

## 7. THE HEIGHTS (AL-A 'RAF)

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

<sup>1</sup> *Alif Lam Mim Sad*

<sup>2</sup> This Book has been sent down to you—let there be no heaviness in your heart about it—so that you may warn by means of it and it is a reminder to the believers. <sup>3</sup> Follow what has been sent down to you by your Lord and do not follow any protector other than Him. How seldom you take heed. <sup>4</sup> How many towns We have destroyed. Our scourge fell upon them by night or at midday when they were resting: <sup>5</sup> and when Our scourge fell upon them, their only cry was, ‘We were indeed wrongdoers!’ <sup>6</sup> Then shall We question those to whom Our message was sent and those through whom We sent it <sup>7</sup> with full knowledge, We shall tell them what they did, for We have never been away from them. <sup>8</sup> Truth alone will be of weight that Day. Those whose scales are heavy shall be successful, <sup>9</sup> and those whose good deeds are light [in the balance] will be the ones who have lost themselves because they wrongfully rejected Our signs.

<sup>10</sup> We established you in the land and provided you with a means of livelihood there: yet you are seldom thankful. <sup>11</sup> We created you, then We shaped you and

then We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate yourselves before Adam,’ and they all prostrated themselves, except Satan. He was not among those who prostrated themselves. <sup>12</sup> God asked, ‘What prevented you from prostrating yourself when I commanded you to?’ He replied, ‘I am better than he is; You created me from fire, while You created him from clay.’ <sup>13</sup> God said, ‘Get down from here! This is no place for your arrogance. Get out! You are contemptible!’ <sup>14</sup> Satan said, ‘Give me respite until the Day of Resurrection,’ <sup>15</sup> and God replied, ‘You are granted respite.’ <sup>16</sup> Then Satan said, ‘Because You have put me in the wrong, I will lie in ambush for them on Your straight path: <sup>17</sup> then I will surely come upon them from before them and from behind them and from their right and from their left, and then You will find most of them ungrateful.’ <sup>18</sup> He said, ‘Get out of here, despised, and rejected! I shall fill Hell with all of those who follow you.’

<sup>19</sup> To Adam He said, ‘You and your wife, dwell in the Garden and eat and drink there from wherever you wish, but do not approach this tree, lest you become wrongdoers.’ <sup>20</sup> But Satan tempted them so that he might reveal to them their nakedness which had been hidden from them. He said, ‘Your Lord has forbidden you to approach this tree lest you should become angels or become of the immortals,’ <sup>21</sup> and he swore to them, ‘Surely, I am your well-wisher.’

<sup>22</sup> Thus he cunningly seduced them. When they tasted the tree's fruit, their nakedness became exposed to them and they started covering themselves with the leaves of the garden. Their Lord called out to them, 'Did I not forbid you to approach that tree, and did I not say to you that Satan was surely your open enemy?' <sup>23</sup> They replied, 'Our Lord, we have wronged our souls: if You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall be among the lost.' <sup>24</sup> He said, 'Go down from here as enemies to each other. For a while, there is an abode for you and a provision on earth. <sup>25</sup> There you will live; there you will die; from there you will be raised up again.'

<sup>26</sup> O children of Adam! We have sent down to you clothes to cover your nakedness, and to be pleasing to the eye; but the raiment of righteousness is the best. That is one of the signs of God. So that people may take heed. <sup>27</sup> Children of Adam, do not let Satan seduce you, just as he turned your parents out of the Garden: he deprived them of their garment in order to make them aware of their nakedness. He and his forces watch you from where you do not see them! We have made the devils friends of those who do not believe.

<sup>28</sup> And when they commit an indecency, they say, 'This is what our fathers used to do and God has enjoined it on us.' Say, 'God does not enjoin what is indecent. Would you attribute to God something of

which you have no knowledge?’<sup>29</sup> Say, ‘My Lord has commanded you to act justly. Turn your faces up toward Him at every time and place of worship, and call upon Him, making yourselves sincere towards Him in religion. As He brought you into being, so shall you return.’<sup>30</sup> Some He has guided and some have earned misguidance: they have taken devils rather than God as their patrons, thinking that they are rightly guided.

<sup>31</sup> O Children of Adam, dress yourself properly whenever you are at worship: and eat and drink but exceed not the bounds: God does not love those who exceed the bounds. <sup>32</sup> Say, ‘Who has forbidden the adornment of God, which He has brought forth for His servants and good things, clean and pure, which God has provided for His servants?’ Say, ‘They are [lawful] for the believers in the present life but they shall be exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection.’ Thus We explain Our signs for a people who understand.

<sup>33</sup> Say, ‘My Lord has forbidden indecency, both open and hidden, sin and wrongful oppression and that, without His sanction, you associate things with Him, and that you say things about Him without knowledge.’

<sup>34</sup> For all people a term has been set: and when [the end of] their term approaches, they can neither delay it by a single moment, nor can they advance it.

<sup>35</sup> Children of Adam! If messengers come to you from among yourselves, reciting My revelations to you,

then those that take warning and mend their ways, on such shall come no fear nor shall they grieve.<sup>36</sup> But those who deny and scorn Our revelations shall be the inmates of Hell, where they shall remain forever.<sup>37</sup> Who does a greater wrong than he who invents lies against God or rejects His revelations? Such people will have what has been decreed for them. And when Our messengers come to them to take away their souls, they shall ask them, 'Where are those you used to call upon besides God?' They will answer, 'They have deserted us;' and they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers?

<sup>38</sup> God will say, 'Enter the Fire and join the bands of jinn and men that have gone before you.' Every time a host enters [the fire], it will curse its fellow-host, then, when they are all gathered there, the last of them will say of the first, 'Our Lord, it was they who led us astray: give them double punishment in the Fire,'— God will say, 'Every one of you will have double punishment, though you do not know it'—<sup>39</sup> then the preceding one will say to the succeeding one, 'You are no better than us: so taste the punishment you have earned.'

<sup>40</sup> The gates of Heaven shall not be opened for those who rejected Our signs and arrogantly spurned them; nor shall they enter Paradise until a camel shall pass through the eye of a needle. That is how We repay the evil-doers—<sup>41</sup> Hell shall be their bed, and over them

will be coverings of fire—thus shall We reward the wrongdoers. <sup>42</sup> But those who believed and did good deeds—and We do not burden any soul with more than it can bear—such are the heirs of the Garden and there they will remain forever. <sup>43</sup> And We shall remove whatever rancour may be in their hearts. At their feet shall flow rivers. And they shall say, ‘All praise belongs to God who has guided us to this. Had God not guided us, we would never have found the way. The messengers of our Lord brought the Truth.’ A voice will call out to them, ‘This is the Garden which you have inherited by your labours.’

<sup>44</sup> The people of the Garden will call out to the people of the Fire, ‘We have found that what our Lord promised us is true. Have you, too, found that what your Lord promised you is true?’ They will say, ‘Yes, we have!’ Then a crier shall call out among them saying, ‘The curse of God is upon the wrongdoers—<sup>45</sup> who turned people away from the path of God and sought to make it appear crooked, and who denied the Hereafter.’

<sup>46</sup> A barrier will divide the two groups, and on the heights there will be men who recognize each group by their marks. They will call out to the people of the Garden, ‘Peace be with you.’ They will not have yet entered, but they will be hoping [to do so], <sup>47</sup> and when they turn their eyes towards the inmates of the Fire, they will say, ‘Our Lord, do not include us among the

wrongdoers!’<sup>48</sup> And the people of the heights will call out to men they recognize by their marks, ‘What use have your great numbers and your false pride been?’<sup>49</sup> See! are these not the people you swore would never earn God’s mercy? “Enter the Garden! No fear shall come upon you nor shall you grieve.”

<sup>50</sup> The people of the Fire shall call out to the people of heaven, ‘Pour out some water on us, or give us something out of that which God has bestowed upon you.’ But the blessed will reply, ‘God has forbidden all that to those who denied the truth.’<sup>51</sup> Who treated religion as a pastime and an idle sport and whom the life of the world had beguiled.’ On that Day We shall forget them, as they forgot their meeting of that Day with Us, for they denied Our revelations.

<sup>52</sup> And surely We have brought them a Book which We have expounded with knowledge, a guide and a mercy for those who believe.<sup>53</sup> Do they wait for the fulfillment of that of which it warns? On the Day when that fulfillment comes, those who had neglected it before will say, ‘The messengers of our Lord did indeed bring the truth. Have we then any intercessors who would intercede for us? Or, could we be sent back so that we might act differently from the way we used to?’ They have indeed ruined their souls and what they invented has forsaken them.

<sup>54</sup> Your Lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six Days [periods] and then settled

Himself firmly on the throne. He throws the veil of night over the day, each seeking the other in rapid succession. It was He who created the sun, the moon and the stars, and made them subservient to His will. His is the creation, His the command. Blessed be God, Lord of the universe! <sup>55</sup> Call on your Lord with humility and in secret—He does not love the transgressors: <sup>56</sup> do not spread corruption on the earth after it has been set in order—pray to Him with fear and hope, God's mercy is close to those who do good.

<sup>57</sup> It is God who sends forth the winds as harbingers of His mercy, and when they have gathered up the heavy clouds, We drive them on to a dead land where We cause rain to fall, bringing out all kinds of fruit, just as We will raise the dead to life. Perhaps you will take heed. <sup>58</sup> Vegetation comes out of good land in abundance by the will of its Lord, but out of bad land only scantily. Thus We explain Our signs in diverse ways for those who give thanks.

<sup>59</sup> We sent Noah to his people. He said, 'O my people, worship God; you have no other god but He. I fear for you the punishment of a dreadful Day,' <sup>60</sup> but the leading men of his people said, 'Truly, we see that you are obviously lost in error!' <sup>61</sup> Said [Noah], 'O my people! I am not in error. Indeed, I am a messenger from the Lord of the Worlds, <sup>62</sup> I am conveying my Lord's messages to you and giving you sincere advice. I know things from God that you do not. <sup>63</sup> Do you find



it so strange that a message should come from your Lord through a man from among yourselves, so that he may warn you and so that you may fear God and be shown mercy?’<sup>64</sup> But they denied him, so We saved him and those with him in the Ark, and We drowned those who rejected Our signs. They were indeed a blind people.

<sup>65</sup> To the people of ‘Ad We sent their brother, Hud. He said, ‘O my people, worship God, you have no other god but He. Then will you not be God-fearing?’

<sup>66</sup> The leading men of his people who refused to acknowledge the truth, said, ‘We can see you are a foolish man, and we think you are lying.’<sup>67</sup> He said, ‘My people, I am by no means a fool, but rather am a messenger from the Lord of the Universe,’<sup>68</sup> I am conveying my Lord’s messages to you and I am your sincere and honest adviser.<sup>69</sup> Do you find it strange that a Message should come from your Lord, through one of your own men, to warn you? Remember how He made you successors of Noah’s people, and increased you greatly in stature. Remember the favours of God, so that you may prosper.’

<sup>70</sup> They said, ‘Have you come to tell us to serve God alone and to forsake the gods our forefathers served? Bring us then what you threaten us with, if you are truthful.’<sup>71</sup> He said, ‘Your Lord’s wrath and indignation have already fallen upon you. Would you dispute with me about mere names, which you and your fathers

have invented, and for which God has revealed no authority? Wait then if you will: I am waiting alongside you.’<sup>72</sup> Then We saved him and those who were with him, by Our mercy; We annihilated those who denied Our signs and would not believe.

<sup>73</sup> To the Thamud We sent their brother Salih. He said, ‘O my people, worship God; you have no other god but Him. A veritable proof has come to you from your Lord: this is God’s she-camel, a sign for you, so let her feed in God’s land and do not harm her in any way, or you will be overwhelmed by a painful punishment.’<sup>74</sup> Remember when He made you successors to the ‘Ad and settled you in the land. You built palaces on its plains and carved houses out of the mountains. Remember God’s blessings and do not spread corruption in the land,’<sup>75</sup> but the arrogant leaders of his people said to the believers who were deemed weak, ‘Do you know for certain that Salih is one sent from his Lord?’ They replied, ‘We believe in the message which has been sent through him.’<sup>76</sup> The arrogant leaders said, ‘We reject what you believe in.’<sup>77</sup> So they hamstrung the she-camel, and insolently defied the commandment of their Lord, saying, ‘O Salih! Bring upon us what you threaten us with if you are indeed a messenger.’<sup>78</sup> So the earthquake overwhelmed them, and morning found them prostrate in their dwelling places.<sup>79</sup> He left them, saying, ‘My people, I delivered my Lord’s messages to you and

counselled you sincerely, but you do not like sincere advisors.’

<sup>80</sup> We sent Lot, who said to his people, ‘How can you commit an abomination such as no one in the world has ever done before you?’ <sup>81</sup> You lust after men rather than women! You transgress all bounds!’ <sup>82</sup> The only answer given by his people was, ‘Turn them out of your town. They are people who regard themselves to be pure.’ <sup>83</sup> So We saved him and his family—except for his wife. She was one of those who stayed behind. <sup>84</sup> We rained down on them a shower [of brimstone]. Then see what was the end of the evil-doers.

<sup>85</sup> To Midian We sent their brother Shu‘ayb. He said, ‘O my people, worship God; you have no other god but Him. A clear Sign has indeed come to you from your Lord. So give full measure and full weight, and do not deliver short. Do not corrupt the land after it has been set in order. This is for your own good, if you are true believers.’ <sup>86</sup> Do not lie in ambush on every pathway, threatening people, barring those who believe from the Way of God, seeking to make it appear crooked. Remember when you were few in number and He multiplied you. Consider the fate of those who used to spread corruption. <sup>87</sup> And if there is a group of you which believes in My message and others who disbelieve it, be patient until God shall judge between us. He is the best of judges.’

<sup>88</sup> The arrogant leaders of his people said, ‘Shu‘ayb, we will expel you and your fellow believers from our town unless you return to our faith.’ He said, ‘Even though we detest it? <sup>89</sup> We would be inventing lies against God if we returned to your faith after God has delivered us from it. It is not for us to return to it unless God our Lord so willed. Our Lord encompasses all things in His knowledge. We have put our trust in God. Our Lord, expose the truth [and judge] between us and our people, You are the best judge.’<sup>90</sup> The leading men of his people who were bent on denying the truth, said, ‘If you follow Shu‘ayb, you will certainly be the losers.’<sup>91</sup> Thereupon an earthquake overtook them and morning found them lying flattened in their homes; <sup>92</sup> those who had denied Shu‘ayb became as though they had never lived there. Those who denied Shu‘ayb, were themselves the losers.<sup>93</sup> So he turned away from them, saying, ‘My people, I delivered my Lord’s messages to you and gave you sincere advice, so why should I grieve for people who refused to believe?’

<sup>94</sup> Whenever We sent a prophet to a town, We afflicted its people with suffering and adversity, so that they might humble themselves [before God],<sup>95</sup> and then We changed their hardship into ease until they grew affluent and said, ‘Our fathers had also experienced adversity and prosperity,’ then We seized them suddenly, unawares.<sup>96</sup> Had the people of those

towns believed in and feared God, We would have showered upon them blessings from heaven and earth, but they rejected the truth. So We seized them on account of their misdeeds. <sup>97</sup> Do the people of these towns now feel secure against the coming of Our punishment upon them by night while they are asleep? <sup>98</sup> Or, do they feel secure against the coming of Our punishment upon them in the forenoon while they are at play? <sup>99</sup> Do they feel secure against God's devising? No one feels secure against God's devising except for those doomed to ruin.

<sup>100</sup> Does it not guide the people who inherit the land from former people that We can punish them for their sins if We will? And seal up their hearts so that they would not be able to lend an ear to words of guidance?

<sup>101</sup> We have told you the stories of those towns: their messengers came to them with clear signs, but they were never going to believe in something they had already rejected. Thus God seals up the hearts of those who deny the truth. <sup>102</sup> We found most of them untrue to their covenants, indeed We found most of them to be defiant.

<sup>103</sup> After them We sent Moses with Our signs to Pharaoh and his chiefs. But they willfully rejected them. Consider the end of the evil-doers. <sup>104</sup> Moses said, 'Pharaoh, I am a messenger from the Lord of the Universe, <sup>105</sup> duty-bound to say nothing about God but the truth, and I have brought you a clear sign from your

Lord. Let the Children of Israel go with me.’  
<sup>106</sup> [Pharaoh] said, ‘If you come with a sign, then produce it, if you are telling the truth.’<sup>107</sup> Then Moses threw down his staff and suddenly, unmistakably, it appeared as a serpent,<sup>108</sup> and he drew forth his hand, and it appeared [shining] white to the beholders.  
<sup>109</sup> The chiefs of Pharaoh’s people said, ‘This is most surely a skillful magician,<sup>110</sup> who seeks to drive you from your land!’ Pharaoh said, ‘What then do you advise?’<sup>111</sup> They said, ‘Let him and his brother wait awhile, and send into the cities summoners,<sup>112</sup> who should bring to you every skillful magician.’

<sup>113</sup> And the magicians came to Pharaoh and asked, ‘Shall we have a reward, if we should prevail?’  
<sup>114</sup> Pharaoh replied, ‘Certainly, and you shall also become my courtiers.’<sup>115</sup> They said, ‘Moses, will you first throw, or shall we?’<sup>116</sup> He said, ‘You throw [first]!’ When they made their cast, they bewitched the eyes of the people and struck them with awe, for they showed a great [feat of] magic.<sup>117</sup> Then We inspired Moses, saying, ‘Throw down your staff.’ And it immediately swallowed up their false devices.<sup>118</sup> Thus the truth prevailed and what they had produced came to nothing:<sup>119</sup> Pharaoh and his men were defeated and utterly humiliated.<sup>120</sup> And the sorcerers prostrated themselves<sup>121</sup> and said, ‘We believe in the Lord of the Universe,<sup>122</sup> the Lord of Moses and Aaron!’

<sup>123</sup> Pharaoh said, ‘You dare believe in Him before I

have given you permission? Behold, this is indeed a plot which you have devised in this city in order to drive its people out. But you shall soon know the consequences, <sup>124</sup> I will cut off your hands and feet on alternate sides and then crucify you all!' <sup>125</sup> They replied, 'We shall surely return to our Lord. <sup>126</sup> You would punish us only because we believed in the signs of our Lord when they were shown to us. Our Lord, pour patience upon us, and cause us to die in a state of submission to You.'

<sup>127</sup> The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said, 'Will you allow Moses and his people to spread corruption in the land, and to forsake you and your gods?' He replied, 'We shall kill their male children and spare only the females. We have complete power over them.' <sup>128</sup> Moses said to his people, 'Turn to God for help and be patient. The earth belongs to God. He gives it to those of His servants whom He chooses, and the future belongs to the God-fearing.' <sup>129</sup> They replied, 'We were being persecuted before you came to us, and we are still being persecuted.' He said, 'Your Lord may well destroy your enemy and make you successors to the land. Then He will see how you conduct yourselves.'

<sup>130</sup> We afflicted Pharaoh's people with shortages of food and famine so that they might take heed, <sup>131</sup> then when something good came to them, they said, 'It is our due!'—but when something bad came, they ascribed it as an ill-omen to Moses and those with him.

Surely their [evil] fortune had been decreed by God, but most of them did not know this. <sup>132</sup> They said, ‘Whatever miracles you work to bewitch us, we will not believe in you.’

<sup>133</sup> Then We afflicted them with storms, and locusts, and lice, and frogs, and blood: so many clear signs. But they were steeped in arrogance, for they were a people given to sin. <sup>134</sup> Whenever a plague struck them, they would say, ‘Moses, pray to your Lord for us by virtue of the promise He has made to you: if you remove this plague from us, we will surely believe in you and let the Children of Israel go with you,’ <sup>135</sup> but whenever We removed the plague from them, giving them time to make good their promise, they would break their word.

<sup>136</sup> So We exacted retribution from them and drowned them in the sea, because they rejected Our signs and paid no heed to them; <sup>137</sup> We made the people who were considered weak inheritors of the eastern parts and western parts of the land which We had blessed. Thus your Lord’s good promise to the Children of Israel was fulfilled, because of their patience, and We destroyed all that Pharaoh and his people had built and all that they had raised high.

<sup>138</sup> We brought the Children of Israel across the sea and they came upon a people who were devoted to their idols. They said, ‘Moses, give us a god just like the gods these people have.’ He said, ‘You are indeed



an ignorant people: <sup>139</sup> what they are engaged in is doomed to destruction and all their works are in vain.’ <sup>140</sup> He said, ‘Shall I seek a deity for you other than God, while it is He who has exalted you above all peoples? <sup>141</sup> We delivered you from Pharaoh’s people, who afflicted you with dreadful torment, slaying your male children and sparing only your daughters. That was surely a great trial for you by your Lord.’

<sup>142</sup> We appointed thirty nights for Moses, then added ten more: the term set by his Lord was fulfilled in forty nights. Moses said to his brother Aaron, ‘Take my place among my people: act rightly and do not follow the way of those who spread corruption.’ <sup>143</sup> And when Moses came at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said, ‘My Lord, show Yourself to me so that I may look at You.’ He replied, ‘You cannot see Me, but look at the mountain; if it remains firmly in its place, then only will you see Me.’ And when his Lord manifested Himself on the mountain, He broke it into pieces and Moses fell down unconscious. And when he recovered, he said, ‘Glory be to You, I turn towards You, and I am the first to believe.’

<sup>144</sup> He replied, ‘Moses, I have chosen you of all mankind for My messages and My Words. Hold fast to what I have given you, and be among the grateful!’ <sup>145</sup> And We wrote for him upon the Tablets an admonition and details of all things, then [bade him],

‘Hold fast to them; and command your people to follow them in their best sense. Soon I shall show you the home of the wicked. <sup>146</sup> I will turn away from My signs all those who are arrogant in the land without any right, so that even if they see all the signs they will not believe in them. If they see the right path, they shall not walk upon it: but if they see the path of error, they shall choose it for their path, because they have given the lie to Our signs and paid no heed to them. <sup>147</sup> The actions of those who denied Our signs and the Meeting of the Hereafter will come to nothing—they shall be requited only, according to their deeds.’

<sup>148</sup> In his absence, the people of Moses made a calf from their ornaments, an image which made a lowing sound. Could they not see that it did not speak to them or guide them in any way? Yet they took to worshipping it: they were evil-doers. <sup>149</sup> When they were afflicted with remorse, and realized that they had indeed gone astray, they said, ‘If our Lord does not have mercy on us and forgive us, we shall be among the lost.’ <sup>150</sup> When Moses returned to his people in anger and great sorrow, he said, ‘What an awful sin you have committed in my absence. Did you want to hasten your Lord’s command?’ He threw down the Tablets and seized his brother by the head, pulling him towards himself. Aaron said, ‘Son of my mother, the people oppressed me and almost killed me. Do not give my enemies cause to gloat over me. Do not number me

among the wrongdoers.’<sup>151</sup> He said, ‘My Lord, forgive me and my brother and admit us to Your mercy. You are the Most Merciful of the merciful.’

<sup>152</sup> Those who took to worshipping the calf will be afflicted by their Lord’s wrath, and be disgraced in the life of this world. This is the way We requite those who invent falsehoods. <sup>153</sup> As for those who committed evils, and thereafter repented and believed, they shall find your Lord forgiving and merciful.

<sup>154</sup> When his anger had subsided, Moses took up the Tablets upon which was inscribed a pledge of guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord. <sup>155</sup> And Moses chose from his people seventy men for Our appointment. When they were seized with violent quaking, he prayed, ‘O my Lord! If it had been Your will, You could have destroyed both them and me long ago. But would You destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us? This is no more than Your trial: by it You cause whom You will to stray, and You lead whom You will to the right path. You are our Protector. Forgive us, therefore, and have mercy on us, for You are the best of those who forgive. <sup>156</sup> Grant us good things, both in this life and in the hereafter. To You alone we turn.’ He replied, ‘As for My punishment, I smite with it anyone I will. But My mercy encompasses all things. I shall prescribe it for those who do their duty, pay the *zakat* and who believe in Our signs. <sup>157</sup> Also for those who follow the

Messenger—the unlettered prophet they find described in the Torah that is with them, and in the Gospel—who commands them to do right and forbids them to do wrong, who makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful, who will relieve them of their burdens and of the shackles that weigh upon them. Those that believe in him and honour him, those that aid him and follow the light sent down with him, shall surely triumph.’

<sup>158</sup> Say, ‘People, I am God’s Messenger to you all, He has sovereignty over the heavens and the earth. There is no god but Him. He ordains life and death, so believe in God and His Messenger, the unlettered prophet who believes in God and His words. Follow him so that you may be rightly guided.’ <sup>159</sup> Yet there is a group among the people of Moses who guide with truth and act justly in accordance with it.

<sup>160</sup> We divided them up into twelve tribes, each a whole community, and We revealed Our will to Moses, when his people asked for water, saying, ‘Strike the rock with your staff.’ Twelve springs gushed from it and each tribe knew its drinking place. We caused the clouds to draw their shadow over them and sent down for them manna and quails, saying, ‘Eat the good things We have given you.’ They did not wrong Us; rather it was themselves they wronged. <sup>161</sup> When they were told, ‘Settle down in the town and eat wherever you wish in it, and pray for forgiveness

and enter the gate in humility: We shall forgive you your sins and shall bestow further favours upon those who do good,' <sup>162</sup> the transgressors among them substituted something else for the word they had been given. So We sent them a punishment from heaven for their wrongdoing.

<sup>163</sup> Ask them about the town which was by the sea and what befell its people when they broke the Sabbath. On their Sabbath the fish came to them near the surface, but on week-days they never came near them—thus We tried them because of their disobedience. <sup>164</sup> When some of them asked, 'Why do you admonish a people whom God is going to destroy or to afflict with a severe punishment?' They answered, 'In order to be free from blame before your Lord, and that they may perhaps fear Him.'

<sup>165</sup> Therefore when they forgot what they had been reminded of, We saved those who had tried to prevent the doing of evil. And We meted out a severe punishment to the transgressors because they were rebellious. <sup>166</sup> And then, when they disdainfully persisted in doing what they had been forbidden to do, We said to them, 'Be as apes, despised!'

<sup>167</sup> Then your Lord declared that, until the Day of Resurrection, He would send others against them to inflict terrible suffering on them. Your Lord is swift in retribution; yet surely He is most forgiving and merciful. <sup>168</sup> We split them up into sections on the

earth. Some of them are righteous while some of them are otherwise, and We tested them with blessings and misfortunes, so that they might return to the right path.

<sup>169</sup> They were succeeded by generations who inherited the Scripture and took to the fleeting gains of this world, saying, ‘We shall certainly be forgiven.’ If there came to them similar fleeting gains again, they would take them. Was a pledge not taken from them, written in the Scripture, that they would not say anything but the truth about God? And they have studied whatever is in it. Surely the Home of the Hereafter is better for those who fear Him. Will you not understand? <sup>170</sup> As for those who hold fast to the Book and are steadfast in prayer, We shall not deny the righteous their reward. <sup>171</sup> When We suspended the mountain over them as if it were a canopy, and they thought it was going to fall down on them, We said, ‘Hold on firmly to what We have given you and remember what is in it, so that you may remain conscious of God.’

<sup>172</sup> When your Lord brought forth offspring from the loins of the Children of Adam and made them bear witness about themselves, He said, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They replied, ‘We bear witness that You are.’ This He did, lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, ‘We had no knowledge of that.’ <sup>173</sup> Or lest you say, ‘Our forefathers associated others with God before our time, and we are only the descendants

who came after them. So are You going to destroy us for what those inventors of falsehood did?' <sup>174</sup> We explain Our signs in detail thus, so that perhaps they may return to Us.

<sup>175</sup> Recite to them the tale of the man to whom We gave Our signs, but who then cast them to one side and Satan overtook him. And he became one of those who went astray—<sup>176</sup> if it had been Our will, We could have used these signs to exalt him, but instead he clung to the earth and followed his own desires—he was like a dog that pants whether you chase it away or leave it alone. Such are those who reject Our signs. Tell them this story so that they may reflect. <sup>177</sup> How evil is the case of those who deny Our signs. They only wrong themselves: <sup>178</sup> anyone whom God guides has been rightly guided; while those He lets go astray will surely be the losers.

<sup>179</sup> We created many of the jinn and mankind for hell. They have hearts they do not understand with; they have eyes they do not see with; and they have ears they do not hear with. Such people are like cattle—no, they are even more misguided. Such are the heedless. <sup>180</sup> God has the Most Excellent Names. Call on Him by His Names and keep away from those who distort them. They shall be requited for what they do. <sup>181</sup> Of those We have created there are some who give true guidance and act justly. <sup>182</sup> We shall gradually seize those who reject Our signs from a place they do not

recognize. <sup>183</sup> For though I give them rein for a while, My strategy is sure.

<sup>184</sup> Have they not reflected that their companion is not mad? He is only a plain warner. <sup>185</sup> Have they not looked into the realms of the heavens and the earth and all that God created, and seen that the end of their time might be near? What will they believe in if they do not believe in this? <sup>186</sup> No one can guide those whom God lets go astray: He leaves them blundering about in their arrogance. <sup>187</sup> They ask you [Prophet] about the Last Hour, ‘When will it come?’ Say, ‘Knowledge about it rests only with my Lord; He alone will reveal when its time will come, it lies heavy on the heavens and the earth: it will suddenly overtake you.’ They will put questions to you as though you had full knowledge of it. Say, ‘Knowledge about it rests only with God, though most people do not realize it.’ <sup>188</sup> Say, ‘I myself have no power to benefit or do harm, save as God pleases. If I had knowledge of the unseen, I would have availed myself of an abundance of good, and no harm would have touched me. I am but a warner and a bearer of good tidings for those who will believe.’

<sup>189</sup> It was He who created you from a single soul, and from it made its mate so that he may find comfort in her. Once he has covered her, she conceives and goes about with a light burden. When it grows heavy, they both call to God, their Lord, ‘If You bestow on us a healthy child, we will surely be grateful,’ <sup>190</sup> yet



when He grants them a healthy child, they begin to ascribe to others a share in the gift they have received. But God is far above what they associate with Him!<sup>191</sup> Do they associate with Him those who create nothing and are themselves created?<sup>192</sup> They can give them no help, nor can they help themselves.<sup>193</sup> It makes no difference whether you call on them or remain silent. If you call them to the right path, they will not follow you.<sup>194</sup> Those whom you call on besides God are but creatures like yourselves. Call upon them, then, and let them respond to you, if what you say is true.

<sup>195</sup> Have they feet to walk with? Have they hands to hold with? Have they eyes to see with? Have they ears to hear with? Say, 'Call upon those you associate with God as partners, then all of you contrive against me and give me no respite.'<sup>196</sup> My protector is God who sent down the Book, for it is He who protects the righteous.<sup>197</sup> Those whom you call on besides Him have no power to help you, nor can they help themselves.'<sup>198</sup> If you call them to the right path, they will not hear you. You find them looking towards you, but they do not see you.

<sup>199</sup> Be tolerant; enjoin what is right; and avoid the ignorant.<sup>200</sup> If an evil impulse from Satan provokes you, seek refuge with God; He is all hearing, and all knowing.<sup>201</sup> When any evil suggestion from Satan touches those who fear God, they are instantly alerted

and become watchful; <sup>202</sup> but the followers of devils are led relentlessly into error by them. They never desist.

<sup>203</sup> When you do not bring them a sign, they say, ‘Why do you not invent one?’ Say, ‘I follow only what is revealed to me by my Lord. This Book is an enlightenment from your Lord and a guide and mercy to true believers. <sup>204</sup> When the Quran is read, listen to it with attention, and hold your peace, so that you may receive mercy. <sup>205</sup> Remember your Lord deep in your very soul, in all humility and awe, without raising your voice, morning and evening—do not be one of the heedless—<sup>206</sup> [even] the ones [angels] who live in the presence of your Lord are not too proud to worship Him: they glorify Him and prostrate themselves before Him.

## 8. THE SPOILS OF WAR (*AL-ANFAL*)

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

<sup>1</sup> They ask you about the spoils of war. Say, ‘They belong to God and His Messenger. So fear God, and set things right among yourselves, and obey God and His Messenger, if you are true believers: <sup>2</sup> true believers are those whose hearts tremble with awe at the

mention of God, and whose faith grows stronger as they listen to His revelations. They are those who put their trust in their Lord,<sup>3</sup> who pray regularly and give in alms out of what We have provided for them.<sup>4</sup> Such are the true believers. They have a high standing with their Lord, His forgiveness and an honourable provision made for them.

<sup>5</sup> As it was your Lord who rightfully brought you forth from your house, even though some of the believers disliked it,<sup>6</sup> and they disputed with you concerning the truth after it had become manifest, as though they were being driven to their death with open eyes.<sup>7</sup> God promised you that one of the two parties would fall to you, and you wished that the one without sting should be yours, but God wanted to establish the truth by His words and cut off the root of those who denied the truth—<sup>8</sup> so that He might prove the truth to be true and the false to be false, however much the wrongdoers might dislike it.

<sup>9</sup> When you prayed to your Lord for help, He answered, ‘I am sending to your aid a thousand angels in succession.’<sup>10</sup> God only did this to give you good news, and so that your hearts might be set at rest, for help comes from God alone. Surely, God is Mighty and Wise.<sup>11</sup> He brought drowsiness upon you to give you His reassurance and sent down water from the sky upon you, so that He might thereby purify you and remove Satan’s pollution from you, and make your

hearts strong and your feet firm. <sup>12</sup> When your Lord commanded the angels, saying, ‘I am with you, so make those who believe stand firm. I will instill fear in the hearts of those who deny the truth: so strike their necks and strike all their finger joints!’<sup>a</sup> <sup>13</sup> That was because they defied God and His Messenger. He who defies God and His Messenger shall be severely punished by God. <sup>14</sup> That is your punishment, taste it then; and know that for those who deny the truth there is the punishment of the Fire.

<sup>15</sup> Believers, when you meet in battle those who deny the truth, never turn your backs on them: <sup>16</sup> whoever turns his back on such an occasion, unless it be as a stratagem of war, or in an endeavour to join another group [of the believers] will indeed draw down upon himself the wrath of God, and Hell shall be his abode and the worst indeed is that destination.

<sup>17</sup> You did not kill them; it was God who killed them; and when you [Prophet] threw [sand] at them it was not you, but God who threw it so that He might confer on the believers a great favour from Himself. Surely, God is all hearing, all-knowing—<sup>18</sup> that is what happened—and God will surely undermine the design of those who deny the truth. <sup>19</sup> If you were seeking a judgement, a judgement has now come to you. If you desist, it will be the better for you. But if

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<sup>a</sup> See pages xvii to xxi of the Introduction.

you return [to hostility] We too will return. And your host will avail you naught, however numerous it may be, and [know] that surely God is with the believers.

<sup>20</sup> Believers, obey God and His Messenger, and do not turn away from him now that you have heard all.

<sup>21</sup> Do not be like those who say, ‘We hear,’ but pay no heed to what they hear—<sup>22</sup> the worst creatures in God’s eyes are those who are deaf and dumb, and who possess no understanding. <sup>23</sup> If God had found any good in them, He would certainly have made them hear; but being as they are, even if He makes them hear, they will turn away in aversion.

<sup>24</sup> Believers, obey God and the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life. Know that God stands between man and his heart, and you shall all be gathered in His presence. <sup>25</sup> And beware of an affliction that will not smite exclusively those among you who have done wrong. Know that God is severe in exacting retribution.

<sup>26</sup> Remember when you were few in number and were accounted weak in the land, ever fearing the onslaught of your enemies, but He provided you with shelter, and supported you with His help and provided you with good things, so that you might be grateful.

<sup>27</sup> Do not betray God and His Messenger, and do not knowingly violate your trusts. <sup>28</sup> Know that your wealth and children are a trial and that there is an immense reward with God.

<sup>29</sup> Believers, if you fear God, He will grant you the ability to discriminate between right and wrong, and will forgive you your sins: for God is limitless in His great bounty. <sup>30</sup> Remember how those who bent on denying the truth plotted against you to imprison you or kill you or expel you: they schemed—but God also schemed. God is the best of schemers.

<sup>31</sup> Whenever Our revelations are recited to them, they say, ‘We have heard them. If we wished, we could produce the like. They are nothing but the fables of the ancients.’ <sup>32</sup> They also said, ‘God, if this really is the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from heaven, or send us some other painful punishment.’ <sup>33</sup> But God would not punish them while you [Prophet] were in their midst, nor would He punish them so long as they sought forgiveness. <sup>34</sup> Yet why should God not punish them when they debar people from the Sacred Mosque, although they are not its guardians? Its rightful guardians are those who fear God, though most of them do not realize it. <sup>35</sup> Their prayers at the Sacred House are nothing but whistling and clapping of hands. ‘So taste the punishment because of your denial.’

<sup>36</sup> Those who are bent on denying the truth are spending their wealth in debarring others from the path of God. They will continue to spend it in this way till, in the end, this spending will become a source of intense regret for them, and then they will be overcome.

And those who denied the truth will be gathered together in Hell. <sup>37</sup> So that God may separate the bad from the good, He will heap the wicked one upon another and then cast them into Hell. These will surely be the losers.

<sup>38</sup> Tell those who are bent on denying the truth that if they desist, their past shall be forgiven, but if they persist in sin, they have an example in the fate of those who went before. <sup>39</sup> Fight them until there is no more [religious] persecution,<sup>a</sup> and religion belongs wholly to God: if they desist, then surely God is watchful of what they do, <sup>40</sup> but if they turn away, know that God is your Protector; the Best of Protectors and the Best of Helpers!

<sup>41</sup> Know that one-fifth of your battle gains belongs to God and the Messenger, to his close relatives and orphans, to the needy and travellers, if you believe in God and the revelation We sent down to Our servant on the Decisive Day, the day when the two forces met. God has power over all things.

<sup>42</sup> You were on the nearer side of the valley, and they were on the farther side, and the caravan was below you. Had you wished to set a time by mutual agreement, you would certainly have disagreed on the timing. However, the encounter took place, so that God might settle a matter which had already been ordained, so

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<sup>a</sup> See pages xvii to xxi of the Introduction.

that he who was to perish might perish after clear evidence of the truth, and he who was to live might live in clear evidence of the truth. Surely, God is all hearing and all-knowing. <sup>43</sup> God showed them to you in your dream as small in number. If He had shown them to you as many, you would have lost heart and disputed about the matter; but God saved you. He has full knowledge of what is in the human heart. <sup>44</sup> When at the time of your encounter He made them appear few in your eyes, and made you appear few in their eyes, it was so that God might bring about that which had been decreed. Everything returns to God.

<sup>45</sup> Believers! When you encounter a party, remain firm and remember God much, so that you may succeed. <sup>46</sup> Obey God and His Messenger, and avoid dissension, lest you falter and are no longer held in awe. Have patience: God is with those who are patient. <sup>47</sup> Do not be like those who left their homes full of conceit and showing off to others. They debar others from the path of God: but God has knowledge of all their actions.

<sup>48</sup> Satan made their deeds seem fair to them and said, ‘None of the people shall prevail against you this day; I shall be your protector!’ But when the two forces came in sight of each other, he turned on his heels, saying, ‘This is where I leave you: I see what you do not, and I fear God—God is severe in His punishment.’ <sup>49</sup> The hypocrites and those whose hearts



were perverted said, ‘These people [the believers] must be deluded by their religion.’ But he who places his trust in God [knows that], God is Almighty and Wise.

<sup>50</sup> If you could see, when the angels take the souls of those who are bent on denying the truth [at death], how they strike their faces and backs: saying ‘Taste the punishment of the Burning!’ <sup>51</sup> This is the punishment for what your hands committed—for, God never does the least wrong to His servants.’ <sup>52</sup> Like Pharaoh’s people and those that have gone before them, they rejected God’s signs and God seized them for their sins. God is strong, and severe in punishment! <sup>53</sup> God would never withdraw a favour that He had conferred upon a people unless they change what is in their hearts. God is all hearing and all-knowing. <sup>54</sup> Like Pharaoh’s people and those who went before them, they denied their Lord’s signs: We destroyed them for their sins, and We drowned Pharaoh’s people—they were all evil-doers.

<sup>55</sup> The worst creatures in the sight of God are those who reject Him and will not believe; <sup>56</sup> those with whom you have made a covenant, and who break their covenant on every occasion and have no fear [of God]. <sup>57</sup> Should you encounter them in war, then deal with them in such a manner that those that follow them should abandon their designs and may take warning. <sup>58</sup> And if you learn of treachery on the part of any

people, throw their treaty back at them, so as to be on equal terms, for God does not love the treacherous.

<sup>59</sup> Let not the deniers think that they will ever get away. They cannot frustrate [God's purpose]. They have not the power to do so. <sup>60</sup> Prepare any strength you can muster against them, and any cavalry with which you can overawe God's enemy and your own enemy as well, and others besides them whom you do not know, but who are known to God. Anything you spend in the way of God will be repaid to you in full. You will not be wronged. <sup>61</sup> Then if they should be inclined to make peace, make peace with them, and put your trust in God. Surely, it is He who is All Hearing and All Knowing. <sup>62</sup> Should they seek to deceive you, God is enough for you: it was He who strengthened you with His help, and rallied the faithful around you, and bound their hearts together. <sup>63</sup> Even if you had spent all that is on the earth, you could not have bound their hearts together, but God has bound them together. Surely, He is Mighty and Wise.

<sup>64</sup> O Prophet! God is sufficient for you and the believers who follow you. <sup>65</sup> Prophet, urge the believers to fight;<sup>a</sup> if there are twenty of you who are steadfast, they will overcome two hundred, and if there are a hundred of you, they will overcome a thousand of those who deny the truth, for they are devoid of

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<sup>a</sup> See pages xvii to xxi of the Introduction.

understanding. <sup>66</sup> God has now lightened your burden, for He knows that there is weakness in you. If there are a hundred of you who are steadfast, they will overcome two hundred; and if there are a thousand of you, they will overcome two thousand by God's will. God is with the steadfast.

<sup>67</sup> It is not right for a Prophet to keep captives unless he has battled strenuously in the land. You desire the gain of this world, while God desires for you the Hereafter—God is mighty and wise. <sup>68</sup> Had it not been for a writ from God that had already gone forth, you would have been severely punished on account of what you took. <sup>69</sup> So eat of that which you have gained in war as lawful and good, and fear God. Surely, God is most forgiving and merciful.

<sup>70</sup> Prophet, tell those you have taken captive: 'If God knows of any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you: God is Forgiving and Merciful.' <sup>71</sup> And if they would betray you, they betrayed God before, and He gave [you] power over them. God is aware and wise.

<sup>72</sup> Those who have believed and migrated and struggled for God's cause with their possessions and persons, and those who have given refuge and help, are the friends and protectors of one another. But as for those who have come to believe without having migrated —you are in no way responsible for their

protection until they migrate. If they seek your help in the matter of religion, it is incumbent on you to help them, except against a people with whom you have a pact. God sees what you do. <sup>73</sup> Those who deny the truth support one another. If you fail to do likewise, there will be great disorder and corruption in the land.

<sup>74</sup> Those who have believed and migrated and striven for the cause of God, as well as those who have given them refuge and support, are the true believers; they shall have forgiveness and an honourable provision. <sup>75</sup> And those who have believed later on, and emigrated and struggled for God's sake alongside you are also a part of you. But as to blood relations, they are nearer one to another in the Book of God. God has full knowledge of all things.

## 9. REPENTANCE (*AL-TAWBAH*)

<sup>1</sup> This is a declaration of immunity from God and His Messenger to the polytheists, with whom you had made agreements. <sup>2</sup> So go about in the land for four months, but know that you cannot frustrate the plan of God and that God will disgrace those who deny the truth. <sup>3</sup> This is a proclamation from God and His Messenger to the people on the day of the Pilgrimage, that God is free of all obligation to the polytheists, and so is His Messenger. If you repent, it will be better for

you, but if you turn away, then know that you cannot frustrate the plan of God. Proclaim a grievous punishment to those who are bent on denying the truth.

<sup>4</sup> As for those who have honoured the treaty you made with them and who have not supported anyone against you: fulfill your agreement with them to the end of their term. God loves those who are righteous.

<sup>5</sup> When the forbidden months have passed, kill the polytheists [who are at war with you] wherever you find them.<sup>a</sup> Take them captive, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they repent, and take to prayer regularly and pay the alms, then let them go their way. God is forgiving and merciful. <sup>6</sup> If any one of the polytheists seeks asylum with you, grant him asylum so that he may hear the word of God; then convey him to a place of safety. That is because they are a people who have no knowledge.

<sup>7</sup> How can there be a treaty with the polytheists on the part of God and His Messenger, except for those with whom you entered into a treaty at the Sacred Mosque? As long as they act straight with you, act straight with them. God loves those who are righteous.

<sup>8</sup> How [can there be a treaty] for, if they get the upper hand over you, they will respect neither kinship nor covenant. They [try to] please you with their tongues

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<sup>a</sup> See pages xvii to xxi of the Introduction.

but their hearts reject you; most of them are perfidious. <sup>9</sup> They have sold God's revelations for a paltry price, and barred others from His path. How evil is what they have been doing! <sup>10</sup> Where believers are concerned, they respect no tie of kinship or treaty. They are people who overstep the limits. <sup>11</sup> If they repent and keep up their prayers and pay the alms, then they are your brethren in faith. We make Our messages clear for people who are willing to learn.

<sup>12</sup> But if they break faith after pledging it and revile your religion, then fight these leaders of unbelief, so that they may desist, for they have no regard for their pledged word. <sup>13</sup> Will you not fight against those who have broken their oaths and conspired to banish the Messenger? They were the first to attack you. Do you fear them? Surely God is more deserving of your fear, if you are true believers. <sup>14</sup> Fight them: God will punish them at your hands, and will disgrace them. He will help you to overcome them and heal the hearts of the faithful; <sup>15</sup> He will remove the rage from their hearts. God will turn in His mercy to whom He wills. God is all knowing and wise.

<sup>16</sup> Do you [O believers] think that you will be spared without God identifying which of you have struggled and did not take anyone for friends and protectors except God, His Messenger, and the believers? God is fully aware of all your actions.

<sup>17</sup> It is not right that the polytheists should frequent

God's places of worship while they are self-confessed unbelievers. It is they whose works shall come to nothing and they shall abide in Hell. <sup>18</sup> Only he should tend God's houses of worship who believes in God and the Last Day, and is constant in prayer, and spends in charity, and stands in awe of none but God: such people may hope to be among the rightly guided. <sup>19</sup> Do you regard giving water to pilgrims and tending the Sacred Mosque as being equal to the deeds of those who believe in God and the Last Day and who strive in God's path? They are not equal in the sight of God. God does not guide such unjust people. <sup>20</sup> Those who have believed and have migrated, and have striven for God's sake with their possessions and persons, stand much higher in God's esteem. It is they who will triumph; <sup>21</sup> their Lord gives them the good news of His mercy and His pleasure and gardens of eternal bliss. <sup>22</sup> There they will dwell for ever. Truly there is an immense reward with God.

<sup>23</sup> Believers, do not take your fathers and your brothers for allies if they choose denial of truth in preference to faith. Those among you who ally themselves with them are wrongdoers. <sup>24</sup> Say, 'If your fathers and your sons and your brothers and your spouses and your tribe, and the worldly goods which you have acquired, and the commerce which you fear will decline, and the homes you love are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and the struggle for His

cause, then wait until God fulfills His decree. God does not guide the disobedient people.’

<sup>25</sup> Indeed, God has helped you on many occasions. On the day of Hunayn, when you took pride in your great numbers, they proved of no avail to you—for the earth, despite all its vastness, became [too] narrow for you and you turned back, in retreat. <sup>26</sup> God caused His tranquillity to descend upon His Messenger and the faithful: and sent down forces which you did not see: He punished those who denied the truth—for such is the recompense of all who deny the truth—<sup>27</sup> then after that, God will turn in His mercy to whom He wills: God is forgiving and merciful. <sup>28</sup> Believers, know that the polytheists are impure,<sup>a</sup> so they should not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year onwards. If you should fear destitution, God will enrich you out of His bounty, if He so wishes. God is aware and wise.

<sup>29</sup> Fight those from among the People of the Book who believe neither in God, nor in the Last Day, nor hold as unlawful what God and His Messenger have declared to be unlawful, nor follow the true religion, until they pay the tax willingly and agree to submit. <sup>30</sup> The [ancient] Jews [used to] say, ‘Ezra is the son of God,’ and the Christians say, ‘The Messiah is the son

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<sup>a</sup> The word impure (*najas*) connotes spiritual, not physical impurity.



of God.’ These are but their baseless utterances. They imitate the assertions made in earlier times by those who deny the truth. May God destroy them! How far astray they have been led!

<sup>31</sup> They have taken their learned men and their monks for their lords besides God. So have they taken the Messiah, son of Mary, although they were commanded to worship only the One God. There is no deity but He. He is far above whatever they set up as His partners!

<sup>32</sup> They want to extinguish God’s light with their mouths, but God seeks only to perfect His light, no matter how those who deny the truth may abhor it. <sup>33</sup> It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, so that He may make it prevail [ideologically] over every other religion, however much the polytheists may hate this.

<sup>34</sup> Believers, many religious scholars and monks wrongfully appropriate people’s possessions and turn people away from God’s path! Tell those who hoard gold and silver instead of giving in God’s cause that they will have a painful punishment: <sup>35</sup> on the Day their treasure is heated up in the fire of hell, their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it, and they will be told, ‘This is what you hoarded up for yourselves. Taste then what you were hoarding.’

<sup>36</sup> On the Day God created heaven and earth, He

decreed that the number of months should be twelve in number. Out of these, four are sacred. That is the true religion. Do not wrong your souls in these months. Fight the polytheists all together, as they fight you all together,<sup>a</sup> and know that God is with the righteous.<sup>37</sup> The postponing of [sacred months] is but one more instance of [their] refusal to acknowledge the truth—by which those who are bent on denying the truth are led astray. They declare this to be permissible in one year and forbidden in another year, so that they may adjust the months which God has sanctified, thus making lawful what God has forbidden. Their evil deed seems fair to them: God does not guide those who deny the truth.

<sup>38</sup> Believers, what is the matter with you that when you are asked to go forth in the cause of God, you cling slothfully to the land? Do you prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life, compared to that of the Hereafter.<sup>39</sup> If you do not go forth, He will punish you sternly and replace you by other people. You will not harm Him in the least. God has power over all things.<sup>40</sup> If you do not support him [Muhammad], know that God did support him when those who denied the truth expelled him when the two of them were in the cave, he [Muhammad] told his companion, ‘Do not worry; for God is with us.’ So

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<sup>a</sup> See pages xvii to xxi of the Introduction.

God sent His tranquillity down on him and aided him with forces invisible to you and placed the word of those who disbelieved lowest, while God's word remained supreme. God is powerful and wise.

<sup>41</sup> Go forth, whether lightly or heavily equipped, and strive and struggle, with your goods and your persons, for the cause of God. That is better for you, if you only knew. <sup>42</sup> Had the gain been immediate and the journey shorter, they would have followed you: but the distance seemed too great for them. Yet they will swear by God, 'Had we been able, we would have gone out with you.' They bring ruin upon themselves. God knows that they are surely lying.

<sup>43</sup> May God pardon you! Why did you permit them to do so before it had become clear to you which ones were truthful, so that you might recognize the liars?

<sup>44</sup> Those who believe in God and the Last Day will never ask you to exempt them from striving with their wealth and their lives—God best knows the righteous—

<sup>45</sup> only those seek exemption who do not truly believe in God and the Last Day, and whose hearts have become a prey to doubt. Because they doubt, they waver. <sup>46</sup> If they had wished to go forth, they would surely have made some preparation for it, but God disliked their setting out [and being raised high in God's eyes] and held them back. They were told to stay behind with those who stay behind.

<sup>47</sup> Had they gone forth with you, they would only

have proved a source of evil for you, and would have run back and forth among you, seeking to sow discord among you: and among you there were some who would have willingly listened to them. God knows the evil-doers.<sup>48</sup> They have already tried to sow dissension, and hatched plots against you, until the truth became manifest and God's will prevailed, much to their disgust.

<sup>49</sup> Some of them say, 'Give us leave to stay behind and do not put us to trial.' Surely, they have already fallen into trial. Surely, Hell shall engulf those who deny the truth.<sup>50</sup> If good befalls you, it grieves them, but if a misfortune befalls you, they say, 'We took our precautions beforehand!' They turn away rejoicing.<sup>51</sup> Say, 'Nothing can befall us, except what God has ordained for us. He is our Supreme Lord. In God let the faithful put their trust.'<sup>52</sup> Say, 'Are you waiting for anything to befall us except one of the two best things [Victory in this world or Paradise in the next]? But we expect that God will send His punishment to you either directly from Himself, or by our hands. So wait, if you will; we too, are waiting with you.'

<sup>53</sup> Say, 'Whether you give willingly or unwillingly, your offerings shall not be accepted by God, for you are indeed a disobedient people.'<sup>54</sup> The only reason their contributions are not accepted is that they have denied God and His Messenger, they come to the prayer half heartedly, and they offer contributions

unwillingly. <sup>55</sup> Do not let their wealth and children impress you. For God seeks to punish them through these things in the life of this world, so that their souls shall depart while they are still denying the truth. <sup>56</sup> They swear by God that they are believers like you; but they are not. They are afraid [to appear in their true colours]: <sup>57</sup> if they could find a place of refuge, or a cave or any hiding-place, they would run there with frantic haste.

<sup>58</sup> Among them there are some who find fault with you concerning the distribution of alms. If a share is given to them, they are pleased, but if they receive nothing, they grow resentful. <sup>59</sup> If only they had been content with what God and His Messenger had given them and had said, 'God is sufficient for us. God will give us out of His bounty, and so will His Messenger. To God alone do we turn with hope!' <sup>60</sup> Alms are only for: the poor and the destitute, for those who collect *zakat*, for conciliating people's hearts, for freeing slaves, for those in debt, for spending for God's cause, and for travellers in need. It is a legal obligation enjoined by God. God is all-knowing and wise.

<sup>61</sup> Among them are those who vex the Prophet by saying, 'He listens to everyone.' Say, 'His listening to everyone is good for you; he believes in God and puts his trust in the faithful, and is a mercy to those of you who believe. Those who annoy God's Messenger shall have a painful punishment.' <sup>62</sup> They swear by God in

order to please you [believers]: but it would be more fitting for them to please God and His Messenger, if they are believers. <sup>63</sup> Do they not know that whoever opposes God and His Messenger shall abide forever in the fire of Hell? That is the supreme humiliation.

<sup>64</sup> The hypocrites are afraid lest a chapter [of the Quran] be sent down about them, telling them what is in their hearts—say, ‘Go on mocking. God will surely bring to light what you are dreading.’ <sup>65</sup> If you ask them, they will say, ‘We were only joking and playing with words.’ Say, ‘Would you make a mockery of God and of His Revelations and of His Messenger?’ <sup>66</sup> Make no excuses; you rejected the faith after you accepted it.’ If We pardon some of you, We will punish others amongst you, for they are guilty.’

<sup>67</sup> The hypocrites, both men and women, are all alike. They enjoin what is evil, forbid what is right and they are niggardly when it comes to spending for the cause of God. They have forgotten God, so He has forgotten them. The hypocrites are the disobedient ones. <sup>68</sup> God has promised the hypocrites, both men and women, and those who deny the truth, the Fire of Hell. They shall abide in it forever. That is a sufficient recompense for them. God has rejected them. They shall have everlasting punishment. <sup>69</sup> Like those before you who were stronger than you, possessed more wealth and children; they enjoyed their share in this life as you have enjoyed yours; like them, you have

indulged in idle talk. It is they whose works shall come to nothing in this world and in the life to come—and it is they who shall be the losers.<sup>70</sup> Have they never heard the stories about their predecessors, the peoples of Noah, ‘Ad, Thamud, Abraham, Midian, and of the ruined cities? Their messengers brought them clear evidence of the truth. It was not God who wronged them; they wronged themselves.

<sup>71</sup> The believers, both men and women, are friends to each other; they enjoin what is good and forbid evil, they attend to their prayers and pay the alms and obey God and His Messenger. On these God will have mercy, for God is almighty and wise.<sup>72</sup> God has promised the believers, both men and women, Gardens through which rivers flow, wherein they will abide, and fine dwelling places in Gardens of eternity. But the good pleasure of God is greater still. That is the supreme achievement.

<sup>73</sup> O Prophet, strive against those who deny the truth and the hypocrites, and be firm against them. Their abode shall be Hell: an evil destination.<sup>74</sup> They swear by God that they did not, yet they uttered the words of denial of truth after they had accepted Islam. They meditated a plot which they were unable to carry out, and being spiteful was their only response to God, who had enriched them out of His bounty, and to His Messenger. If they repent, it will indeed be better for them. If they turn away, God will punish them with

grievous suffering in this world and the Hereafter, and there will be no one on earth to protect or help them.

<sup>75</sup> There are some among them who pledged themselves to God, saying, 'If God gives us something out of His bounty, we shall certainly give alms and be righteous,' <sup>76</sup> but when He bestowed His favours on them they grew niggardly, and turned away in aversion.

<sup>77</sup> So He caused hypocrisy to settle in their hearts until the Day of their meeting with Him, because they broke their word to God, and because they lied. <sup>78</sup> Do they not know that God knows what they conceal and what they talk about in secret? That God knows all that is hidden?

<sup>79</sup> As for those who ridicule such believers as give alms freely for the sake of God and taunt those who find nothing to give save that which they earn through their toil, God will cause their ridicule to rebound on them: they shall have a painful punishment. <sup>80</sup> It is the same whether or not you ask forgiveness for them. Even if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, God will not forgive them, for they have denied God and His Messenger. God does not guide the evil-doers.

<sup>81</sup> Those who stayed at home were glad that they were left behind by God's Messenger. They hated the thought of striving for God's cause with their possessions and their persons. They said, 'Do not go forth in this heat.' Say, 'The Fire of Hell is far hotter.' If only they could understand. <sup>82</sup> Let them laugh a little



and weep much in return for their misdeeds. <sup>83</sup> So [Prophet], if God brings you back to a group of them, and should they ask your leave to go forth with you, say, ‘You shall never go forth with me and shall never fight an enemy with me. You chose to sit at home the first time, so sit now with those who remain behind.’ <sup>84</sup> And never [O Muhammad] pray for one of them who dies, nor stand by his grave. For they denied God and His Messenger, and died rebellious.

<sup>85</sup> Do not let their wealth and their children dazzle you. God only wants to punish them through these things in this world, and let their souls depart while they deny the truth. <sup>86</sup> When a chapter is revealed enjoining, ‘Believe in God and strive for the cause of God along with His Messenger,’ the wealthy among them ask you to exempt them saying, ‘Let us stay with those who are to stay behind.’ <sup>87</sup> They preferred to be with [the women], who remained behind [at home]: their hearts are sealed and so they do not understand. <sup>88</sup> But the Messenger and those who shared his faith strove hard with their possessions and their lives. It is they who shall have all kinds of good, and it is they who shall surely prosper. <sup>89</sup> God has prepared for them Gardens through which rivers flow, in which they shall abide forever. That is the supreme triumph.

<sup>90</sup> Some of the desert Arabs, too, came to make excuses, asking to be granted exemption. Those who lied to God and His Messenger stayed behind at home.

Those who denied the truth among them will be afflicted with a painful chastisement,<sup>91</sup> but no blame shall attach to the weak, the sick, and those who have no means to spend, provided they are sincere to God and His Messenger. There is no reason to reproach those who do good deeds; God is most forgiving and merciful.<sup>92</sup> Nor [does any blame] attach to those who came to you to be provided with mounts, and when you said, 'I can find no mounts for you,' they went back, and tears welled up in their eyes with sadness, since they could not find any way to contribute.<sup>93</sup> The blameworthy are those who are men of wealth and yet ask for exemption. They are content to be with those [women] who stay behind. God has sealed their hearts: they do not understand.

<sup>94</sup> They will make excuses to you when you return to them. Say, 'Do not make excuses, we will not believe you. God has already informed us about you. God will see your actions, as will His Messenger. Then you will be returned to the One who knows the seen and the unseen and He will tell you all that you used to do.'<sup>95</sup> When you return, they will swear to you by God so that you may leave them alone, so leave them alone. They are unclean, and Hell will be their home as a reward for their actions—<sup>96</sup> they will swear to you, so that you may be pleased with them. But [even] if you are pleased with them, God is not pleased with rebellious people.

<sup>97</sup> The desert Arabs are more stubborn in their denial of truth and hypocrisy, and are the least likely to be aware of the limits which God has revealed to His Messenger. God is all knowing and wise. <sup>98</sup> Some desert Arabs regard what they give for the cause of God as a fine and wait for some misfortune to befall you. May ill-fortune befall them! God hears all and knows all.

<sup>99</sup> There are also those among them who believe in God and the Last Day and regard what they spend for the cause of God as a means of bringing them nearer to God and of deserving the prayers of the Messenger. This shall certainly be for them a means of drawing near to God. God will admit them into His mercy; God is indeed most forgiving and merciful.

<sup>100</sup> As for those who led the way, the first of the emigrants and the supporters, as well as those who nobly followed them, God is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him; He has prepared for them Gardens through which rivers flow, where they shall dwell forever. That is the supreme achievement. <sup>101</sup> Some of the desert Arabs around you are hypocrites as are some of the people of Madinah—they are obdurate in their hypocrisy. You do not know them, but We know them. We shall cause them to suffer doubly and then they will be subjected to a great punishment.

<sup>102</sup> There are others who have confessed their

wrongdoing, who have done some good deeds and some bad ones. It is likely that God will turn to them in mercy. Surely, God is most forgiving, merciful.

<sup>103</sup> Take alms out of their wealth to cleanse them and purify them, and pray for them; your prayer will be a comfort to them. God is all hearing, all knowing.

<sup>104</sup> Do they not know that God accepts the repentance of His servants and receives their alms, and that God is the Forgiving, the Merciful One? <sup>105</sup> Say, ‘Do as you will. God will watch your conduct and so will His Messenger and the believers. Soon you will be brought back to Him who knows what is hidden and what is manifest: then He will show you the truth of all that you have done.’ <sup>106</sup> [There are yet] others whose cases are deferred until it is God’s will to judge them. He will either punish them, or turn in mercy to them; God is all knowing and wise.

<sup>107</sup> Then there are those who built a mosque to cause harm, to spread apostasy and disunity among the believers—as an outpost for those who from the outset warred on God and His Messenger. They swear, ‘Our intentions were nothing but good,’ but God bears witness that they are lying. <sup>108</sup> Do not set foot in it. Only a house of worship, founded from the very first day upon piety, is worthy of your setting foot therein. In it are men who love to be purified and God loves those who purify themselves. <sup>109</sup> Who is better, he who founds his building on the fear of God and His good

pleasure, or he who builds on the brink of a crumbling precipice, so that his house is ready to fall with him into the Fire of Hell? God does not guide the wrongdoers: <sup>110</sup> the building which they have built will never cease to be a source of deep disquiet in their hearts, until their hearts are cut to pieces. God is all knowing and wise.

<sup>111</sup> God has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth in return for the Garden. They fight for the cause of God and they kill and are killed.<sup>a</sup> It is a promise binding on Him in the Torah, the Gospel and the Quran, and who is truer to his promise than God? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the supreme achievement. <sup>112</sup> [The believers are] those who turn to God in repentance; who worship and praise Him; who go about in the land serving His cause, who bow down, who prostrate themselves, who enjoin good and forbid evil, and who observe the limits set by God. Give good news to the believers!

<sup>113</sup> It is not proper for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for polytheists, even though they are close relatives, after it has become clear to them that they have earned the punishment of Hell. <sup>114</sup> Abraham's asking forgiveness for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him, but when it became clear to him, that he was God's

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<sup>a</sup> See pages xvii to xxi of the Introduction.

enemy, he disassociated himself from him. Surely, Abraham was most tender-hearted and forbearing. <sup>115</sup> God would never lead a people astray after He has guided them and until He has made clear to them what they should guard against. God has knowledge of all things; <sup>116</sup> surely to God belongs the kingdom of the heavens and of the earth. He gives life and death. You have none besides God to protect or help you.

<sup>117</sup> God turned in mercy to the Prophet, and the emigrants and the helpers who followed him in the hour of hardship. After the hearts of a group of them had almost faltered, He turned towards them, for He was compassionate and merciful towards them. <sup>118</sup> He has turned with mercy to the three whose case was deferred, when the earth, for all its spaciousness, closed in upon them, and their own souls seemed straitened to them and they realised that there was no refuge from God except in Him. He turned to them so that they might turn to Him. God is the Ever Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

<sup>119</sup> Believers, fear God and stand with the truthful. <sup>120</sup> It was not proper for the people of Madinah and those desert Arabs around them to hold back from following God's Messenger, and to prefer their own lives to his life. This is because whenever they suffer from thirst or weariness or hunger for God's cause, and whenever they take any step which provokes those who deny the truth, or inflicts any loss upon the

enemy, it shall be counted as a good deed in the sight of God—God will not deny the righteous their reward—<sup>121</sup> and whenever they spend anything [for the sake of God], be it little or much, and whenever they traverse the land [in God's cause]—it is recorded to their credit, and God will grant them the best reward for all that they have been doing.

<sup>122</sup> It is not right that all the believers should go out [in time of war] all together. Why, then, does not a party from every group come to [the Prophet] in order to acquire a deeper knowledge of religion and to warn their people, so that they can guard themselves against evil?

<sup>123</sup> Believers! Fight against those deniers of the truth who are near you.<sup>a</sup> Deal firmly with them. Know that God is with those who fear Him. <sup>124</sup> Whenever a chapter is sent down, there are some of them who say, 'Which of you has had his faith increased by it?' But, as for those who believe, it increases their faith and they rejoice, <sup>125</sup> but as for those with sickness in their hearts, it adds defilement to their defilement and they die in a state of denial of truth. <sup>126</sup> Do they not see that they are tried every year once or twice? Yet they do not repent, nor would they be admonished. <sup>127</sup> Whenever a chapter is revealed, they glance at each other, asking, 'Is anyone watching?' Then they turn away. God has

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<sup>a</sup> See pages xvii to xxi of the Introduction.

turned their hearts away, because they are people who do not understand.

<sup>128</sup> There has come to you a Messenger of your own. Your suffering distresses him: he is deeply concerned for your welfare and full of kindness and mercy towards the believers. <sup>129</sup> But if they turn away, say, ‘God suffices me: there is no deity but He: in Him I have put my trust. He is the Lord of the Glorious Throne.’

## 10. JONAH (YUNUS)

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

<sup>1</sup> *Alif Lam Ra*

These are the verses of the Book of Wisdom. <sup>2</sup> Does it seem strange to people that We have sent revelation to a man from among themselves, saying, ‘Warn mankind and give glad tidings to the believers that they have a true rank [of honour] with their Lord?’ Those who deny the truth say, ‘This man is clearly a sorcerer.’

<sup>3</sup> Truly, your Lord is God who created the heavens and the earth in six days [periods], then He ascended the Throne, disposing the whole affair. No one may intercede with Him save with His permission. Such is



God, your Lord, so worship Him alone. Will you not take heed? <sup>4</sup>To Him you shall all return. God's promise is true; He originates Creation, then He restores it, so that He may reward with justice those who believe and do good works. Those who have denied the truth shall have boiling water to drink, and a painful punishment, because of their denial.

<sup>5</sup>It is He who made the sun radiate a brilliant light and the moon shed its lustre, and ordained for it stages so that you may learn to count out the years and [to make other such] reckoning of time. God has not created all these without a purpose. He makes plain His revelations to men of understanding. <sup>6</sup>In the alternation of night and day, and in all that God has created in the heavens and the earth, there are signs for a God-fearing people.<sup>a</sup> <sup>7</sup>Those who entertain no hope of meeting Us, being pleased and contented with the life of this world, and those who give no heed to Our signs, <sup>8</sup>shall have their abode in the Fire in requital for their deeds. <sup>9</sup>Those who believe and do good deeds will be guided by their Lord because of their faith.

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<sup>a</sup> In the heavens and on the earth, there are countless signs, but they serve as a lesson only for those who are God-fearing. Fear, or apprehension, is a thing which makes a man serious. Unless a man is serious, he will not pay full attention to matters of importance and will not understand their various aspects.

Rivers shall flow at their feet in the Gardens of Bliss.

<sup>10</sup> In that [state of happiness] they will call out; ‘Glory be to You, O God!’, while their greeting in it will be: ‘Peace!’ And the close of their call will be, ‘All praise is due to God, the Lord of the Universe!’

<sup>11</sup> Had God hastened the punishment of men as He hastens the good, the end of their term of life would already have been reached. We leave those who do not hope to meet Us groping along in their arrogance.

<sup>12</sup> Whenever any trouble befalls a person, he prays to Us all the time, lying on his side, sitting or standing; but when We remove his trouble, he goes on his way as if he had never prayed to Us for the removal of his trouble. Thus it is that the doings of the transgressors are made to look fair to them.

<sup>13</sup> And indeed, before your time We destroyed [whole] generations when they [persistently] did evil; their messengers came to them with clear signs, but they would not believe. Thus We requite the guilty.

<sup>14</sup> Then We made you their successors in the land, so that We might observe how you would conduct yourselves.

<sup>15</sup> When Our clear revelations are recited to them, those who do not expect to meet Us say, ‘Bring us a different Quran, or make some changes in it.’ Say, ‘It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I follow only what is revealed to me. I fear, if I were to disobey my Lord, the punishment on a Dreadful Day.’ <sup>16</sup> Say,

‘If God had so wished, I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have brought it to your knowledge. Indeed, I have spent a whole lifetime among you before it came to me. How can you not use your reason?’ <sup>17</sup> Who is more unjust than the man who invents a falsehood about God or denies His signs? Surely, the guilty shall never prosper.

<sup>18</sup> Instead of God they worship what neither harms nor benefits them, and they say: ‘These are our intercessors with God.’ Say, ‘Do you inform God about something in heavens and on earth that He does not know? Glory be to Him; may He be Exalted over whatever they associate [with Him]!’ <sup>19</sup> Mankind was only one community, but then they differed, and had it not been for a prior word from your Lord, their differences would have been settled for them.

<sup>20</sup> They ask, ‘Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord?’ Tell them, ‘God alone has knowledge of the unseen. So wait; I too will wait with you.’ <sup>21</sup> Whenever We let mankind taste mercy after some adversity has afflicted them, they forthwith turn to devising false arguments against Our signs. Say, ‘God is swifter in His devising! Our angels are recording your intrigues.’

<sup>22</sup> It is God who enables you to travel on land and sea. And when you are sailing on ships and rejoicing in the favourable wind, a storm arrives, and the waves surge upon those on board from every side and they think they

are encompassed, then they make a fervent appeal to God, saying in all sincerity, 'If You deliver us from this, we will surely be of the thankful.'<sup>23</sup> But when He has delivered them, they begin, wrongfully to commit excesses in the land. O you men, your excesses only affect your own selves. Have the enjoyment of the present life. Then to Us you shall return; and We will inform you of all that you have done.

<sup>24</sup> The life of the world is like the water which We send down from the sky, and which is absorbed by the plants of the earth, from which men and cattle eat. But when the earth has taken on its finest appearance, and looks beautiful, and its people think they have it under their control, then by day or by night, Our command comes to it and We convert it into a field of stubble, as if nothing had existed there the day before. Thus We make plain Our revelations for those who reflect.

<sup>25</sup> God calls man to the home of peace and He guides whom He wills to a straight path. <sup>26</sup> Those who do good works shall have a good reward and more besides. No darkness and no ignominy shall cover their faces. They are destined for Paradise wherein they shall dwell forever. <sup>27</sup> But as for those who have done evil deeds, the recompense shall be in proportion. They will have none to defend them against God. Ignominy shall cover them, as though their faces were veiled by the night's own darkness. It is they who are destined for the fire, where they will live forever.

<sup>28</sup> On the Day when We gather them all together, We shall say to those who ascribed partners to God, ‘Keep to your places, you and your partners!’ Then We shall separate them from one another and their partner-gods will say, ‘It was not us that you worshipped. <sup>29</sup> God suffices as a witness between us and you. We were entirely unaware that you worshipped us.’ <sup>30</sup> Then every soul shall realize what it has done. They shall be returned to God, their true Master, and anything they had invented will forsake them.

<sup>31</sup> Say, ‘Who provides [sustenance] for you from heaven and earth? Who is it who controls the ears and the eyes? Who brings forth the living from the dead, and the dead from the living? And who governs all affairs?’ They will say, ‘God’. Then say, ‘Will you not then fear Him? <sup>32</sup> That is God, your true Lord. What is there, besides the truth, but error? How then can you turn away?’ <sup>33</sup> Thus the Word of your Lord is proved true against those who are disobedient. They will not believe.

<sup>34</sup> Ask then, ‘Can any of your partner-gods originate creation, and then reproduce it?’ Say, ‘It is God who originates creation and then restores it: how then are you so misled?’ <sup>35</sup> Say, ‘Does any of your partner-gods guide one to the Truth?’ Say, ‘It is God who guides to the truth. Then, is He who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed or one who cannot find the way himself unless he be guided? What is the matter with

you? How ill you judge!’ <sup>36</sup> Most of them follow nothing but mere conjecture. But conjecture is of no use against the Truth. God is well aware of what they do.

<sup>37</sup> This Quran is not such as could have been produced by anyone but God. It fulfills that [the predictions] which came before it and gives a fuller explanation of the [earlier] Revelations. There is no doubt about it: it is from the Lord of the Universe.

<sup>38</sup> Do they say, ‘He has fabricated it?’ Say, ‘Bring me one chapter like it. Call on whom you may besides God to help you, if what you say be true!’ <sup>39</sup> Indeed, they are denying something which they cannot comprehend; the reality not yet having dawned on them. Likewise those before them rejected the truth. But see what was the end of the wrongdoers.

<sup>40</sup> Some of them will believe in it [the Quran], while others will not. And your Lord is fully aware of the evil-doers. <sup>41</sup> If they should reject you, say, ‘My deeds are mine and your deeds are yours. You are not accountable for my actions, nor am I accountable for what you do.’ <sup>42</sup> Some of them appear to be listening to you; but can you make the deaf hear, incapable as they are of understanding? <sup>43</sup> Some of them look fixedly at you; but can you make the blind see, bereft as they are of sight? <sup>44</sup> Surely, God does not wrong people at all, but people wrong themselves.

<sup>45</sup> And on the Day when He shall gather them

together, it will seem to them as if they had not tarried in the world longer than an hour of a day. They will recognize one another; lost indeed will be those who considered it a lie that they were destined to meet God, and did not follow the right path. <sup>46</sup> Whether We show you something of what We have promised them or cause you to die [before that], to Us they shall return. God is Witness to all that they do.

<sup>47</sup> Every nation has a messenger. Once their messenger has come, judgement will be passed upon them in all fairness and they will not be wronged.

<sup>48</sup> They say, ‘When will this promise come to pass—if you speak the truth?’ <sup>49</sup> Say, ‘I have no control over any harm or benefit to myself, except by the will of God. For every people, however, there is an appointed term. When the end of their term arrives, they cannot postpone it for an hour, nor can they advance it.’ <sup>50</sup> Say, ‘If His punishment comes upon you in the dead of night, or by the light of day, how will the guilty escape it?’ <sup>51</sup> Will you believe in it only after it has overtaken you, although it was your wish to hurry it on?’ <sup>52</sup> Then the evil-doers will be told, ‘Taste the everlasting punishment. Have you not been rewarded according to your deeds?’

<sup>53</sup> They enquire of you if this will really happen. Tell them, ‘Yes, by my Lord. Most certainly it will happen, and you cannot avert it.’ <sup>54</sup> If every wrongdoer possessed all that was on the earth, he would seek to

ransom himself with it: when they see the punishment, they will repent in secret. But judgement will be passed upon them in all fairness, and they will not be wronged.<sup>55</sup> Assuredly, everything that is in the heavens and on the earth belongs to God. Assuredly, God's promise is true. Yet most of them do not realize it.<sup>56</sup> He gives life and brings about death, and to Him you shall all return.

<sup>57</sup> O mankind! There has come to you an admonition from your Lord, a cure for what is in the hearts, and a guide and a blessing to true believers.<sup>58</sup> Say, 'In the grace and mercy of God let them rejoice, for these are better than the worldly riches which they hoard.'<sup>59</sup> Say, 'Have you considered the provision God has sent down for you, and have you made some of it unlawful and some lawful?' Say, 'Has God given you permission [to do this], or are you inventing falsehoods about God?'<sup>60</sup> What will they think, those who invent falsehoods about God, on the Day of Resurrection? God is bountiful to men: yet most of them are not grateful.

<sup>61</sup> In whatever activity you may be engaged, and whichever part of the Quran you recite, and whatever deed you do, We are witness to it when you are engaged in it. Not the smallest particle on the earth or in heaven is hidden from your Lord; and there is nothing smaller or bigger but is recorded in a clear Book.<sup>62</sup> Those who are close to God shall certainly



have no fear, nor shall they grieve. <sup>63</sup> For those who believe and are mindful of God, <sup>64</sup> there is good news in this life and in the Hereafter: the Word of God shall never change. That is the supreme triumph. <sup>65</sup> Do not let their words grieve you. Surely, all might and glory belongs to God alone; He is the all-hearing, the all-knowing. <sup>66</sup> Surely, all who are in the heavens and on the earth belong to Him. What do those follow, who appeal to associates instead of to God? They merely follow conjecture and they are only guessing. <sup>67</sup> It is He who has made the night dark for you so that you may rest in it, and the day a source of light. Surely, there are signs in this for a people who listen.

<sup>68</sup> They say, 'God has begotten a son.' Glory be to Him. He is the Self-Sufficient One; everything in the heavens and on the earth belongs to Him. Do you have any authority for this? Would you ascribe to God something which you do not know? <sup>69</sup> Say, 'Those who invent falsehoods about God shall not prosper.' <sup>70</sup> Their portion is short-lived enjoyment in this world; but to Us they shall return. Then We shall make them taste a severe punishment, because of their denial of truth.

<sup>71</sup> Tell them the story of Noah. He said to his people, 'My people, if my presence among you and my preaching to you of God's revelations offends you, know that I put my trust in God, so agree on your course of action, along with your partner-gods, and let

no hesitation deflect you from it, then put it into effect against me, and give me no respite.<sup>72</sup> If you turn away from me, remember I demand no recompense from you. Only God will reward me and I have been commanded to submit completely to Him.’<sup>73</sup> Then they rejected him; then We delivered him and those with him in the Ark, and We made them successors; while We drowned the others who belied Our signs. Observe then the fate of those who had been forewarned.

<sup>74</sup> After him We sent other messengers to their respective peoples, and they brought them clear proofs. But they would not believe in the truth, because they had rejected it before. Thus We seal up the hearts of the transgressors.

<sup>75</sup> Then We sent forth Moses and Aaron with Our signs to Pharaoh and his nobles, but they behaved arrogantly, for they were wicked people.<sup>76</sup> When the truth came to them from Us, they said, ‘This is plain sorcery.’<sup>77</sup> Moses replied, ‘Do you speak thus of the truth after it has been brought to you? Can this be sorcery? Sorcerers never prosper.’<sup>78</sup> They said, ‘Have you come to turn us away from what we found our forefathers following, so that the two of you might become supreme in this land? We will never believe in you.’

<sup>79</sup> Then Pharaoh said, ‘Bring me every skilled magician!’<sup>80</sup> When the magicians came, Moses said

to them, ‘Cast down whatever you are going to cast down.’<sup>81</sup> And when they had done so, Moses said, ‘What you have wrought is mere sorcery. Surely, God will bring it to nothing. Truly, God does not support the work of mischief-makers;’<sup>82</sup> God establishes the truth by His words, however much the sinners may dislike it.’

<sup>83</sup> But none save a few youths declared their faith in Moses, [while others held back] for fear that Pharaoh and his nobles would persecute them. Pharaoh was high and mighty in the land. And one who transgressed all bounds.<sup>84</sup> Moses said, ‘O my people; if you believe in God, [and] if you have surrendered yourselves to Him, then in Him alone put your trust.’<sup>85</sup> They said, ‘In God we put our trust. Our Lord, make us not a trial [the subject of persecution] for the oppressors.’<sup>86</sup> And deliver us by Your mercy from the people who deny the truth.’

<sup>87</sup> We revealed [Our will] to Moses and his brother, saying, ‘Set aside for your people some houses in the city and turn them into places of worship, and be constant in prayer! And give [O Moses] the good news to the believers.’

<sup>88</sup> Moses prayed, ‘Our Lord, You have bestowed upon Pharaoh and his nobles pomp and wealth in the present life, whereby they lead people astray from Your path. Our Lord, destroy their riches and harden their hearts, so that they shall not believe until they are faced with grievous punishment.’

<sup>89</sup> God said, ‘Your prayer is granted, so continue, then, both of you, steadfastly on the right path, and do not follow the path of those who have no knowledge.’

<sup>90</sup> So We brought the Children of Israel across the sea. Pharaoh and his troops pursued them arrogantly and aggressively. When he was about to drown, [Pharaoh] exclaimed, ‘I believe that there is no deity save Him in whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am of those who surrender themselves to Him!’

<sup>91</sup> ‘Only now? When you had always been a rebel, and a wrongdoer. <sup>92</sup> So We shall save your body this day, so that you may serve as a sign for those who come after you: for many people are indeed heedless of Our signs.’

<sup>93</sup> We settled the Children of Israel in a blessed land, and We provided them with good things. And it was not until knowledge [of God’s revelation] was granted to them that they began to hold divergent views. Your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that in which they differed.

<sup>94</sup> If you are in any doubt concerning what We have sent down to you, then question those who have read the Book before you: the Truth has come to you from your Lord, so do not be one of the doubters—<sup>95</sup>do not be one who rejects God’s signs, for then you would become one of the losers.

<sup>96</sup> Those against whom your Lord’s word has been confirmed will never believe; <sup>97</sup> not even if every Sign

were to come to them—until they see the painful punishment. <sup>98</sup> Why was there no other people, save the people of Jonah, who should have believed so that their belief would have benefited them. Once they believed, We lifted the torment of shame from them during their worldly life and let them enjoy Our provision for a while.

<sup>99</sup> Had your Lord pleased, all the people on earth would have believed in Him, without exception. So will you compel people to become believers? <sup>100</sup> No soul can believe except by the will of God. He will place the filth [of doubt] upon those who do not use their reason.

<sup>101</sup> Say, ‘Look at whatever [exists] in heavens and on earth.’ But signs and warnings do not benefit the unbelievers. <sup>102</sup> What can they be waiting for but the punishment that came to those before them? Say, ‘So wait; I am one of those waiting with you.’ <sup>103</sup> Then We shall save Our messengers and those who believe. Thus We have made it incumbent upon Ourselves to save the believers.

<sup>104</sup> Say, ‘O people, if you are in doubt concerning my religion, then [know that] I do not worship those whom you worship instead of God, but rather I worship God who will cause you to die, for I am commanded to be one of the believers.’ <sup>105</sup> And set your face towards the [true] faith in all uprightness, and do not be one of those who ascribe partners to

God; <sup>106</sup> and do not invoke besides God what can neither help nor harm you. If you do, you will be one of the wrongdoers. <sup>107</sup> If God inflicts harm on you, no one can remove it but He, and if He intends good for you, no one can withhold His bounty; He grants His bounty to any of His servants whom He will. He is the Most Forgiving, and the Most Merciful.

<sup>108</sup> Say, ‘Mankind, Truth has come to you from your Lord! Anyone who accepts guidance is guided only for his own sake; and he who goes astray does so at his own peril. I am not appointed as your keeper.’

<sup>109</sup> Follow what is revealed to you, [O Prophet], and be steadfast until God gives His judgement. He is the Best of Judges.

## 11. HUD

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

<sup>1</sup> *Alif Lam Ra*

[This is] a Book, with verses which are fundamental [in nature], and then expounded in detail by One who is all wise and all aware. <sup>2</sup> [It teaches] that you should worship none but God. I am sent to you from Him to warn you and to give you good tidings. <sup>3</sup> Seek forgiveness from your Lord; then turn towards Him [in

repentance]. He will make generous provision for you for an appointed term and will bestow His grace on all who merit it! But if you turn away, then I fear for you the torment of a dreadful Day: <sup>4</sup> to God you shall all return; and He has power over all things.

<sup>5</sup> See how they cover themselves up to hide [their thoughts] from Him. But when they cover themselves up with their garments, He knows what they hide and what they reveal. He knows their innermost thoughts. <sup>6</sup> There is not a living creature on the earth but it is for God to provide its sustenance. He knows its dwelling and its [final] resting place. All this is recorded in a clear book.

<sup>7</sup> Enthroned above the waters, it was He who created the heavens and the earth in six Days [periods], in order to test which of you is best in conduct. If you say, 'You will [all] be raised up after death,' those who deny the truth will say, 'This is just sheer sorcery!' <sup>8</sup> If We defer their punishment till an appointed time, they ask, 'What is holding it back?' On the Day when it overtakes them, there will be nothing to avert it from them; and what they used to mock at shall encompass them.

<sup>9</sup> When We bestow upon man a measure of Our grace and then take it away from him, he yields to despair and becomes ungrateful. <sup>10</sup> And if, after adversity, We let him taste good fortune he says, 'All my ills are gone.' He becomes exultant and boastful.

<sup>11</sup> Not so those who are patient and do good deeds. They shall have forgiveness and a great reward.

<sup>12</sup> You may [feel the inclination] to leave aside a part of what is revealed to you and you may be distressed because they say, ‘Why has no treasure been sent down to him, why has no angel come with him?’ But you are only to give warning. God is the guardian of all things. <sup>13</sup> If they say, ‘He has invented it himself.’ Say, ‘If you are truthful, produce ten invented chapters like it, and call on whom you can besides God, to help you.’ <sup>14</sup> But if they do not respond to you, then know that this [Quran] is sent down with God’s knowledge and that there is no deity but Him. Will you then surrender yourselves to Him?

<sup>15</sup> Those who desire the life of this world and all its finery shall be repaid in full in this life for their deeds—nothing shall be denied them. <sup>16</sup> These are the people who, in the world to come, shall have nothing but Hellfire and all that they used to do shall be in vain.

<sup>17</sup> Can they be compared to those who possess a clear proof from their Lord, followed up by a witness from Him, preceded by the Book of Moses, as a guide and a mercy? These people believe in it; whereas those groups that deny its truth are promised the Fire. Therefore, have no doubt about it. It is the truth from your Lord, but most people do not believe it.

<sup>18</sup> Who does greater wrong than the one who fabricates a lie against God? Such people shall be



brought before their Lord, and the witnesses will say, 'These are the ones who lied about their Lord.' Surely God's rejection is merited by such wrongdoers.<sup>19</sup> Such as those who turn others away from the path of God and seek to make it appear crooked: these are the ones who deny the Hereafter.<sup>20</sup> They can never frustrate God on earth, nor have they any protectors besides God. They will be subjected to double punishment, for they could neither hear nor see.<sup>21</sup> It is such as these who have ruined their souls, and that which they fabricated shall fail them.<sup>22</sup> In the Hereafter, it is they who shall be the greatest losers.

<sup>23</sup> Those who have believed and done good deeds and humbled themselves before their Lord are destined for Paradise, and they will live in it forever.<sup>24</sup> These two groups are like the blind and the deaf as compared with those who can see and hear. Can the two be equal? Will you not then understand?<sup>a</sup>

<sup>25</sup> We sent Noah to his people. He said, 'I have come to you with a clear warning:<sup>26</sup> worship none but God. I fear lest punishment befall you on a woeful Day.'<sup>27</sup> The leaders of his people, who refused to

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<sup>a</sup> Faith, humility and righteous deeds—all three are different aspects of the same reality. Faith is the conscious discovery of God and His perfect attributes. Humility is the state of the heart which necessarily develops in man as a result of the discovery of God.

acknowledge the truth, said, ‘We regard you only as a human being like ourselves. We do not see that anyone follows you but the lowliest of us, those of immature judgement. We see no superior merit in you; in fact we believe you are a liar.’

<sup>28</sup> He said, ‘O my people, tell me: if I have clear evidence from my Lord and He has favoured me with grace from Himself, which you have been unable to recognize, can we force it on you against your will?

<sup>29</sup> O my people, I do not ask you for any money for this; my reward comes only from God. I will not drive away those who believe; they shall surely meet their Lord. Yet I see that you are a people who act out of ignorance.

<sup>30</sup> My people, who would support me against God if I were to drive them off? Will you not take heed? <sup>31</sup> I do not say to you that I possess God’s treasures, or that I have knowledge of the unseen, or that I am an angel. Nor do I say concerning those upon whom you look with contempt, that God will not bestow any good upon them—God knows best what is in their hearts. If I did, I would certainly be one of the wrongdoers.’

<sup>32</sup> ‘Noah,’ they replied, ‘you have argued with us, and argued to excess. Now bring down upon us what you threaten us with, if you speak the truth!’ <sup>33</sup> He said, ‘It is God who will bring it down upon you, if He wishes, and you will not be able to escape. <sup>34</sup> My advice will not benefit you, no matter how sincerely

I want to advise you, if God lets you go astray. He is your Lord and you will all return to Him.’

<sup>35</sup> If they say, ‘He has invented it himself,’ say to them, ‘If I have indeed invented this myself, then may I be punished for my sin; I am innocent of the crimes that you commit.’

<sup>36</sup> God’s will was revealed to Noah, ‘No more of your people will believe in you than those who already believe; do not grieve, therefore, over what they have been doing. <sup>37</sup> Build the Ark under Our eyes and in accordance with Our revelation. Do not plead with Me concerning the evil-doers. They shall certainly be drowned.’ <sup>38</sup> So he began to build the Ark, and whenever leaders of his people passed by, they scoffed at him. He said, ‘If you are scoffing at us, we shall scoff at you [and your ignorance], just as you scoff at us: <sup>39</sup> you will soon come to know who will receive a humiliating punishment, and find unleashed against him an everlasting punishment.’

<sup>40</sup> When Our command came, and water gushed forth in torrents, We said to Noah, ‘Take into the Ark a pair from every species, and your own family—except those on whom the sentence has already been passed, and all the true believers.’ But only a few believed along with him. <sup>41</sup> Noah said, ‘Embark on it. In the name of God, be its sailing and its anchoring. Truly, my Lord is forgiving and merciful.’ <sup>42</sup> The Ark sailed along with them through mountainous waves.

Noah called out to his son who stood apart, ‘O my son! Embark with us and do not be among the deniers!’<sup>43</sup> He replied, ‘I shall seek refuge on a mountain, which will save me from the water.’ Noah cried, ‘Today there is no refuge for anyone from God’s command except for those to whom He shows mercy!’ Thereupon, a wave swept in between them, and Noah’s son was among those who were drowned.<sup>44</sup> A voice cried out, ‘Earth, swallow up your waters. O sky, cease your rain.’ The waters receded. The command was fulfilled. The Ark came to rest on Mount Judi. It was said, ‘Away with the wrong-doing people.’

<sup>45</sup> Noah called out to his Lord, saying, ‘My Lord, my son was a part of my family. Your promise was surely true. You are the most just of all judges.’<sup>46</sup> God said, ‘Noah, he was not one of your family. For, indeed, he was unrighteous in his conduct. Do not question Me about something of which you have no knowledge; I admonish you lest you become like an ignorant man.’<sup>47</sup> He said, ‘My Lord, I take refuge with You from asking You something of which I have no knowledge. If You do not forgive me and show me mercy, I shall be one of the losers.’

<sup>48</sup> God said, ‘Noah, go ashore in peace; Our blessings upon you and upon the people who are with you and upon some of the descendants of those who are with you. [As for the unrighteous] We shall grant provision for a time, then a grievous punishment from Us shall

afflict them.’<sup>49</sup> These are tidings of the unseen that We reveal to you, [O Prophet], which you did not know before, nor did your people, so be patient: the future belongs to the God-fearing.

<sup>50</sup> To ‘Ad We sent their brother Hud. He said, ‘O my people, worship God alone; you have no god but Him. You do nothing but fabricate lies. <sup>51</sup> I ask of you nothing in return for this [Message]. My recompense is with Him who has created me. Why do you not use your reason? <sup>52</sup> My people, seek forgiveness of your Lord and turn to Him in repentance. He will send from the sky abundant rain upon you; He will add strength to your strength. Do not turn away from Him as evil-doers.’

<sup>53</sup> They replied, ‘Hud, you have not brought us any clear evidence and we shall not forsake our deities merely at your behest, nor will we believe in you. <sup>54</sup> We can only say that some of our gods have stricken you with evil.’ He said, ‘I call God to witness, and you also bear witness, that I disown those which you associate [with God] instead of Him. <sup>55</sup> So scheme against me, all of you together, and then grant me no respite. <sup>56</sup> I have put my trust in God, my Lord and your Lord. For there is no living creature which He does not hold by its forelock. My Lord is on the straight path.

<sup>57</sup> ‘If you turn away, I have conveyed to you the message with which I was sent. My Lord will make another people your successors and you cannot harm

Him in the least. For my Lord is guardian over all things.’<sup>58</sup> When Our command came, We delivered Hud and those who believed with him by Our special mercy. We saved them from a severe punishment.<sup>59</sup> Such were the ‘Ad who denied the signs of their Lord and disobeyed His messengers and followed the bidding of every headstrong enemy of truth.<sup>60</sup> They were pursued by a curse in this world as they will be on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, the ‘Ad denied their Lord. So away with the ‘Ad, the people of Hud!

<sup>61</sup> To the Thamud We sent their brother Salih. He said, ‘My people, worship God! You have no god but Him. It was He who brought you into being from the earth and settled you upon it and so ask His forgiveness. Turn to Him in repentance. My Lord is near and responsive.’<sup>62</sup> They said, ‘O Salih! We had great hopes in you. Do you forbid us to worship what our fathers worshipped? We are in grave doubt, amounting to suspicion, concerning that to which you call us.’

<sup>63</sup> He said, ‘O my people, tell me: if I have clear evidence from my Lord, and He has granted His mercy, who then will support me against God, if I disobey Him? You would only make my loss greater.

<sup>64</sup> My people! This she-camel of God is a sign for you. So leave her alone to graze on God’s earth. And do her no harm, lest you should be instantly afflicted with a torment.’<sup>65</sup> But they hamstrung her. He [Salih] said, ‘Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three more

days. This warning will not prove false.’<sup>66</sup> Then when Our command came by Our grace, We saved Salih and those who believed along with him from the disgrace of that day. Surely, your Lord is powerful and mighty.<sup>67</sup> The wrongdoers were overtaken by a dreadful blast and they lay dead in their homes,<sup>68</sup> as if they had never dwelt there. The Thamud denied their Lord; cursed are the tribe of Thamud.

<sup>69</sup> Our messengers came to Abraham with good news and greeted him with, ‘Peace.’ He too said, ‘Peace be on you,’ and hastened to bring a roasted calf.<sup>70</sup> But when he saw that they made no move to eat, he found this strange and became afraid of them. They said, ‘Do not be afraid, for we have been sent to the people of Lot.’<sup>71</sup> His wife, who was standing nearby, laughed when We gave her the good news of Isaac, and after Isaac, Jacob.<sup>72</sup> She said, ‘Alas! Shall I bear a child in this old age, while my husband here is also old? This is indeed a strange thing!’<sup>73</sup> They said, ‘Are you astonished at God’s command? May the mercy of God and His blessings be upon you, O people of this house. Surely, He is praiseworthy and glorious.’

<sup>74</sup> When the fear had left Abraham, and the glad tidings had been conveyed to him, he began to plead with Us for Lot’s people,<sup>75</sup> for Abraham was forbearing, tender-hearted and oft-returning to God.<sup>76</sup> We said, ‘Abraham, cease your pleading: the

command of your Lord has gone forth. There shall fall upon them a punishment which none can avert!’

<sup>77</sup> When Our messengers came to Lot, he was uneasy on this account and felt powerless to protect them. He said, ‘This is a dreadful day.’ <sup>78</sup> His people, who were used to committing foul deeds, came running to him. He said, ‘My people, here are my daughters. They are purer for you, [if you marry] so have some fear of God and do not disgrace me before my guests. Is there not a single right-minded man among you?’ <sup>79</sup> They replied, ‘You know we have no need of your daughters. You know very well what we are seeking.’

<sup>80</sup> He said, ‘If only I had the strength to stop you or could take refuge in some powerful support!’ <sup>81</sup> They said, ‘Lot, we are your Lord’s messengers. By no means shall they reach you! So depart with your family while it is yet night and let none of you look back. But your wife will suffer the fate that befalls the others. Their appointed time is the morning: is the morning not near?’ <sup>82</sup> When Our command came, We turned that town upside down and We rained upon it stones of clay, layer upon layer, <sup>83</sup> marked for them by the decree of your Lord. The punishment of the unjust was not far off.

<sup>84</sup> To the people of Midian, We sent their brother Shu‘ayb. He said, ‘My people, worship God. You have no deity other than Him. Do not give short measure



and short weight. I see you are prospering. I fear for you the punishment of a fateful Day. <sup>85</sup> O my people, [always] give full measure and weight, in all fairness and do not defraud people by making short delivery, and do not spread corruption in the land. <sup>86</sup> What God leaves with you is the best for you, if you are believers. I have not been appointed as your keeper.’

<sup>87</sup> They said, ‘Shu‘ayb, does your prayer tell you that we should abandon what our forefathers worshipped and that we should stop disposing of our belongings as we please? You are indeed the only wise and rightly-guided man!’

<sup>88</sup> [Shu‘ayb] said, ‘O my people! What do you think? If I have clear evidence from my Lord, and He has sustained me with fair sustenance from Himself [should I not guide you?]. I have no desire to do, out of opposition to you, what I am asking you not to do. I only want to reform you as far as I can. Nor can I succeed without God’s help. In Him I have put my trust and to Him I turn. <sup>89</sup> O my people, do not let your opposition to me bring upon you a fate similar to the peoples of Noah or Hud or Salih; nor is it long since the people of Lot were punished! <sup>90</sup> Seek forgiveness of your Lord and turn to Him in repentance. For my Lord is indeed merciful and loving.’

<sup>91</sup> They replied, ‘Shu‘ayb, we do not understand much of what you say. In fact, we see that you are powerless among us. Were it not for your clan, we

would have stoned you, for you are not strong against us.’<sup>92</sup> He said, ‘My people, is my tribe mightier to you than God? You put Him behind you, turning your backs on Him! Surely, my Lord encompasses all that you do.’<sup>93</sup> My people, do what you will and so shall I. You will certainly come to know who will receive a punishment to disgrace him, and who is a liar. Wait on; I shall wait on with you.’

<sup>94</sup> When Our command came, We saved Shu‘ayb and those who believed with him as a mercy from Ourselves, while the blast overtook the wrongdoers, so that they lay dead in their homes,<sup>95</sup> as though they had never dwelt therein. Oh, away with the people of Midian, just as happened with the Thamud!

<sup>96</sup> We sent forth Moses with Our signs and with manifest authority,<sup>97</sup> to Pharaoh and his nobles. But they followed the command of Pharaoh and the command of Pharaoh was not rightly directed.<sup>98</sup> He shall stand at the head of his people on the Day of Resurrection, and shall lead them into the Fire. Evil is the place to which they shall be led.<sup>99</sup> A curse followed them in this world, and shall follow them on the Day of Resurrection. What a foul gift to be given!

<sup>100</sup> We relate to you such accounts of earlier towns: some of them are still standing; while others have ceased to exist;<sup>101</sup> We did not wrong them; they wronged themselves; the deities they called on besides

God availed them nothing: when God's command came upon them, they only added to their ruin.

<sup>102</sup> Such is the punishment of your Lord when He seizes the towns in the midst of their sins: His punishing grip is terrible and severe. <sup>103</sup> In that is a sign for him who fears the punishment of the Hereafter. That is a Day for which mankind shall be gathered together, a Day when all will be present. <sup>104</sup> We will only postpone it until a predetermined time, <sup>105</sup> and when that Day arrives, no soul shall speak but by His leave. Among those some shall be damned, and others shall be blessed.

<sup>106</sup> The wretched ones will be in the Fire sighing and groaning, <sup>107</sup> remaining in it timelessly, for ever, as long as the heavens and earth endure, except as your Lord wills. Your Lord carries out whatever He wills. <sup>108</sup> Those who are blessed shall abide in the Garden; they will dwell therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord wills. Such bounty shall be unending. <sup>109</sup> Have no doubt as to what they worship. They worship nothing but what their fathers worshipped before [them]. We shall certainly give them their share in full, without diminishing anything.

<sup>110</sup> We certainly gave the Book to Moses, but differences arose about it: had it not been that a word had gone forth before from your Lord, Judgement would indeed have been passed on them: yet they are in grave doubt about it. <sup>111</sup> Your Lord will reward each

one of them in full for their deeds. He is well-aware of all their actions.

<sup>112</sup> Therefore stand firm [in the straight path] as you are commanded, along with those who have turned to God with you, and do not exceed the bounds, for He sees everything you do. <sup>113</sup> Do not incline toward those who do wrong, lest the Fire touch you. For [then] you would have none to protect you from God, and you will not be helped. <sup>114</sup> Say your prayers morning and evening, and during parts of the night; surely good makes amends for evil. This is a reminder for people who pay heed. <sup>115</sup> Be steadfast; for surely, God does not let the wages of the righteous be wasted.

<sup>116</sup> Why, then, were there not among the generations before you upright men who would speak out against the [spread of] corruption on earth—except for the few whom We saved? But the wrongdoers pursued their worldly pleasures and thus became guilty. <sup>117</sup> Your Lord would never unjustly destroy communities while their people were trying to reform.

<sup>118</sup> If your Lord had wished, He would have made mankind into one community. As it is, they will not cease to dispute,—<sup>119</sup> and to this end He has created them [all], except for those to whom your Lord has shown mercy. The word of your Lord shall be fulfilled, ‘I will fill Hell with jinn and men all together.’

<sup>120</sup> We have told you the stories of the prophets to make your heart firm and in these accounts truth has

come to you, with an exhortation and a reminder for the believers. <sup>121</sup> Say to those who do not believe, ‘You do things in your way and we are doing things in our way, <sup>122</sup> and wait, we too are waiting.’ <sup>123</sup> The knowledge of the secret of the heavens and the earth belongs to God alone, and to Him shall all affairs be referred. So worship Him and put your trust in Him alone. Your Lord is not unaware of what you do.

## 12. JOSEPH (*YUSUF*)

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

<sup>1</sup> *Alif Lam Ra*

These are verses from the clear Book. <sup>2</sup> We have sent down the Quran in Arabic, so that you may understand. <sup>3</sup> We recount to you the best of narratives in revealing this Quran to you, even though you were unaware of it before it came.

<sup>4</sup> When Joseph told his father, ‘My father, I dreamt of eleven stars, and the sun and moon: I saw them prostrate themselves before me,’ <sup>5</sup> he replied, ‘My son, do not relate your dream to your brothers, lest they plot evil against you—Satan is the sworn enemy of man. <sup>6</sup> You shall be chosen by your Lord and He will impart

to you some understanding of the inner meaning of events. He will bestow the full measure of His blessings upon you and upon the House of Jacob—even as He formerly bestowed it in full measure upon your forefathers, Abraham and Isaac. Truly, your Sustainer is all-knowing and wise!’

<sup>7</sup> Surely, in Joseph and his brothers there are signs for the inquirers. <sup>8</sup> They said [to each other], ‘Surely Joseph and his brother [Benjamin] are dearer to our father than ourselves, although we are a band. Truly, our father is clearly mistaken. <sup>9</sup> Therefore, let us put Joseph to death or cast him away to some [far-off] land, so that our father’s attention should turn only to us, and you can thereafter become a righteous people.’

<sup>10</sup> One of them said, ‘Do not kill Joseph, but if you must do something, cast him into the bottom of a well; some of the travellers will pick him up.’

<sup>11</sup> They said to their father, ‘Why do you not trust us with Joseph? We are indeed his well-wishers.

<sup>12</sup> Send him with us tomorrow, so that he may play and enjoy himself. We will look after him.’ <sup>13</sup> [Jacob] said, ‘It would indeed grieve me if you took him away with you, and I fear lest the wolf should devour him while you are off your guard.’ <sup>14</sup> They said, ‘Surely, if the wolf devoured him while we were a strong party, we should indeed be great losers.’

<sup>15</sup> And so, when they went away with him, they decided to cast him into the dark depths of a well. Then

We revealed to him Our will, ‘You shall [one day] tell them of this deed of theirs, when they do not realize who you are.’<sup>16</sup> And at nightfall they came to their father, weeping.<sup>17</sup> They said, ‘Father, we went off racing and left Joseph with our belongings, and the wolf devoured him. But you will not believe us, even though we are telling the truth.’<sup>18</sup> And they showed him their brother’s shirt, stained with false blood. ‘No!’ he cried. ‘Your souls have tempted you to do something evil! But it is best to be patient: God alone can help me bear the loss you speak of.’

<sup>19</sup> And there came a caravan of travellers and they sent their water-drawer to draw water from the well. He let down his bucket into the well and he exclaimed, ‘Oh, what a lucky find, here is a boy!’ They hid him like a piece of merchandise, but God knew well what they did.<sup>20</sup> Later they sold him for a paltry sum, a few pieces of silver [*dirhams*]: So little did they value him.

<sup>21</sup> The Egyptian who bought him said to his wife, ‘Lodge him honourably, he may prove of benefit to us, or we may even adopt him as our son.’ Thus We established Joseph in the land, so that We might teach him the true meaning of events. God has power over all things. However, most people do not know this.

<sup>22</sup> And when he reached maturity, We bestowed on him right judgement and knowledge. Thus We reward those who do good.

<sup>23</sup> However, the woman in whose house he lived,

wanted to seduce him. One day she bolted the doors and said, ‘Come!’ He replied, ‘God forbid! Truly [your husband] is my master and has treated me honourably. Wrongdoers certainly never prosper.’<sup>24</sup> She started towards him, and he would have succumbed to her, if he had not seen a sign from his Lord—We did this in order to keep evil and indecency away from him, for he was truly one of Our chosen servants.

<sup>25</sup> They both ran to the door and, in the struggle, she tore his shirt at the back. They found her husband at the door. She cried, ‘Shall not the man who wished to violate your wife be thrown into prison or sternly punished?’<sup>26</sup> Joseph said, ‘It was she who sought to seduce me.’ One of her household testified, ‘If his shirt is torn at the front then she is speaking the truth, and he is lying.<sup>27</sup> But if it is torn from behind then she is lying, and he speaks the truth.’<sup>28</sup> So when he saw his shirt torn from behind [her husband] said, ‘This is the guile of you women. Your guile is great indeed.<sup>29</sup> Joseph, overlook this: but you [wife], ask forgiveness for your sin, for you have done wrong.’

<sup>30</sup> Women in the town began to gossip, ‘The nobleman’s wife is trying to seduce her slave! Love for him consumes her heart! Indeed! We see her in manifest error.’<sup>31</sup> When she heard of their intrigues, she sent for them and prepared a party for them. She gave a knife to each of them [to cut fruits, etc.] and



then asked Joseph to appear before them. When the women saw him, they were greatly amazed [at his beauty], and they cut their hands, exclaiming, ‘God preserve us! This is no human being but a noble angel!’<sup>32</sup> She said, ‘This is he about whom you have been blaming me! And, indeed, I did try to make him yield to me, but he was unyielding. Now, however, if he does not do as I bid him, he shall certainly be put in prison and be humiliated.’<sup>33</sup> Joseph said, ‘O my Lord! I would prefer prison to what these women are inviting me to do. And if You do not avert their guile from me, I may yield to them and so become one of the ignorant.’<sup>34</sup> So his Lord answered him and warded off their guile. He is All Hearing and All Knowing.

<sup>35</sup> Yet, even after all the evidence they had seen, they thought it right to jail him for a time.<sup>36</sup> Two young men entered the prison along with him. One of them said, ‘I saw myself [in a dream] I was pressing wine.’ The other said, ‘I dreamed I was carrying bread on my head from which the birds were eating. Tell us their meaning; for we see that you are one who does good [to all].’

<sup>37</sup> Joseph said to them, ‘I shall inform you of the interpretation of your dreams before your meal is brought to you. This is a part of the knowledge that my Lord has taught me. I have renounced the religion of the people who do not believe in God and who deny the Hereafter.’<sup>38</sup> I follow the religion of my fathers,

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and it is not for us to associate anyone with God as a partner. This is of God's grace upon us and upon mankind; even though most men are not grateful. <sup>39</sup> O my two fellow-prisoners! Are many diverse lords better, or God, the One, the Almighty? <sup>40</sup> All those you worship instead of Him are mere names you and your forefathers have invented, names for which God has sent down no authority: all power belongs to God alone, and He orders you to worship none but Him: this is the true faith, though most people do not realize it.

<sup>41</sup> O my two fellow-prisoners, one of you will serve wine to his lord, the other of you will be crucified and birds will feed off his head. The matter about which you have been seeking my opinion has been so decreed.' <sup>42</sup> He said to the one he thought would be saved, 'Mention me to your master.' However Satan made him forget to mention him to his master, and so Joseph remained in prison for a number of years.

<sup>43</sup> The king said, 'I saw [in a dream] seven fat cows which seven lean ones were eating, also seven green ears of corn and seven others which were dry. Tell me the meaning of this vision, my nobles, if you can interpret visions.' <sup>44</sup> They said, 'These are confusing dreams and we do not know the interpretation of such dreams.' <sup>45</sup> Then one of the two men who had been released and who, after a long time, remembered, said,

‘I shall tell you its interpretation; therefore, give me leave to go [to Joseph in prison].’

<sup>46</sup> ‘O truthful Joseph!’ he said, ‘Tell us the meaning of a dream in which seven fat cows are being eaten by seven lean ones, and there are seven green ears of corn and seven others which are dry, so that I may return to my people and inform them.’ <sup>47</sup> Joseph said, ‘You shall sow for seven consecutive years as usual, but leave in the ear the harvest that you reap, except for a little which you may eat. <sup>48</sup> Then there will follow seven years of great hardship which will consume all but a little of what you stored. <sup>49</sup> Then a year will come after that when people will have abundant rain and when once more they will press [wine and oil].’

<sup>50</sup> The king said, ‘Bring him to me.’ When the king’s messenger came to Joseph, he said, ‘Go back to your master and ask him about the women who cut their hands: my Lord knows well their guile.’ <sup>51</sup> The king asked the women, ‘What was the truth of the affair in which you tried to seduce Joseph?’ The women said, ‘God forbid! We know no evil of him.’ The wife of the nobleman said, ‘The truth has now come to light. It was I who tried to seduce him; he is surely an honest man.’

<sup>52</sup> ‘From this,’ said Joseph, ‘[The nobleman] should know that I did not betray him in his absence, and that God does not guide the plotting of the treacherous. <sup>53</sup> I am not trying to absolve myself: for man’s very soul

incites him to evil unless my Lord bestows His mercy. Indeed, my Lord is forgiving and merciful.’

<sup>54</sup> The king said, ‘Bring him to me. I will take him for my special service.’ And when he had spoken to him, he said, ‘From now on you will dwell with us, honoured and trusted.’ <sup>55</sup> Joseph said, ‘Place in my charge the storehouses of the land; for I am a good and knowledgeable custodian.’ <sup>56</sup> Thus We caused Joseph to be established in a position of authority in the land. He could dwell therein wherever he pleased. We bestow Our mercy on whomever We please, and We do not allow the reward of the righteous to go to waste. <sup>57</sup> Yet the reward of the hereafter is best for those who believe and are mindful of God.

<sup>58</sup> Joseph’s brothers arrived and presented themselves before him. He recognized them, but they did not know him. <sup>59</sup> When he had made provision for them, he told them, ‘Bring me your brother on your father’s side. Do you not see that I give you full measure and that I am the best of hosts?’ <sup>60</sup> But if you do not bring him to me, you shall have no grain from me, nor shall you ever approach me again.’ <sup>61</sup> They replied, ‘We shall try to persuade his father to send him with us. We shall do [our utmost]!’

<sup>62</sup> Joseph said to his servants, ‘Put their money back into their saddlebags, so that they will recognize it when they return home to their family; thus they may come back.’ <sup>63</sup> When they returned to their father, they

said, 'Our father, any [further] measure of grain has been denied us, so send our brother [Benjamin] along with us, so that we may obtain our measure [of grain]; and, we shall guard him well.' <sup>64</sup> He replied, 'Am I to trust you with him as I once trusted you with his brother? But God is the best of guardians, the Most Merciful of all.'

<sup>65</sup> When they opened their packs, they discovered that their money had been returned to them. They said, 'Our father, what more do we desire than this? This money of ours has been returned to us, so we shall [again] buy food for our family and we shall guard our brother, and we shall obtain an additional camel-load of grain. This [that we bring now] is a small quantity.' <sup>66</sup> He [Jacob] said, 'I will never send him with you until you give me a solemn pledge, before God, that you will indeed bring him back to me, unless you yourselves are trapped [in a compulsive situation].' And when they had given him their solemn pledge, [Jacob] said, 'God shall be witness to all that we say.'

<sup>67</sup> 'O my sons! Do not all of you enter [the city] by one gate; enter by separate gates. I cannot help you in any way against God; judgement is His alone. In Him I have put my trust. In Him let the faithful put their trust.' <sup>68</sup> They entered [safely] as their father had told them. However, he had no power to guard them against God's decree. It was only a wish in Jacob's soul which he had thus fulfilled. He was possessed of

knowledge which We had given him. But most people have no knowledge.

<sup>69</sup> When they presented themselves before Joseph, he took his brother [Benjamin] aside. He said, ‘I am your brother, so do not feel distressed about whatever they have been doing.’ <sup>70</sup> And when he had given them their provisions, he placed a drinking-cup in his brother’s pack. Then a crier called out after them, ‘Men of the caravan! You have committed theft!’ <sup>71</sup> They said, turning towards him, ‘What is it that you have lost?’ <sup>72</sup> ‘We miss the royal measuring bowl,’ he replied. ‘He who brings it shall have a camel-load of corn. I pledge my word for it.’ <sup>73</sup> They said, ‘By God, you [ought to] know we have not come here to cause any trouble in the land. We are not thieves!’ <sup>74</sup> The Egyptians asked them, ‘And if we find that you are lying, what penalty shall we mete out to you?’ <sup>75</sup> They replied, ‘The penalty should be that he in whose saddlebag it is found, should be held [as bondman] to atone for the crime. That is how we punish the wrongdoers.’ <sup>76</sup> He [the herald] searched their bags before his brother’s and then took out the cup from his brother’s bag. In this way, We devised a plan on behalf of Joseph. He could not have detained his brother under the King’s law, unless God so willed. We exalt whoever We please: but above those who have knowledge there is One all knowing.

<sup>77</sup> They said, ‘If he is a thief, a brother of his had [also] committed theft before him.’ But Joseph kept his secret and revealed nothing to them. He said [to himself], ‘Your deed was worse. God best knows the things you speak of.’ <sup>78</sup> They said, ‘O exalted one, he has a very aged father, take one of us in his place. We can see that you are a very good man.’ <sup>79</sup> He replied, ‘God forbid that we should take anyone other than the person on whom we found our property. In that case, we would clearly be wrongdoers.’

<sup>80</sup> When they had lost all hope of [persuading] him, they withdrew, conferring among themselves. The eldest said, ‘Do you not know that your father took from you a pledge in God’s name. You have already failed with regard to Joseph, so I shall never leave the land until my father permits me to, or God decides [things] for me. He is the best judge!’ <sup>81</sup> Return to your father and say, ‘Father, your son has committed a theft. We testify only to what we know. How could we guard against the unforeseen?’ <sup>82</sup> Inquire of [the people of] the city where we lodged, and of the caravan with which we travelled. We are telling you the truth.’”

<sup>83</sup> Jacob said, ‘No, but you have yourselves contrived a story. But it is best to be patient. God may well bring them all back to me [in the end]. For He is indeed full of knowledge and wisdom.’ <sup>84</sup> And he turned away from them, crying, ‘Alas for Joseph!’ His eyes went white with grief, and he was filled with sorrow.

<sup>85</sup> They said, ‘By God, will you keep on remembering Joseph until your health is ruined, and you die?’ <sup>86</sup> He said ‘I only complain of my anguish and my sorrow to God. God has made known to me things that you do not know. <sup>87</sup> Go, my sons, and seek news of Joseph and his brother. Do not despair of God’s mercy; none but those who deny the truth despair of God’s mercy.’

<sup>88</sup> When his brothers presented themselves before Joseph, they pleaded, ‘Exalted one, distress has afflicted us and our family and we have brought only a paltry sum; but give us full measure. Be charitable to us. Truly, God rewards the charitable.’ <sup>89</sup> He said, ‘Are you aware of what you did to Joseph and his brother in ignorance?’ <sup>90</sup> They exclaimed, ‘Are you indeed Joseph?’ He replied, ‘I am Joseph and this is my brother. God has indeed been gracious to us. The truth is that God does not waste the reward of those who do good, who are righteous and steadfast.’

<sup>91</sup> [The brothers] said, ‘By God! Most certainly God has raised you high above us, and we have indeed been guilty!’ <sup>92</sup> He said, ‘No blame [shall fall] on you this day; may God forgive you! And He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy. <sup>93</sup> Go with this shirt of mine and cast it upon my father’s face. He will recover his sight; thereupon come [back] to me with all your family.’

<sup>94</sup> When the caravan set out from Egypt, their father [in Canaan] said, ‘You may think I am senile, but I certainly perceive the breath of Joseph.’ <sup>95</sup> They said,



‘By God, you still persist in your illusions!’<sup>96</sup> But when the bearer of the good news arrived and cast the shirt on Jacob’s face, his eyesight returned and he said, ‘Did I not tell you that I know from God what you do not know?’<sup>97</sup> They said, ‘O our father! Ask forgiveness for our sins—we were truly in the wrong.’<sup>98</sup> He said, ‘I shall certainly ask my Lord to forgive you. Surely, He is the Most Forgiving and Merciful.’

<sup>99</sup> Then, when they presented themselves before Joseph, he drew his parents to him and said, ‘Welcome to Egypt, in safety, if God wills!’<sup>100</sup> He helped his parents to a couch and they all fell down on their knees before him. He said, ‘My father, this is the interpretation of my dream. My Lord has made it come true! He was kind to me when He let me out of prison and brought you from the desert after Satan had brought about discord between me and my brethren. My Lord is the best planner in achieving what He will; He is All Knowing, and Truly Wise.’

<sup>101</sup> Then Joseph prayed, ‘My Lord, You have given me power and taught me the interpretation of dreams. Creator of the heavens and the earth, You are my patron in this world and the Hereafter! Make me die in submission to You and admit me among the righteous.’

<sup>102</sup> These are tidings of the unseen that We reveal to you, [O Prophet], though you were not present with them when they plotted and agreed upon a plan.<sup>103</sup> Yet most men will not become believers, no matter how

eager you may be. <sup>104</sup> You shall not ask them for any reward for this. It is but a reminder for all mankind.

<sup>105</sup> And there are many signs in the heavens and the earth that they pass by and give no heed to—<sup>106</sup> and most of them, even when they profess belief in God, attribute partners to Him. <sup>107</sup> Do they feel secure that the all-encompassing punishment of God will not come upon them, or that the Last Hour will not come upon them suddenly when they least expect it? <sup>108</sup> Say, ‘This is my way; on the basis of sure knowledge, I call on you to have faith in God, I and those who follow me. God is Holy; I am not one of those who associate partners with God.’

<sup>109</sup> All the messengers We sent before you [Muhammad] were human beings to whom We made revelations; they were men chosen from the people of their towns. Did they not travel across the earth and see the end of those before them? Those who are mindful of God prefer the life to come. Will you not then understand? <sup>110</sup> When the messengers lost all hopes and thought that they had been told lies, Our help came to them: We saved whoever We pleased, but Our punishment will not be averted from the guilty.

<sup>111</sup> In their stories there is a lesson for men of understanding. This [Quran] is no invented tale, but a confirmation of the previous [scripture] and a detailed explanation of all things as well as guidance and mercy to true believers.