations to you and the example of those who passed away before you and an admonition for the God-fearing.

³⁵ God is the light of the heavens and the earth. His light may be compared to a niche containing a lamp, the lamp inside a crystal of star-like brilliance lit from a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west.^a The [luminous] oil is as if ready to burn without even the fire touching it. Light upon light; God guides to His light whom He will. God draws such comparisons for mankind; God has full knowledge of everything.

³⁶ [They worship] in the houses which God has allowed to be raised for the remembrance of His name, morning and evening,³⁷ people who are not distracted

^a This is a metaphor with many layers of meaning. 'Light' symbolizes the guidance of God Almighty. 'Niche' is man's heart and 'lamp' is faith (*iman*), sheltered in that niche. The image is elaborated by yet two more points of reference: 'crystal of star-like brilliance' and 'luminous oil'.

by trade or commerce from the remembrance of God and the observance of prayer and the payment of the *zakat*—fearing a Day when hearts and eyes will be convulsed,³⁸ so that God may reward them according to the best of their deeds and give them more out of His bounty. God provides for whoever He wills without measure.

³⁹ As for those who deny the truth, their works are like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty traveller thinks it to be water, but when he comes near, he finds it to be nothing. He finds God there, who pays him his account in full. God is swift in His reckoning.⁴⁰ Or like darkness on a deep ocean covered by waves billowing over waves and overcast with clouds: darkness upon darkness. If he stretches out his hand, he can scarcely see it. Indeed, the man from whom God withholds His light shall find no light at all.

⁴¹ [Prophet], do you not see that all those who are in the heavens and on earth praise God, as do the birds with wings outstretched? Each knows his own mode of prayer and glorification: God has full knowledge of all that they do.⁴² To God belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and to God shall all things return.

⁴³ Do you not see how God drives the clouds, then joins them together, then piles them into layers and then you see the rain pour from their midst? He sends down from the skies mountainous masses [of clouds]

charged with hail, and He makes it fall on whom He will, and turns it away from whom He pleases. The flash of His lightning may well-nigh take away the sight. ⁴⁴ God alternates the night and the day—truly, in this there is a lesson for men of insight.

⁴⁵ God created every creature from water. Some crawl upon their bellies, others walk on two legs, and others walk on four. God creates what He pleases. He has power over all things. ⁴⁶ We have sent down revelations clearly showing the truth. God guides whom He wills to the straight path.

⁴⁷ They say, ‘We believe in God and in the Messenger, and we obey.’ But then, even after that a group of them will turn away. Those are surely not believers ⁴⁸ and when they are called to God and His Messenger so that he may judge between them, some of them turn away. ⁴⁹ But if the truth happens to be to their liking, they are quite willing to accept it! ⁵⁰ Is there a sickness in their hearts, or are they full of doubt? Or do they fear that God and His Messenger will be unjust to them? The truth is that they themselves are wrongdoers.

⁵¹ The response of the believers, when they are called to God and His Messenger in order that he may judge between them, is only, ‘We hear and we obey.’ It is they who will prosper: ⁵² those who obey God and His Messenger, and fear God, and are mindful of their duty to Him, are the ones who will triumph.

⁵³ They swear firm oaths by God that if you

command them to march forth, they will obey you. Say, ‘Do not swear: your obedience, not your oaths, will count. God is well aware of all your actions.’

⁵⁴ Obey God and obey the Messenger. If you turn away, then he is responsible for what he is charged with and you are responsible for what you are charged with. If you obey him, you will be rightly guided. The Messenger is responsible only for delivering the message clearly.

⁵⁵ God has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely grant them power in the land as He granted to those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them. He will cause their state of fear to be replaced by a sense of security. Let them worship Me and associate no other with Me. Whoever still chooses to deny the truth is truly rebellious.

⁵⁶ Attend to your prayers and pay the *zakat* and obey the Messenger, so that you may be shown mercy. ⁵⁷ Do not think that those who deny the truth can frustrate Our plan on earth; their abode shall be Hell; and it is indeed an evil resort.

⁵⁸ Believers, let [even] those whom you rightfully possess, and those who are under age ask your leave on three occasions when they come in to see you: before the morning prayer, when you have taken off your garments in the heat of noon, and after the

evening prayer. These are the three occasions for your privacy. At other times, there is nothing blameworthy if you or they go around visiting one another. Thus God makes clear to you His revelations: God is all knowing and wise.⁵⁹ When your children have reached the age of puberty, let them still ask permission as their elders do. Thus God expounds to you His revelations: God is all knowing and wise.⁶⁰ There is no blame on elderly women who are past the age of marriage, if they take off their outer clothing, without revealing their adornments. But it would be better for them to guard themselves. God is all hearing, all knowing.

⁶¹ There is no harm if the blind, the lame, the sick or you yourselves eat in your own houses, or in the houses of your fathers, or mothers, or brothers, or sisters, or paternal uncles, or paternal aunts, or maternal uncles, or maternal aunts, or in those that you are in charge of or in the house of a friend. There is no objection to your eating together or separately. But when you enter houses, salute one another with a greeting of peace, a greeting from your Lord full of blessings and purity. Thus does God expound to you His commandments, so that you may understand.

⁶² They only are true believers who believe in God and His Messenger. When they are with him on some matter of common concern, they should not depart until they have asked him for permission to do so. Those who ask you for such permission are the ones

who truly believe in God and His Messenger. When they ask you for permission to attend to some affair of their own, then grant it to whoever you please and seek forgiveness from God for them. God is forgiving and merciful.

⁶³ Do not treat being called by the Messenger like being called by one another. God knows those of you who slip away on some pretext. Let those who go against his order beware lest some affliction befall them or they receive a painful punishment. ⁶⁴ Surely, whatever is in the heavens and on the earth belongs to God. God knows well what condition you are in. On the Day when they return to Him, He will declare to them all that they have done. God has full knowledge of all things.

25. THE CRITERION (*AL-FURQAN*)

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

¹ Blessed be He who has revealed the criterion [the Quran] to His servant that he may warn the nations.

² Sovereign of the heavens and the earth, who has begotten no children and who has no partner in His sovereignty, it is He who has created all things and measured them out precisely. ³ Yet they have taken, besides Him, deities who create nothing and are

themselves created, and who have no power to harm, or benefit themselves and who control neither death, nor life, nor resurrection.

⁴ Those who deny the truth say, ‘This is only a forgery of his own invention in which others have helped him.’ What they say is unjust and false. ⁵ They say, ‘It is just fables of the ancients, which he has had written down. They are dictated to him morning and evening.’ ⁶ Say to them, ‘It has been revealed by Him who knows every secret that is in the heavens and on the earth. Truly, He is most forgiving and most merciful.’

⁷ They say, ‘What kind of a messenger is this who eats food and walks about in the market-places? Why has no angel been sent down with him to warn us?’ ⁸ Or a treasure should have been sent down to him, or he should have had a garden from which to eat.’ The wrongdoers say, ‘You are surely following a man who is bewitched.’ ⁹ Observe what kind of things they attribute to you. They have surely gone astray and cannot find the right way again.

¹⁰ Blessed is He who, if He please, can give you better things than that; gardens watered by flowing streams, and palaces too. ¹¹ They deny the Hour. For those who deny that Hour, We have prepared a blazing fire. ¹² When it sees them from afar, they will hear its raging and roaring. ¹³ When they are thrown into a narrow space, chained together, they will plead for

death. ¹⁴ But they will be told, ‘Do not call today for one death, call for many deaths!’ ¹⁵ Say, ‘Which is better, this or the Paradise of immortality which the righteous have been promised? It is their recompense and their destination.’ ¹⁶ Abiding there forever, they shall find in it all that they desire. This is a binding promise which your Lord has made.

¹⁷ On the Day He gathers them all together with those they worship besides Him, He will say, ‘Was it you who misled My servants, or did they stray away by themselves?’ ¹⁸ They will answer, ‘Hallowed be You! It was not proper for us to choose any guardian other than You. But You gave them and their fathers the comforts of this life, so that they forgot Your reminder and thus brought destruction upon themselves.’ ¹⁹ [God will say], ‘Now, they have given the lie to all your assertions, and you can neither ward off [your punishment] nor obtain any help.’ For, whoever of you has committed evil, shall be caused by Us to taste great suffering!’

²⁰ We never sent any messengers before you who did not eat food and walk in the market-place. We make some of you a means of trial for others, to see whether you are steadfast. Your Lord is all seeing.

²¹ Those who do not expect a meeting with Us say, ‘Why are angels not sent down to us?’ Or ‘Why do we not see our Lord?’ Surely, they are too proud of themselves and have greatly exceeded all bounds.

²² There will be no good tidings for the guilty on the day they see the angels; and they will cry out, ‘Keep away, keep away!’²³ and We shall take all that they did and turn it into scattered dust.²⁴ The inhabitants of the Garden will have the best residence and the finest lodging on that Day.

²⁵ On a Day when the sky will split open with its clouds and the angels are sent down rank upon rank,²⁶ true sovereignty on that Day will belong to the Gracious One, and it will be a hard Day for those who deny the truth.²⁷ On that Day, the wrongdoer will bite his hands and say, ‘Would that I had walked in the Messenger’s path!’²⁸ Oh, would that I had never chosen such a one for my companion—²⁹ he made me forgetful of the warning after it had reached me. Satan is man’s great betrayer.’³⁰ The Messenger will say, ‘Lord, my people did indeed discard the Quran,’³¹ thus did We assign to every prophet an enemy from among the sinners; your Lord is sufficient as a guide and a helper.

³² Those who deny the truth say, ‘Why was the Quran not sent down to him in a single revelation?’ We sent it in this manner, so that We might strengthen your heart. We gave it to you in gradual revelation.³³ Every time they raise an objection, We will bring you the truth and the best of explanations.³⁴ Those who will be dragged headlong into Hell shall have an evil place to dwell in, for they have strayed far from the right path.

³⁵ We gave Moses the Book, and appointed his brother Aaron as his supporter. ³⁶ Then We said, ‘Go together to the people who have denied Our signs.’ We utterly destroyed them! ³⁷ We drowned the people of Noah also when they rejected their messengers and We made them an example to all mankind. We have prepared a painful punishment for the wrongdoers, ³⁸ to ‘Ad, and Thamud, and the people of al-Rass, and as We did for the many a generation between them. ³⁹ To each of them We gave warnings and each of them We destroyed completely. ⁴⁰ Indeed they must have come upon the town on which an evil rain had poured down. Did they not see it? Yet they have no faith in the Resurrection.

⁴¹ Whenever they see you they only make a mockery of you—‘Is this the one God has sent as His Messenger? ⁴² Indeed, he would well-nigh have led us astray from our deities, had we not been [so] steadfastly attached to them!’ When they behold the punishment, they shall realize who strayed furthest from the right path.

⁴³ Have you seen him who has taken his own desire to be his god? Can you be a guardian over him? ⁴⁴ Do you think most of them can hear or understand? They are like cattle. Indeed, they are even more astray.

⁴⁵ Have you not seen how your Lord lengthens the shadows? Had He pleased, He could have made them constant; then We placed the sun as an indicator for them, ⁴⁶ then We withdrew it to Us, a gradual

withdrawal.⁴⁷ It is He who made the night a mantle for you, and sleep for repose; and made the day a time for rising.^a ⁴⁸ It is He who sends the winds as heralds of His mercy and We send down pure water from the sky,⁴⁹ so that We may bring life to a dead land; and slake the thirst of Our creation; cattle and men, in great numbers.

⁵⁰ We have explained it to them in diverse ways, so that they may take heed, but most persist in their ingratitude.⁵¹ If We had so wished, We might have sent a warner into every town,⁵² so do not yield to those who deny the truth, but strive with the utmost strenuousness by means of this [Quran, to convey its message to them].

⁵³ It is He who released the two bodies of flowing water, one sweet and fresh and the other salty and bitter, and set up an insurmountable barrier between them.⁵⁴ It is He who has created human beings from water and He has granted them the ties of blood as well as marriage. Your Lord is all powerful.

⁵⁵ Yet they worship besides God that which can neither benefit them nor harm them. One who denies

^a There are many lessons in this system of the earth. As the light of day necessarily follows the darkness of night, so also is it necessary that untruth be followed by Truth. While waking up in the morning after sleeping at night symbolizes resurrection in the life after death.

the truth is a helper [of evil] against his Lord. ⁵⁶ We have sent you only as a bearer of glad tidings and as a warner. ⁵⁷ Say, ‘I do not ask you for any recompense for this except that anyone who so wishes should take the right path to his Lord.’

⁵⁸ Put your trust in the One who is the Ever-Living [God], who never dies, and glorify Him with His praise. He is fully aware of the sins of His servants; ⁵⁹ it is He who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six Days [periods], then settled Himself on the throne—the Gracious One. Ask any informed person about Him.^a ⁶⁰ When they are told, ‘Prostrate yourselves before the Gracious One,’ they ask, ‘Who is this Gracious One? Shall we prostrate ourselves before whatever you will?’ This increases their aversion.

⁶¹ Exalted is He who put constellations in the heavens, a radiant lamp and an illuminating moon—
⁶² it is He who has made night and day succeed each other, a sign for those who would take heed and would be grateful.

^a Here ‘six Days’ means six Days of God. In the language of human beings it may be called six stages or six periods. The Creation of the Universe in six stages indicates that it was done in a well planned manner. Whatever is brought into existence on the basis of a plan and a specific arrangement cannot be futile.

⁶³ The true servants of the Gracious One are those who walk upon the earth with humility and when they are addressed by the ignorant ones, their response is, ‘Peace’; ⁶⁴ and those who spend the night prostrating themselves, and standing before their Lord, ⁶⁵ who say, ‘Our Lord, ward off from us the punishment of Hell, for its punishment is a dreadful torment to suffer. ⁶⁶ Indeed, it is an evil abode and evil dwelling-place.’ ⁶⁷ They are those who are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but keep a balance between the two; ⁶⁸ those who never invoke any other deity besides God, nor take a life which God has made sacred, except with the right to do so, nor commit adultery. Anyone who does that shall face punishment: ⁶⁹ he shall have his suffering doubled on the Day of Resurrection and he will abide forever in disgrace, ⁷⁰ except for those who repent and believe and do good deeds. God will change the evil deeds of such people into good ones: He is most forgiving and most merciful. ⁷¹ He who repents and does good deeds has truly turned to God.

⁷² And those who do not bear false witness, and when they pass by frivolity, they pass by with dignity; ⁷³ who do not turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the signs of their Lord when they are reminded of them; ⁷⁴ who say, ‘Lord, grant us joy in our wives and children and make us a model for the righteous.’

⁷⁵ These are the ones who will be rewarded with lofty mansions in Paradise, for their steadfastness.

They will be received therein with greetings of welcome and salutations of peace. ⁷⁶ There they shall abide forever: a blessed dwelling and a blessed resting place. ⁷⁷ Say, ‘What would my Lord care for you, if you do not call on Him. Because you have indeed rejected the truth and His punishment is bound to overtake you.

26. THE POETS (*AL-SHU‘ARA*)

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

¹ *Ta Sin Mim*

² These are the verses of the Book that makes things clear. ³ It may be that you will destroy yourself with grief because they will not believe. ⁴ But if We had so willed, We could have sent down to them a sign from the heavens so that their heads would be bowed down before it in utter humility. ⁵ Whenever there comes to them any fresh warning from the Merciful, they always turn their backs on it: ⁶ they have indeed rejected the message. But the truth of what they laughed to scorn will dawn upon them before long.

⁷ Do they not see the earth, and what beneficial kinds of things We have caused to grow in it? ⁸ Surely in this there is a sign, yet most of them would not

believe: ⁹ truly, your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.^a

¹⁰ When your Lord called out to Moses, saying, 'Go to the wrongdoing people, ¹¹ the people of Pharaoh, will they not fear God?' ¹² Moses replied, 'My Lord, I fear they will reject me, ¹³ and my breast is straitened and my tongue is not fluent; so send Aaron as well; ¹⁴ besides, they accuse me of a crime, and I fear that they may put me to death.'

¹⁵ God said, 'Indeed not; go both of you with Our signs, We shall be with you, listening [to your call]. ¹⁶ Go to Pharaoh, both of you, and say, "We are messengers from the Lord of the Worlds: ¹⁷ let the Children of Israel go with us!"' ¹⁸ Pharaoh said to Moses, 'Did we not bring you up among us as a child? And you spent several years of your life with us. ¹⁹ Yet you committed the deed you did, surely you are one of the ingrates.'

²⁰ Moses replied, 'I did that when I was one of the misguided, ²¹ and I fled from you because I feared you. Then my Lord granted me wisdom and made me one of the messengers. ²² And this is the favour with which

^a Almighty God wants man to notice the extraordinary but hidden aspects of ordinary events. In the events happening in the chain of cause and effect, he should be able to observe the direct role of God. Those who display this high degree of insight are the ones who will be treated as having faith in God and the ones who will be blessed with the eternal grace of God.

you taunt me—that you have enslaved the Children of Israel?’²³ Pharaoh said, ‘What is this: Lord of the Universe?’²⁴ Moses said, ‘Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, if only you would be convinced.’²⁵ Pharaoh said to those around him, ‘Did you hear?’²⁶ Moses went on, ‘He is your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers.’²⁷ Pharaoh said, ‘This messenger who has been sent to you is surely possessed!’²⁸ Moses said, ‘He is the Lord of the East and the West, and all that lies between them, if only you could understand.’²⁹ Pharaoh said, ‘If you take any deity other than myself, I will throw you into prison,’³⁰ and Moses asked, ‘Even if I show you a clear sign?’³¹ Pharaoh said, ‘Show it then, if you are telling the truth!’³² So Moses threw down his staff and suddenly it appeared as a serpent, plainly visible.³³ And he drew out his hand, and it appeared [shining] white to the beholders.³⁴ Pharaoh said to the chiefs around him, ‘Surely this man is a skilful sorcerer.³⁵ Who wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery. Now what do you advise?’

³⁶ They said, ‘Let him and his brother wait a while, and send heralds into the cities,³⁷ who shall bring to you every skilful sorcerer.’³⁸ So the sorcerers were gathered on the appointed day³⁹ and the people were told, ‘Will you also gather together,⁴⁰ so that we may follow the magicians, if they be the winners.’⁴¹ When the magicians came, they asked Pharaoh, ‘Shall we

have a reward, if we are the winners?' ⁴² He replied, 'Certainly, in that case you will join my inner circle.'

⁴³ Moses said to the magicians, 'Throw down whatever you are going to throw.'⁴⁴ So they cast down their ropes and staffs, and said, 'By Pharaoh's honour, we shall surely win.'⁴⁵ Then Moses threw down his staff, and it swallowed up all that they had conjured into being. ⁴⁶ The magicians fell down prostrate, ⁴⁷ saying, 'We believe in the Lord of the Worlds, ⁴⁸ the Lord of Moses and Aaron.'

⁴⁹ Pharaoh said, 'Have you come to believe in him, before I have given you permission? He is surely your master who has taught you magic. But you shall see. I will cut off your hands and feet on alternate sides and crucify you all.'⁵⁰ They said, 'There is no harm. To our Lord we shall return. ⁵¹ We hope our Lord will forgive us, as we are the first of the believers.'

⁵² Then We revealed Our will to Moses, saying, 'Set forth with My servants, in the night, for you will surely be pursued.'⁵³ And Pharaoh sent forth heralds to all the cities. ⁵⁴ 'These,' they said, 'are only a small band—⁵⁵ and they have enraged us—⁵⁶ we are a large and watchful force.'⁵⁷ So We made them leave their gardens and springs, ⁵⁸ their treasures and their noble dwellings—⁵⁹ and We made the Children of Israel inheritors of these bounties.

⁶⁰ Pharaoh and his people pursued them at sunrise, ⁶¹ and when the two groups saw each other, Moses'

companions said, 'We are sure to be overtaken.'⁶² Moses replied, 'No, My Lord is with me, and He will guide me.'⁶³ Then We bade Moses strike the sea with his staff. And it parted, and each part was like a huge mountain.⁶⁴ In the meantime We made the others approach that place.⁶⁵ We delivered Moses and all those who were with him,⁶⁶ then We drowned the others.⁶⁷ Surely in that there is a sign; yet most of them do not believe:⁶⁸ truly, your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.

⁶⁹ Tell them the story of Abraham,⁷⁰ when he asked his father and his people, 'What is that which you worship?'⁷¹ They said, 'We worship idols and will continue to cling to them.'⁷² He asked, 'Do they hear you when you call to them?'⁷³ Do they help or harm you?'⁷⁴ They replied, 'But we found our fathers doing the same.'

⁷⁵ Abraham said, 'Have you really thought about what you have been worshipping,⁷⁶ you and your forefathers—⁷⁷ they are all my enemies, not so the Lord of the Universe,⁷⁸ who created me. It is He who guides me;⁷⁹ He who gives me food and drink;⁸⁰ He who cures me when I am ill;⁸¹ He who will cause me to die and bring me back to life;⁸² and He who will, I hope, forgive me my faults on the Day of the Judgement.

⁸³ My Lord, bestow wisdom upon me; unite me with the righteous;⁸⁴ give me a good name among later

generations; ⁸⁵ and make me one of the inheritors of the Garden of Bliss; ⁸⁶ and forgive my father; for he is one of the misguided; ⁸⁷ and do not disgrace me on the Day when all people are resurrected, ⁸⁸ the Day when wealth and sons will be of no avail, ⁸⁹ and when he alone will be saved who comes to God with a sound heart.'

⁹⁰ When Paradise shall be brought near to the God-fearing ⁹¹ and Hell shall be revealed to the misguided, ⁹² they will be asked, 'Where are those whom you worshipped ⁹³ besides God? Can they help you or even help themselves?' ⁹⁴ Then they will be thrown headlong into Hell, both they and the misguided ones, ⁹⁵ and Satan's legions, all together. ⁹⁶ They will dispute between themselves therein, and will say, ⁹⁷ 'We were clearly misguided ⁹⁸ when we made you equal with the Lord of the Universe. ⁹⁹ It was the evildoers who led us astray, ¹⁰⁰ and we have no intercessors now, ¹⁰¹ and no sincere friend. ¹⁰² If we could only return to the world and be among the believers.' ¹⁰³ There is certainly a sign in that, but most of them would not believe: ¹⁰⁴ surely, your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.

¹⁰⁵ The people of Noah also rejected the messengers. ¹⁰⁶ When their brother Noah said to them, 'Will you have no fear of God? ¹⁰⁷ I am a trustworthy messenger for you: ¹⁰⁸ fear God, and obey me. ¹⁰⁹ I ask of you no recompense for it, for my only reward is with the Lord of the Universe, ¹¹⁰ so fear God and obey me.' ¹¹¹ They replied, 'Are we to believe in you when your followers

are but the lowest of the low?’ ¹¹² He said, ‘What knowledge do I have of their doings?’ ¹¹³ My Lord alone can bring them to account—if only you could understand—¹¹⁴ I am not going to drive away any believers. ¹¹⁵ I am only a plain warner.’

¹¹⁶ They said, ‘Noah, if you do not desist, you will be stoned.’ ¹¹⁷ Noah said, ‘My Lord, my people have rejected me, ¹¹⁸ therefore, judge decisively between me and them; and save me and the believers who are with me.’ ¹¹⁹ So We saved him, and those who were with him in the laden ark, ¹²⁰ and drowned the rest. ¹²¹ There is certainly a sign in that; but most of them do not believe: ¹²² surely your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.

¹²³ The people of ‘Ad, too, rejected the messengers. ¹²⁴ Their brother Hud said to them, ‘Will you not fear God?’ ¹²⁵ I am a trustworthy messenger for you: ¹²⁶ fear God, then, and obey me. ¹²⁷ I ask no recompense of you; my reward is only with the Lord of the Universe. ¹²⁸ Do you build monuments on every high place in vanity, ¹²⁹ and erect castles hoping that you will live forever. ¹³⁰ When you lay hands upon anyone, you do so as tyrants. ¹³¹ So fear God, and obey me; ¹³² fear Him who has aided you with all that you know—¹³³ He has bestowed on you cattle, and sons, ¹³⁴ and gardens, and springs—¹³⁵ indeed, I fear for you the torment of an awful day.’

¹³⁶ They replied, ‘It makes no difference to us

whether you preach or do not preach, ¹³⁷ this is nothing but a habit of the ancients: ¹³⁸ and we shall not be punished.' ¹³⁹ So they rejected him; and We destroyed them. There is certainly a sign in that; but most of them would not believe. ¹⁴⁰ Surely your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.

¹⁴¹ The tribe of Thamud also rejected the messengers. ¹⁴² When their brother Salih said to them, 'Will you not fear God? ¹⁴³ Truly, I am a trustworthy messenger for you, ¹⁴⁴ so fear God and obey me. ¹⁴⁵ For this I demand no recompense from you; my reward is only with the Lord of the Universe. ¹⁴⁶ Do you think that you will be left secure [forever]—¹⁴⁷ in the midst of gardens and fountains, ¹⁴⁸ and cornfields, and palm-trees laden with fruit—¹⁴⁹ hewing out houses in the mountains and taking pride in your skill? ¹⁵⁰ So fear God and obey me: ¹⁵¹ do not obey the bidding of those who are given to excesses, ¹⁵² those who spread corruption in the land instead of putting things right.'

¹⁵³ They replied, 'Surely you are bewitched. ¹⁵⁴ You are only a human being like ourselves. Show us a sign, if you are telling the truth.' ¹⁵⁵ He said, 'Here is a she-camel. She shall have her turn of drinking, as you have yours, each on an appointed day, ¹⁵⁶ so do her no harm, or the punishment of an awful day will befall you.' ¹⁵⁷ Yet they hamstrung her, and then they became regretful: ¹⁵⁸ so the punishment came down upon them. Surely in that there is a sign, but most of them

would not believe. ¹⁵⁹ Your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.

¹⁶⁰ Then the people of Lot rejected the messengers. ¹⁶¹ When their brother Lot said to them, ‘Will you not fear God? ¹⁶² I am a trustworthy messenger to you: ¹⁶³ so fear God and obey me. ¹⁶⁴ I ask of you no recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the Universe. ¹⁶⁵ Do you, of all people, approach males, ¹⁶⁶ and leave your wives whom your Lord has created for you? You are a people who transgress all bounds.’

¹⁶⁷ They said, ‘If you do not desist, Lot, you will surely be banished.’ ¹⁶⁸ He said, ‘I am one of those who abhors your ways. ¹⁶⁹ My Lord, save me and my family from their evil doings.’ ¹⁷⁰ We saved him and all of his family, ¹⁷¹ except for an old woman who stayed behind, ¹⁷² then We totally destroyed the rest, ¹⁷³ and We poured a rain [of destruction] down upon them—and how evil was the rain which fell on those who were forewarned. ¹⁷⁴ Surely in this there is a sign: but most of them would not believe: ¹⁷⁵ your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.

¹⁷⁶ The dwellers of the forest also rejected the messengers. ¹⁷⁷ Shu‘ayb said to them, ‘Will you not fear God? ¹⁷⁸ I am a trustworthy messenger to you: ¹⁷⁹ so fear God, and obey me. ¹⁸⁰ I ask of you no recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the Universe. ¹⁸¹ Give full measure, and cause no loss to others. ¹⁸² Weigh with correct scales: ¹⁸³ do not

defraud people of what is rightfully theirs; and do not spread corruption in the land. ¹⁸⁴ Fear Him who created you and those who have gone before you.'

¹⁸⁵ They replied, 'You are bewitched. ¹⁸⁶ You are only a human being like ourselves. Indeed we think you are a liar. ¹⁸⁷ So cause a fragment of the sky to fall on us, if you are truthful.' ¹⁸⁸ He said, 'My Lord has full knowledge of all your actions.' ¹⁸⁹ They rejected him, and then had to suffer the punishment of a day of overshadowing gloom. That was indeed the punishment of an awful day. ¹⁹⁰ Surely, in this is indeed a sign; but most of them would not believe: ¹⁹¹ your Lord is the Mighty One, the Merciful.

¹⁹² This surely is a revelation from the Lord of the Universe: ¹⁹³ the Faithful Spirit has brought it down ¹⁹⁴ into your heart, so that you may be a warner, ¹⁹⁵ in clear Arabic speech. ¹⁹⁶ Surely, it is foretold in the ancient scriptures. ¹⁹⁷ Is it not evidence enough for them that the learned among the Children of Israel have recognized this [as true]?

¹⁹⁸ Had We revealed it to any one of the non-Arabs, ¹⁹⁹ and he had recited it to them, they would not have believed in it. ²⁰⁰ We have thus caused denial of truth to enter into the hearts of the sinners: ²⁰¹ they will not believe in it until they see the grievous punishment. ²⁰² It will come upon them suddenly when they are not expecting it. ²⁰³ Then they will exclaim, 'Could we have some respite?'

²⁰⁴ Do they want to hasten Our punishment?

²⁰⁵ Think! If We let them enjoy life for some years,
²⁰⁶ and then the promised punishment fell upon them,
²⁰⁷ of what avail would their past enjoyment be to
them? ²⁰⁸ Never have We destroyed a town without
sending down messengers to warn it, ²⁰⁹ as a reminder
from Us: We are never unjust. ²¹⁰ It was not the devils
who brought down the Quran: ²¹¹ neither are they
worthy of it, nor are they capable of it, ²¹² indeed they
are debarred from overhearing it.

²¹³ So do not call on any deity besides God, lest you
incur His punishment. ²¹⁴ Warn your nearest kinsmen,
²¹⁵ and extend kindness and affection to those of the
believers who follow you. ²¹⁶ If they disobey you, say,
'I bear no responsibility for what you do.' ²¹⁷ Put your
trust in the Mighty One, the Merciful, ²¹⁸ who sees you
when you stand up [for prayer], ²¹⁹ and sees your
movements among those who prostrate themselves:
²²⁰ He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing.

²²¹ Shall I tell you upon whom the devils descend?
²²² They descend on every lying sinner, ²²³ who lends
an ear to them, and most of them are liars. ²²⁴ And as
for the poets—it is the misled who follow them. ²²⁵ Do
you not see how they wander aimlessly in every valley,
²²⁶ preaching what they do not practice. ²²⁷ Not so the
true believers who do good works and remember God
with fervour and defend themselves only after they are
wronged. The wrongdoers will soon know how evil a
turn their affairs will take.

27. THE ANTS (*AL-NAML*)

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

¹ *Ta Sin*

These are verses from the Quran, a book that makes things clear; ² it is guidance and good news for the believers ³ who pray regularly and pay obligatory alms and have firm faith in the Hereafter. ⁴ We have made those who do not believe in the Hereafter feel their actions appear good to them, so they wander blindly: ⁵ they are the ones who will have the worst of punishment, and in the Hereafter they will be the greatest losers. ⁶ You have received this Quran from One who is all-wise, all-knowing.

⁷ Tell of Moses who said to his family, ‘I have seen a fire. I will bring you news from there, or a burning brand for you to warm yourselves.’ ⁸ When he came up to it, a voice called out, ‘Blessed be whoever is near this fire, and whoever is around it! Glory be to God, Lord of the Universe!

⁹ O Moses, I am God, the Powerful, the Wise. ¹⁰ Throw down your staff.’ But when he saw it moving like a snake, he turned and fled. ‘Moses, do not be afraid! The messengers need have no fear in My presence; ¹¹ as for those who do wrong and then do

good after evil, I am most forgiving, most merciful. ¹² Now put your hand inside your cloak next to your bosom and it will come out [shining] white, without any blemish. This will be one of the nine signs for Pharaoh and his people: for truly they are a rebellious people.’ ¹³ But when Our signs came to them in all their clarity they said, ‘This is clearly sorcery!’ ¹⁴ And they persisted in rejecting them wrongfully and arrogantly, while in their hearts they were convinced of their truth. Observe, then, how evil was the fate of the evil-doers.

¹⁵ We bestowed knowledge on David and Solomon and they both said, ‘Praise be to God who has exalted us above many of His believing servants.’ ¹⁶ Solomon succeeded David. He said, ‘Know, my people, that we have been taught the speech of birds and endowed with all good things. Surely this is God’s manifest grace.’

¹⁷ Solomon’s hosts of jinn and men and birds, were all gathered together in his presence and were ranged in battle order, ¹⁸ and when they came to the Valley of the Ants, one ant said, ‘Ants! Go into your dwellings, in case Solomon and his hosts inadvertently crush you.’ ¹⁹ Solomon smiled broadly at its words and said, ‘Lord, inspire me to be thankful for the blessings You have granted me and my parents, and to do good deeds that please You; and include me, by Your grace, among Your righteous servants!’

²⁰ Then Solomon inspected the birds, and said, ‘How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Is he absent then?’ ²¹ I shall surely punish him severely or order him to be executed, unless he gives me a good reason for his absence.’ ²² But he was not long in coming, and said, ‘I have learnt something you did not know. I have come to you from Sheba with reliable news.’ ²³ I found a woman ruling over them, who has been given everything and she has a mighty throne. ²⁴ I found her and her people worshipping the sun, instead of God. Satan has made their conduct appear good to them, and has thus diverted them from the right path, so that they might not be guided. ²⁵ Should they not worship God who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and earth and knows both what you conceal and what you make known? ²⁶ He is God: there is no deity but He, the Lord of the mighty throne.’

²⁷ Solomon said, ‘We shall soon see whether you have spoken the truth, or whether you are a liar.’ ²⁸ Go with this letter of mine and lay it before them, then withdraw from them and see how they respond.’ ²⁹ The Queen of Sheba said, ‘O Counsellors, an honourable letter has been delivered to me.’ ³⁰ It is from Solomon. It reads, “In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, ³¹ do not exalt yourselves above me, but come to me in all submission.” ³² Now advise me in this, Counsellors. I never decide any affair till I have conferred with you.’ ³³ They said, ‘We are strong and

our prowess in battle is great, but the decision is in your hands, so consider what you will command.’

³⁴ She said, ‘Surely, when mighty kings invade a country, they despoil it and humiliate its noblest inhabitants—these men will do the same—³⁵ but I shall send them a present and see with what reply my envoys will return.’

³⁶ So when [the envoy] came to Solomon he said, ‘What! Are you offering me wealth? But that which God has given me is better than that which He has given you. Yet you rejoice in your gift. ³⁷ Go back to them: we shall most certainly come upon them with forces which they will never be able to withstand, and shall most certainly cause them to be driven from their lands, disgraced and humbled!’

³⁸ Solomon then said, ‘O Counsellors, which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?’ ³⁹ A demon from among the jinn said, ‘I will bring it to you before you get up from your seat. I am strong and trustworthy enough to do it.’ ⁴⁰ But one of them who had some knowledge of the Book said, ‘I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye.’ When Solomon saw it placed before him, he exclaimed, ‘This is by the grace of my Lord, to test whether I am grateful or ungrateful. Whosoever is grateful, it is for the good of his own self; and whosoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is self-sufficient and generous.’

⁴¹ He said, ‘Disguise her throne. We shall see whether

or not she will recognize it.’⁴² When she came to Solomon, she was asked, ‘Is your throne like this?’ She replied, ‘It looks as though it were the same, and we had been given knowledge [of your power] before this, and we have already submitted.’⁴³ And that which she used to worship beside God had stopped her [from believing]; for she came of a disbelieving people.⁴⁴ Then she was bidden to enter the palace; but when she saw it, she thought it was a deep pool of water, and bared her legs. But Solomon explained, ‘It is just a palace paved with glass,’ and she said, ‘My Lord, I have wronged myself: now I submit myself along with Solomon, to God, the Lord of the Universe.’

⁴⁵ To Thamud We sent their brother Salih. He said, ‘Serve none but God.’ But they divided themselves into two factions contending with one another.⁴⁶ He urged them, ‘O my people, why do you wish to hasten on the evil rather than the good? Why do you not ask forgiveness of God, so that you may be shown mercy?’⁴⁷ They said, ‘We see you and your followers as an evil omen.’ He replied, ‘No, your evil omen is with God; the truth is that you are a people being put to the test.’

⁴⁸ There were in the city nine men who spread corruption in the land, and would not reform.⁴⁹ They said, ‘Let us bind ourselves by an oath sworn in the name of God that we shall attack Salih and his family by night, and to his protector [who demands retribution], we shall say, ‘We were not present when

they were slain. We are telling the truth.’⁵⁰ Thus they devised a plan, and We also devised a plan, but they were not aware of it.⁵¹ See, then, what the consequences of their plan were. We destroyed them and their people utterly, all together.⁵² Because of their wrongdoing, their houses are in ruins—in that surely there is a sign for people who have knowledge—⁵³ and We saved those who believed in and feared God.

⁵⁴ And tell of Lot. He said to his people, ‘Will you commit evil knowingly?’⁵⁵ Must you go lustfully to men instead of women? Indeed, you are a people who are deeply ignorant.’⁵⁶ The only answer of his people was, ‘Drive out Lot and his family from the city. They are a people who make themselves out to be pure.’⁵⁷ So We delivered him and his family—except his wife: We ordained her to be one of those who stayed behind—⁵⁸ and We pelted them with torrential rain. How dreadful that rain was for those who had been warned!⁵⁹ Say, ‘All praise be to God, and peace be upon those servants of His whom He has chosen. Is God better, or what they associate with Him?’

⁶⁰ Who created the heavens and the earth and sends down water for you from the sky, by which We make luxuriant gardens grow—you could never make such trees grow in them—is it another deity besides God? No indeed, but they are a people who equate others with Him.⁶¹ Who is it that made the earth a stable place to live in? Who made rivers flow through it?

Who set mountains upon it and placed a barrier between the two seas? Is there another deity besides God? Indeed, most of them have no knowledge.

⁶² Who responds to the oppressed when he calls out to Him, and relieves his suffering and who will make you inheritors of the earth? Then, is there a god besides God? How little you pay heed! ⁶³ Who guides you in the darkness of the land and sea? Who sends the breezes as heralds of His mercy? Then, is there a deity besides God? Exalted is God above what they associate with Him. ⁶⁴ Who originates creation, then regenerates it, and who gives you sustenance from heaven and earth? Then, is there a deity besides God?' Say, 'Bring forward your proofs, if you are telling the truth.'

⁶⁵ Say, 'No one in the heavens and the earth has knowledge of the unseen except God.' They do not know when they will be raised up again. ⁶⁶ Indeed, their knowledge of the life to come stops short of the truth: they are [often] in doubt as to its reality: in fact, they are blind to it. ⁶⁷ Those who deny the truth say, 'When we have turned to dust like our fathers, shall we be brought back to life again?' ⁶⁸ We and our fathers were promised this before; these are but old stories.' ⁶⁹ Say, 'Roam across the earth and observe what was the end of the sinful ones.'

⁷⁰ Do not grieve over them, nor feel distressed at their schemes. ⁷¹ They ask, 'When will this promise be fulfilled, if what you say be true?' ⁷² Say, 'It may be

that a part of what you would hasten on is close behind you.’⁷³ Truly, your Lord is bountiful to mankind, but most of them are not grateful.⁷⁴ The Lord knows full well what they conceal in their hearts and what they disclose:⁷⁵ there is nothing hidden in heaven and on earth, but is recorded in a clear Book.

⁷⁶ This Quran explains to the children of Israel much of what they differ over, ⁷⁷ certainly it is guidance and a blessing for the believers. ⁷⁸ Certainly your Lord will decide between them in His wisdom—He is the Almighty, the All Knowing—⁷⁹ so put your trust in God. Surely you are on the path of manifest truth. ⁸⁰ You cannot make the dead hear, nor can you make the deaf hear your call, when they turn their backs on it, ⁸¹ nor can you guide the blind out of their error. You can make only those hear you who believe in Our revelations and surrender themselves to Us.

⁸² When God’s word is justly carried out against them, We will produce a *dabbah*^a from the earth

^a At the time when Almighty God takes the decision to bring to an end the present history of the earth, some extraordinary signs will appear to usher in the last phase. Among these signs will be the appearance of a *dabbah*. The message, which was brought through human beings and which was not accepted by the people, will be announced by *dabbah*. Modern systems of communication are probably what is alluded to here as *dabbah*. This will be the bell announcing the end of the examination period and not its beginning.

which will tell them that mankind had no real faith in Our signs. ⁸³ On that Day We shall assemble together a host from every community of those who cried lies to Our revelations and they will be grouped ⁸⁴ then, when they have arrived, He will say, ‘Did you deny My revelations, even though you did not have proper knowledge of them? Or what was it that you were doing?’ ⁸⁵ The verdict will be given against them, because they did wrong, and they will be speechless. ⁸⁶ Do they not see that We have made the night for them to rest in and the day to give them light? There are certainly signs in that for people who believe.

⁸⁷ On the Day when the trumpet is blown, whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth will be struck with terror, except for those whom God wishes to spare. All shall come to Him in utter humility. ⁸⁸ You see the mountains and think them firmly fixed. But they shall pass away as the clouds pass away. Such is the work of God, who has ordered all things to perfection: He is fully aware of what you do. ⁸⁹ Whoever does a good deed, shall be rewarded with what is better, and will be secure from fear of that Day, ⁹⁰ and those who do evil will be flung down on their faces in the Fire. Are you not rewarded according to your deeds?

⁹¹ Say, ‘I am commanded to serve the Lord of this town, which He has made inviolable and to whom everything belongs; I am commanded to be one of

those devoted to Him;⁹² to recite the Quran.’ Whoever follows its guidance, follows it only for the good of his own soul; and as for him who goes astray, just say, ‘I am only a warner.’⁹³ Then say, ‘Praise be to God! He will show you His signs and you will recognize them. Your Lord is not unaware of what you do.’

28. THE STORY (*AL-QASAS*)

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

¹ *Ta Sin Mim*

² These are verses from the Book that makes things clear. ³ We shall narrate to you some of the story of Moses and Pharaoh, with truth, for people who would believe. ⁴ Pharaoh behaved arrogantly in the land, and divided the people into groups, seeking to weaken one section, slaying their sons and sparing their daughters—he was one of those who spread corruption—⁵ We wished to favour those who were oppressed in the land, and to make them leaders and make them inheritors [of Our bounties], ⁶ and to give them power in the land; and to show Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts that very thing which they feared.

⁷ We inspired Moses’ mother saying, ‘Suckle him, and then, when you fear for him, cast him into the

river, and have no fear and do not grieve, for We shall return him to you, and shall make him one of the Messengers.’⁸ Then Pharaoh’s household picked him up—later to become for them an enemy and a source of grief for them: Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were wrongdoers—⁹and Pharaoh’s wife said, ‘He will be a joy to the eye for me and you! Do not slay him: he may well be of use to us, or we may adopt him as a son.’ They did not realize what they were doing.

¹⁰ Moses’ mother’s heart was full of anxiety—she would have disclosed his identity had We not strengthened her heart so that she might be a firm believer [in Our promise].¹¹ She said to Moses’ sister, ‘Go, and follow him.’ So she watched him from a distance, like a stranger, without anyone noticing her.

¹² We had already made him refuse all wet nurses. So his sister said to them, ‘Shall I tell you of a family who will bring him up for you and take good care of him?’

¹³ Thus We restored him to his mother, so that she might be comforted and not grieve any more, and so that she would know that God’s promise was true. But most of them do not realize this.¹⁴ When Moses reached full manhood and maturity, We bestowed upon him wisdom and knowledge: this is how We reward those who do good.

¹⁵ He entered the city unnoticed by its people, and there he encountered two men fighting with one another—one of his own people and the other one of

his enemies. The one who belonged to his own people cried out to him for help against his foe—whereupon Moses struck him down with his fist, thereby causing his death. Moses said, ‘This is Satan’s doing; he is an open foe, leading man astray.’¹⁶ He prayed, ‘Forgive me Lord, for I have sinned against my soul.’ God forgave him; for He is the Forgiving One, the Merciful.¹⁷ He said, ‘My Lord, because of the favour that You have shown me, I vow that I will never be a helper of the guilty.’

¹⁸ The next morning, when he was walking in the city, apprehensive, and watchful, and the man who had sought his help the day before cried out to him again for help. Moses said to him, ‘You are clearly a misguided man.’¹⁹ When he wanted to catch the one who was an enemy to them both, the man said, ‘Moses, do you want to kill me just as you killed a man yesterday? You only want to become a tyrant in the land; you do not want to set things right.’²⁰ A man came running from the far side of the city, and said, ‘Moses, the authorities are conspiring to kill you, so leave the city. I am one of your well-wishers.’²¹ So Moses departed from the city, fearful and vigilant, and prayed, ‘My Lord, save me from these unjust people.’

²² When he made his way towards Midian, he said, ‘I am sure, my Lord will guide me to the right way.’²³ And when he arrived at the well of Midian, he found around it a group of men watering their flocks, and he

saw two women standing apart from them, who were holding back their flocks, so he asked, ‘What is the matter with you?’ They replied, ‘We cannot draw water until the shepherds take away their sheep. Our father is a very old man.’²⁴ So Moses watered their flocks for them; and returned into the shade and prayed, ‘Lord, I am truly in need of whatever blessing You may send down for me,’²⁵ and then one of the two women came walking shyly up to him and said, ‘My father is asking you to come so that he may reward you for watering our flocks for us.’ When Moses came to their father and gave him an account of himself, he said: ‘Don’t be afraid! You have escaped from those wrongdoing people.’²⁶ One of the girls said, ‘Father, hire him! For the best man to hire is someone strong and trustworthy.’²⁷ The father said, ‘I would like to marry you to one of these two daughters of mine on the condition that you stay eight years in my service. But if you wish it, you may stay ten. I do not want to impose any hardship on you. God willing, you will find me a fair person.’²⁸ Moses said, ‘That is agreed between me and you; whichever of the two terms I fulfil, there will be no blame on me. God is witness to what we say.’

²⁹ When Moses completed the term and set out with his family, he noticed a fire in the direction of Mount Tur. He said to his family: ‘Stay here, I can see a fire. Perhaps I can bring you news, or a burning brand from

the fire with which you may warm yourself.’³⁰ And when he came to it, he was called by a voice from a bush in a blessed spot, on the right side of the valley: ‘O Moses, I am God, Lord of the Universe.’³¹ Throw down your staff.’ And when he saw it move as though it were a serpent, he turned his back and fled, and did not look back. ‘O Moses,’ said the voice, ‘come forward and have no fear; you are quite safe.’³² Put your hand into your bosom; it will come out [shining] white, without blemish; now draw your arm close to your body to calm your fears. These are two credentials from your Lord for Pharaoh and his nobles. Surely, they are a rebellious people.’

³³ Moses said, ‘My Lord, I have killed one of their people and fear that they may kill me.’³⁴ My brother Aaron is more eloquent than I am. Send him with me to support me and back me up. For I fear that they will reject me.’³⁵ God said: ‘We shall strengthen your arm through your brother, We shall give you both power, so that they shall not be able to harm you. Set forth with Our signs. You, and those who follow you, will surely prevail.’

³⁶ When Moses came to them with Our clear signs, they said, ‘This is nothing but contrived magic. We never heard of this among our forefathers.’³⁷ And Moses replied, ‘My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from Him and who will attain the heavenly abode in the hereafter. The wrongdoers shall never

prosper.’³⁸ Pharaoh said, ‘O nobles, I know of no god for you other than myself. So, Haman, burn me bricks of clay, and build me a high tower, so that I may have a look at the God of Moses, though I consider him to be one of the liars.’

³⁹ He and his hosts behaved arrogantly in the land without any justification—thinking that they would not be recalled to Us—⁴⁰ so We seized him and his hosts and cast them into the sea. Consider the fate of the wrongdoers. ⁴¹ We had made them leaders, but they called people to the Fire; and on the Day of Judgement they will not be helped. ⁴² We have caused a curse to follow them in this world and, on the Day of Judgement, they will be among the wretched. ⁴³ After We had destroyed the earlier generations, We gave Moses the Book to give men insight, and as guidance and a blessing for people, so that they might take heed.

⁴⁴ You were not present on the western side of the Mount when We gave Our Command to Moses: nor were you among the witnesses—⁴⁵ We brought into being many generations who lived long lives—nor did you live among the people of Midian and recite our revelations to them—it is We who send messengers—⁴⁶ you were not on the side of the Mount when We called out to Moses, but We have sent you as a mercy from your Lord, so that you may warn people to whom no warner has been sent before you, so that they may

take heed, ⁴⁷ and may not say, if an affliction should befall them on account of their misdeeds: ‘Lord, if only You had sent us a messenger, we might have followed Your message and become believers.’ ⁴⁸ But when the truth came to them from Us, they said, ‘Why has he not been given the like of what Moses was given?’ But did they not reject what Moses was given before? They said, ‘Both [Moses and Muhammad] are kinds of sorcery, each assisting the other.’ And they add, ‘We reject both of them.’

⁴⁹ Say to them, ‘Bring down from God a scripture that is a better guide than these two and I will follow it, if what you say be true.’ ⁵⁰ If they do not respond to you, then know that they follow only their own desires. Who could be more astray than he who follows his own likes and dislikes with no guidance from God? God does not guide the evil-doers. ⁵¹ We have conveyed Our Word to them, in succession, so that they may give heed.

⁵² Those to whom We gave the Book before this believe in it [the Quran], ⁵³ and, when it is recited to them, they say, ‘We believe in it. Indeed it is the truth from our Lord. Even before it came, we had submitted ourselves.’ ⁵⁴ Such people as these will receive a double reward, because they are steadfast and repel evil with good, and give alms out of what We have given them, ⁵⁵ and when they hear vain talk, they turn away from it and say, ‘We have our actions and you

have yours. We wish you peace. We will have nothing to do with the ignorant.’⁵⁶ You cannot guide whoever you please: it is God who guides whom He will. He best knows those who would accept guidance.

⁵⁷ They say, ‘If we were to follow your guidance, we should be uprooted from our land.’ But have We not established for them a safe haven to which fruits of every kind are brought as a provision from Ourselves? But most of them have no knowledge.

⁵⁸ How many townships have We destroyed where the people had become arrogant on account of their affluence? Since then their dwelling-places have scarcely been inhabited—We became their inheritors.
⁵⁹ Your Lord would never destroy a people until He had sent messengers to their capital cities, reciting to them Our revelations. Nor did We destroy a town unless their people became wrongdoers.

⁶⁰ Whatever you are given in this life is nothing but a temporary provision of this life and its glitter; what God has is better and more lasting. Will you not then understand? ⁶¹ Can someone to whom We have made a gracious promise and who will see it fulfilled, be compared to someone We have allowed to enjoy a worldly life, awhile, and who will be brought up [before God] for his accounting on the Day of Resurrection?

⁶² On that Day He will call to them, and say, ‘Where are those whom you claimed to be My partners?’

⁶³ And those on whom sentence has been passed, will say, ‘Our Lord, these are the ones who led us astray. We led them astray as we ourselves were led astray. We now dissociate ourselves from them before You; it was not us that they worshipped.’

⁶⁴ Then they will be told, ‘Call upon your partners.’ And they will call upon them, but will receive no answer. They shall witness the punishment. If only they had allowed themselves to be guided. ⁶⁵ On that Day God will call out to them, saying, ‘What answer did you give to Our messengers?’ ⁶⁶ They will be left speechless on that Day, and they will not be able to consult each other. ⁶⁷ But as for him who repents and believes and does good deeds, he can hope to find himself among the successful.

⁶⁸ Your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses whomsoever He pleases. They have no choice. Praise be to God—exalted is He over anything they may associate with Him! ⁶⁹ Your Lord knows what they conceal in their hearts and what they disclose. ⁷⁰ He is God: there is no god but Him. All Praise is due to Him in this world and the hereafter. His is the Judgement and to Him you shall be returned.

⁷¹ Ask them, ‘Tell me, if God were to extend perpetual night over you till the Day of Judgement, is there any deity other than God that could bring you light? Will you not listen?’ ⁷² Say, ‘Tell me, if God were to extend perpetual day over you till the Day of

Judgement—is there any deity other than God that could bring you night, in which to rest? Will you not then see?’⁷³ In His mercy He has made for you the night and the day, during which you may rest, and seek His bounty and be grateful.

⁷⁴ And on the Day He shall call out to them and say, ‘Where are those whom you alleged were My partners.’⁷⁵ And We shall bring forth from every people a witness and We shall say to them: ‘Bring your proof.’ Then they will know that truth belongs to God alone, and that which they used to invent will fall away from them.

⁷⁶ Korah was one of Moses’ people, but he behaved arrogantly towards them. We had given him such treasures that their very keys would have weighed down a band of strong men. His people said to him, ‘Do not exult in your riches, for God does not love the exultant.’⁷⁷ But seek the Home of the Hereafter by means of that which God has bestowed on you; do not forget to take your portion [of the Hereafter] in this world. Be good to others as God has been good to you and do not strive for evil in the land, for God does not love the evil-doers.’

⁷⁸ But he said, ‘I have been given it only because of the knowledge I possess.’ Did he not know that God had destroyed before him people who were stronger than he and possessed even greater resources? The guilty are not required to offer explanations of their sins.

⁷⁹ Then he went forth before his people in all his pomp. Those who were eager for the life of this world said, ‘If only we had the like of Korah’s fortune! He really is a very fortunate man,’ ⁸⁰ but those who had been given knowledge said, ‘Woe to you, God’s reward is better for those who believe and do good deeds: and it is awarded only to those who are steadfast.’

⁸¹ Then We caused the earth to swallow up him and his home: there was no one to help him against God, nor could he defend himself. ⁸² Those who had coveted his position the day before now began to say, ‘Ah! It is indeed God alone who gives abundantly to whom He will and sparingly to whom He pleases. Had not God been gracious to us, He would have caused us to be swallowed up also.’ Alas indeed! Those who deny the truth will never prosper.

⁸³ As for the abode of the Hereafter, We shall assign it to those who seek neither self-aggrandisement on the earth nor corruption. The righteous shall have a blessed end. ⁸⁴ He who does good shall be rewarded with something better. But he who does evil shall be requited according to his deeds.

⁸⁵ He who has entrusted you with the responsibility of the Quran, will surely lead you to a successful end. Say, ‘My Lord knows best who is rightly guided and who is in gross error.’ ⁸⁶ You never expected that this Book would be revealed to you. Yet, by the grace of

your Lord, you have received it. So do not support those who reject the truth.⁸⁷ And let no one divert you from God's revelations, once they have been sent down to you. Call people to your Lord. Never be of those who ascribe partners to God.⁸⁸ Invoke no god other than God, for there is no god but Him. All things are bound to perish except Himself. His is the judgement, and to Him you shall be returned.

29. THE SPIDER (*AL- 'ANKABUT*)

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

¹ *Alif Lam Mim*

² Do people think that once they say, 'We believe,' they will be left alone and not be put to the test? ³ We certainly tried those who have gone before them, so God will certainly distinguish between those who are truthful and those who are lying.

⁴ Do those who do evil imagine that they will escape Us? How ill they judge! ⁵ He who hopes to meet God should know that God's appointed hour is sure to come. He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing. ⁶ And whoever strives, strives only for himself—God is independent of all His creation—⁷ as for those who have faith and do good works, We shall certainly

cleanse them of their evil deeds and reward them according to the best of their actions.

⁸ We have enjoined man to show kindness to his parents. But if they bid you associate with Me something about which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. To Me you shall all return, and I shall tell you about all that you have done. ⁹ We shall surely admit those who believe and do good deeds to the company of the righteous.

¹⁰ Some profess to believe in God, but when they suffer for God's cause they mistake the persecution of man for the punishment of God. But when help comes to you from God, they will say, 'We have always been with you.' Is not God fully aware of what is in the hearts of all creatures? ¹¹ Most certainly God will mark out those who believe and mark out those who are hypocrites.

¹² Those who deny the truth say to the faithful, 'Follow our way, and we will bear the burden of your sins.' But they will bear none of their sins. They are surely lying. ¹³ They shall bear their own burdens, and other burdens besides. On the Day of Resurrection they shall be questioned about their false assertions.

¹⁴ We sent Noah to his people and he lived among them for fifty short of a thousand years; then the deluge overtook them, for they were wrongdoers. ¹⁵ But We saved him and those who were with him in the Ark and made the event a sign for mankind.

¹⁶ Tell of Abraham. He said to his people, ‘Worship God and fear Him, that would be best for you, if only you knew. ¹⁷ You worship idols besides God and fabricate falsehoods. Those whom you worship besides God have no power to provide sustenance for you. So seek your sustenance from God and worship Him and be grateful to Him, for to Him you shall return. ¹⁸ If you reject the truth, other communities before you also rejected the truth. The messenger’s responsibility is only to convey the message clearly.’

¹⁹ Do they not see how God originates creation, then reproduces it? That surely is easy for God. ²⁰ Tell them, ‘Roam the earth and see how He originated creation. Then God will bring into being your second life. God has power over all things. ²¹ He punishes whom He will and shows mercy to whom He pleases. And to Him you shall be returned. ²² You cannot defeat His purpose on earth or in heaven; nor have you any friend or helper besides God.’ ²³ Those who deny God’s revelations and the meeting with Him—it is they who have despaired of My mercy. They will suffer a grievous punishment.

²⁴ The only response of Abraham’s people was, ‘Kill him or burn him!’ But God saved him from the fire. Surely in this there are signs for people who believe. ²⁵ Abraham said, ‘You have taken up the worship of idols, instead of God, to promote friendship between yourselves in the present life. But on the Day

of Judgement, you will disown and curse one another. Your abode will be the Fire and you will have no helpers.’²⁶ Lot was the one who believed in him and said, ‘I shall migrate to another land for the sake of my Lord. He is the Mighty One, the Wise One.’²⁷ We gave him Isaac and Jacob and granted prophethood and the Book to his descendants. We gave him his reward in this life and in the Hereafter he shall dwell among the righteous.

²⁸ We sent Lot to his people and he said to them, ‘Indeed you commit obscenity such as no people before you have ever committed.’²⁹ You approach men and waylay them on the road and commit depravities within your gatherings.’ But his people’s only reply was, ‘Bring down God’s punishment upon us, if what you say be true.’³⁰ Lot prayed, ‘Lord, help me against this wicked people.’

³¹ When Our messengers brought Abraham the good news [of the birth of Isaac] they [also] said, ‘We are indeed going to destroy the people of this city, for the people of this city are truly wrongdoers.’³² Abraham said, ‘But, Lot lives here.’ They answered, ‘We well know who lives here. We shall surely save him and his whole family, except his wife, who will be among those who stay behind.’³³ When Our messengers came to Lot, he was troubled and distressed on their account. They said, ‘Have no fear or grief. We shall certainly save you and your household, except your

wife—who will be among those who stay behind—

³⁴ We are surely going to bring down a punishment from heaven on the people of this town because of their depravities.’ ³⁵ Surely the ruins We left of that city are a clear sign for a people who use their reason.

³⁶ To the people of Midian We sent their brother Shu‘ayb. He said, ‘My people, worship God, and look forward to the Last Day, and do not commit evil and spread corruption in the land.’ ³⁷ But they rejected him, so the earthquake overwhelmed them and they were left lying prostrate on the ground in their homes.

³⁸ The same happened to the tribes of ‘Ad and Thamud: this must be clear to you from their ruins. Satan made their actions seem good to them, and turned them away from the straight path, even though they were intelligent people.

³⁹ Korah, Pharaoh, and Haman: Moses came to them with clear signs but they were arrogant in the land. They could not escape Us. ⁴⁰ So We seized each one for his sins; some We struck with a violent storm; some of them were overcome by a sudden blast, some were swallowed up by the earth and some We drowned. God did not wrong them: they wronged themselves.

⁴¹ Those who take protectors other than God can be compared to the spider which builds itself a cobweb, but the frailest of all structures is the house of the spider, if they but knew it. ⁴² God surely knows what they invoke besides Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise

One.⁴³ Such are the comparisons We make for people, but only those understand them who have knowledge.

⁴⁴ God has created the heavens and the earth for a purpose; surely in this there is a sign for true believers.

⁴⁵ Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book, and pray regularly. Surely prayer restrains one from indecency and evil and remembrance of God is greater. God has knowledge of all your actions.^a

⁴⁶ Believers, argue only in the best way with the People of the Book, [but contend not at all] with such of them as are unjust. Say, ‘We believe in what has been revealed to us, and what has been revealed to you; our God and your God are one; and to Him we submit.’

⁴⁷ Likewise We have sent down the Book to you. Those to whom We gave the scripture believe in it, and so do some of your own people. Only those who deny the truth reject Our revelations.⁴⁸ You were not able to read any book before this, nor did you write one down with your hand. If you had done so, the followers of falsehood would have had cause to doubt it.⁴⁹ But the

^b When a man attains perfect knowledge through intense realization of God, or *ma‘rifah*, the result is that the thought of God permeates his very existence. This is what is meant by remembrance of God (*dhikr*). This spring of God’s remembrance, or *dhikr*, wells up and flows through his body and soul. Reaching this height of spirituality, man begins uttering noble words in praise of God, and this is undoubtedly the highest form of prayer or worship.

Quran is a revelation that is clear to the hearts of those endowed with knowledge. Only the evil-doers refuse to acknowledge Our revelations.

⁵⁰ They say, 'Why has no sign been given to him by his Lord?' Say, 'The signs are in the hands of God. I am but a plain warner.'⁵¹ Is it not sufficient for them that We have sent you down the Book to be recited to them? In this surely there is a blessing and an admonition for a people who believe. ⁵² Say, 'God is sufficient as a witness between you and me. He knows all that is in the heavens and the earth. Those who believe in falsehood and reject God will surely be the losers.'

⁵³ They ask you to hasten the punishment. Had there not been an appointed time for it, the punishment would already have come to them. Indeed it will come down upon them suddenly and catch them unawares. ⁵⁴ They ask you to hasten the punishment, but surely, Hell is [already] encompassing those who deny the truth. ⁵⁵ On the Day the punishment envelops them from above them and from underneath their feet, they will be told, 'Taste [the punishment] for what you used to do!'

⁵⁶ My servants who believe, My earth is vast, so worship Me alone. ⁵⁷ Every soul shall taste death and then to Us you shall return. ⁵⁸ We shall lodge forever those who believe and do good works in the mansions of Paradise beside which rivers flow. How excellent is the reward of those who labour, ⁵⁹ and who are steadfast and put their trust in their Lord. ⁶⁰ How many creatures

cannot fend for themselves! God provides for them and for you. He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing.

⁶¹ If you ask them who it is that has created the heavens and the earth and subjugated the sun and the moon, they will say, 'God.' How then are they turned away? ⁶² God gives abundantly to whom He will and sparingly to whom He pleases. God has full knowledge of all things. ⁶³ And if you ask them who it is that sends down water from the sky and revives the earth with it after its death, they will surely answer, 'God.' Then praise be to God. But most of them do not understand.

⁶⁴ The life of this world is nothing but sport and a diversion. It is the life of the Hereafter which is the only true life, if they but knew it. ⁶⁵ When they board a vessel, they call on God, sincere in their faith for Him alone; but when He brings them safe to land, they begin to ascribe partners to Him. ⁶⁶ And thus they may show utter ingratitude for Our favours; let them enjoy themselves for a time. But they will soon come to know.

⁶⁷ Have they not seen how We have granted them a safe sanctuary, though all around them people are snatched away? Would they still believe in falsehood, and deny the favour of God? ⁶⁸ Who does greater wrong than he who invents a lie about God or rejects the truth when it comes to him? Is Hell not the home for those who deny the truth. ⁶⁹ We will surely guide in Our ways those who strive hard for Our cause, God is surely with the righteous.

30. THE ROMANS (*AL-RUM*)

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

¹ *Alif Lam Mim*

² The Romans have been defeated ³ in a nearby land. They will reverse their defeat with a victory ⁴ within a few years: [for] with God rests all power of decision, first and last. On that day the believers too will have cause to rejoice, ⁵ with the help of God. He helps whom He pleases: He is the Mighty, and the Merciful. ⁶ [This is] God's promise. Never does God fail to fulfil His promise—but most people do not know this; ⁷ they only know the outward appearance of the life of this world, and they are neglectful of the Hereafter.

⁸ Do they not ponder about their own selves? God has created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for a purpose and for an appointed time? Yet many deny they will ever meet with their Lord. ⁹ Have they not travelled through the land and seen what end their predecessors met? They were mightier than them: they cultivated the earth more and built more upon it than these have ever built. Their own messengers also came to them with clear signs: God did not wrong them; they wronged themselves.

¹⁰ Then the end of those who committed evil was evil,

for they belied the signs of God, and they derided them.

¹¹ God originates the creation, and shall repeat it, then to Him you shall be returned. ¹² On the Day the Hour arrives, the guilty will be struck dumb with despair, ¹³ and they will have no intercessors among those partners they ascribed to God. They will deny these partners. ¹⁴ When the Last Hour dawns—on that Day they will be sorted out: ¹⁵ those who believed and did good deeds will rejoice in a Garden, ¹⁶ and as for those who denied the truth and belied Our signs and the meeting in the Hereafter—they shall be brought to the torment. ¹⁷ So glorify God in the evening and in the morning—¹⁸ and praise be to Him in the heavens and on the earth—and glorify Him in the late afternoon, and at midday.^a

¹⁹ He brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living. He gives life to the earth after its death, and you shall be raised to life in the same way. ²⁰ One of His signs is that He created you from

^a Constant remembrance (through prayer, etc.) and deep contemplation lead a man towards finding God. It is by profound thought that a man finds God. In the present world, God has scattered His signs everywhere—in the human environment, in the surrounding universe and also in the teachings of the Prophet. Those who give serious consideration to these signs of God will find God.

dust and, behold, you became human beings and multiplied yourselves throughout the earth.²¹ Another of His signs is that He created for you from among yourselves spouses, so that you might find repose in them, and He created between you affection and kindness. Truly there are signs in this for people who reflect.

²² Another of His signs is that He created the heavens and earth, and the diversity of your languages and colours. There truly are signs in this for those who know. ²³ Among His signs are your sleep, at night or in daytime, and your seeking His bounty. There truly are signs in this for people who hear. ²⁴ Among His signs is this: He shows you the lightning, giving rise to [both] fear and hope, and sends down water from the sky, giving life thereby to the earth after it had been lifeless: in this, behold, there are signs indeed for people who use their reason!

²⁵ Another of His signs is this: the heavens and the earth stand firm by His command and afterwards when He calls you, behold, from the earth you will come forth. ²⁶ All those in the heavens and on the earth belong to Him. All are obedient to Him. ²⁷ He is the One who originates creation, then repeats it, and it is very easy for Him. His is the most exalted state in the heavens and on the earth; He is the Mighty, the Wise One.

²⁸ He sets forth for you an example taken from your own lives. Do you make your servants full partners with an equal share in the wealth We have bestowed upon you? Do you fear them as you fear each other? In this way We explain the signs to people who use their reason. ²⁹ And still those who are unjust follow their own desires without having any knowledge. Then who can guide those whom God has let go astray? There shall be none to help them.

³⁰ Devote yourself single-mindedly to the Religion. And follow the nature [constitution] as made by God, that nature in which He has created mankind. There is no altering the creation of God. That is the right religion. But most people do not realize it. ³¹ Turn to Him and fear Him, and be steadfast in prayer, and do not be one of those who associate partners with God, ³² those who split up their religion and became divided into sects; each one exulting in what they have.

³³ When an affliction befalls men, they cry out to their Lord, turning to Him in repentance; but then, when He has made them taste His mercy, a section of them associate partners with their Lord, ³⁴ and are ungrateful for what We have given them. So enjoy yourselves for a while, but soon you will come to know. ³⁵ Have We sent down to them any authority which speaks in favour of what they associate with Him?

³⁶ When We give mankind a taste of Our blessing, they rejoice therein: but if they encounter tribulation because of their own actions—they fall into despair.

³⁷ Do they not see that God gives abundantly to whoever He pleases, and sparingly to whoever He pleases? In that truly there are signs for those who believe. ³⁸ So give the near relative, the needy, and the wayfarer their due—that is best for those who seek God's pleasure: such men are the ones who will surely prosper. ³⁹ Whatever you lend out in usury to gain in value through other people's wealth will not increase in God's eyes, but whatever you give in alms in your desire for God's pleasure will be multiplied.

⁴⁰ God is He who created you, then provides for you, then will cause you to die and then bring you back to life. Can any of your 'partners' do any one of these things? Glory be to Him and exalted be He above anything they associate with Him! ⁴¹ Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of the evil which men's hands have done: and so He will make them taste the fruit of some of their doings, so that they may turn back from evil. ⁴² Say, 'Journey through the land, and see how those before you met their end—most of them, ascribed partners with God.'

⁴³ [Prophet], set your face to the right religion, before that Day comes from God which cannot be averted. On that Day, mankind will be parted in two.

⁴⁴ Those who rejected the truth will bear the burden of

that rejection, and those who did good deeds will have made good provision for themselves. ⁴⁵ For then He will reward out of His bounty those who believe and do good deeds; He does not love those who reject the truth.

⁴⁶ Among His signs is this: He sends out the winds bearing good news so that He may make you taste His mercy, and ships sail at His command, so that you may seek His bounty, and be grateful. ⁴⁷ Surely, We sent messengers before you to their own people, and they brought them clear signs. Then We took vengeance on the guilty. It was certainly Our duty to help the believers.

⁴⁸ It is God who sends out the winds so that they raise the clouds. Then He spreads them in the sky as He wills and places them layer upon layer and you see the rain issuing forth from their midst. When He causes it to fall on whichever of His servants He pleases, behold! they rejoice; ⁴⁹ though before that—before it was sent down upon them—they were in despair. ⁵⁰ Look, therefore, at the signs of God's mercy; how He resurrects the earth after its death. Truly, the same God will resurrect the dead; for He has power over all things. ⁵¹ Yet if We send a wind and they see their harvest turn yellow, they will then begin to deny [Our favours]. ⁵² You [Prophet] cannot make the dead hear and you cannot make the deaf hear your call when they turn their backs and leave;

⁵³ just as you cannot lead the blind [of heart] out of their error, you cannot make anyone hear your call save those who are willing to believe in Our revelations, and thus surrender themselves to Us and are submissive to Our will.

⁵⁴ God is the One who has created you in a state of weakness; then He has granted you strength following [your] weakness; later on He has given you infirmity and grey hairs in place of strength. He creates whatever He wishes; He is the All Knowing and All Powerful. ⁵⁵ On the Day the Last Hour arrives, the evil-doers will swear they have not even tarried for an hour—they have always been deluded—⁵⁶ but those endowed with knowledge and faith will say, ‘Indeed, you did tarry, as God ordained, till the Day of Resurrection, and this is the Day of Resurrection: but you were not aware of it.’ ⁵⁷ So on that Day their pleas shall be of no avail, nor will they be allowed to make amends.

⁵⁸ Truly, We have set forth for men in this Quran every kind of parable and indeed, if you bring them a sign, those who are bent on denying the truth are sure to say, ‘You are only making false claims!’ ⁵⁹ In this way God seals the hearts of those who do not [want to] know [the truth], ⁶⁰ so have patience [O Muhammad]! God’s promise is true; let not those who will not be convinced make you discouraged.