

with her twelve thousand chiefs, commanding an army of hundred thousand men each.<sup>1</sup> Allah Ta'ālā had graced Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام with such awe and majesty that no one had the courage to speak before him. One day he saw a cloud of dust at some distance. So he asked from those who were present as to what that was. His people answered 'O messenger of Allah! Queen Bilqīs is coming with her people'. Some narrations relate that at that time she was about three miles from the court of Sulaimān عليه السلام. At that moment Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام turned to his courtiers and asked them:

قَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْا أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ

He said, "O chieftains, which one of you will bring her throne to me before they come to me submissively?" 27:38.

Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام was already informed that Bilqīs was coming to him to submit after having been impressed by his invitation. So he decided that, apart from royal grandeur, she should also witness a prophetic miracle, which should help her convert to faith. Allah Ta'ālā had bestowed the miracle of control of *jinn*s to Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام. After receiving the cue from Allah Ta'ālā, he fancied to have Bilqīs's throne brought to his court even before her arrival. So he commanded the jinni, who was also present in his court, to bring her throne. Selection of throne was presumably made on the basis that it was the most secured object of her treasure, which was kept in the impregnable inner most hall of the seven castles, one within the other, properly secured under lock. So much so that her own people could not reach there. Shifting of such a huge and secured object without breaking the lock or door to a place so far away from where it was placed, could not have been possible without the help and will of Allah Ta'ālā. This was an ideal way to make her see and realize the unlimited power and control of Allah. At the same time it was also intended to make her realize that the high position and status of

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1. The learned author has already mentioned that no authentic record is available on the details of this story. However there are some details found in the Israelite traditions some of which are reproduced here. This huge number of the army of Bilqīs is also taken from those traditions; otherwise, the number given is highly exaggerated on the face of it, and 'Allāmah 'Alūsī has opined that the tradition giving such a huge number of the army seems to be a lie.

Sulaimān عليه السلام was actually bestowed by Allah Ta'ālā, which had enabled him to perform such super-human things. (Ibn Jarīr)

قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ (before they come to me submissively - 27:38). The word مُسْلِمِينَ (*muslimīn*) is the plural of Muslim, the literal meaning of which is obedient or submissive. In conventional expression, 'Muslim' is equivalent of 'believer'. According to Sayyidnā ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, here *Muslimīn* is used in its literal meaning, that is, obedient or submissive. It is so because it was not established at that time that Queen Bilqīs had converted to Islam. She actually converted to Islam after talking to Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام, as is evident from the verses to follow now.

قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ (Said the one who had the knowledge of the book - 27:40). The question is as to who was this person? One possibility is that he was Sulaimān عليه السلام himself, because his knowledge of the book of Allah was most extensive. In that case this incident happened as a miracle. The objective was also that Bilqīs should have an experience of the prophetic miracle, so that no doubt was left in her mind. But Ibn Jarīr has reported from many commentators of the Qur'an, like Qatādah, that he was a person from the companions of Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام. Qurtubī has declared it to be the view of the majority. Ibn Ishaque has mentioned his name as 'Āṣif Ibn Barkhiyā, and has opined that he was a friend of Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام. Some other narrations say that a cousin of Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام had the knowledge of Al-Ism ul-A'zam, (a particular name of Allah Almighty) the speciality of which is that whatever blessing is invoked from Allah Ta'ālā by reciting this name, it is accepted, and anything requested is delivered from Him. It does not prove that Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام did not have the knowledge of Al-Ism-ul-A'zam. Rather it is quite likely that he considered it prudent to have the manifestation of the miracle by one of his people, which should have deeper impression on Bilqīs. Therefore, instead of performing the miracle himself, he addressed his people in the above manner. (كذا في) (فصوص الحكم) In such a situation, this incident was a Karāmah, which was performed by 'Āṣif Ibn Barkhiyā.

### Difference between miracle and Karāmah

Miracles take place without any involvement of natural phenomena by the exclusive act and will of Allah Ta'ālā. It is clearly defined in the Qur'an itself وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَى (You did not throw when you threw

but Allah did throw - 8:17). Likewise, there is no involvement of natural phenomena in the happening of Karāmah. They take place exclusively with the act and will of Allah Ta'ālā. This should also be understood that miracles and Karāmah do not take place with the wish or control of the person performing them, but only by the will and act of Allah Ta'ālā. The only difference between the two is that if such an unusual act is demonstrated through a prophet, it is known as a miracle; and if it is demonstrated through someone who is not a prophet, it is called Karāmah. In this particular incident if it is correct that 'Āṣif Ibn Barkhiyā, who was a companion of Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام, performed it, then it will be called his Karāmah. The unusual acts performed by saints are in fact the reflection of the perfections of their prophets, which in turn are deemed to be the miracles of their prophet.

### **The incident of the throne of Bilqīs was a Karāmah or a Taṣarruf**

Shaikh Muḥiyyuddīn ibn al-'Arabī has declared it as a Taṣarruf of 'Āṣif ibn Barkhiyā. In the general use of the term, Taṣarruf means to captivate the audience by the power of sight and mind, for which it is not necessary for the person performing it that he is a prophet or saint or even a Muslim. It is something like mesmerism or hypnotism. The saints have used this power occasionally for reforming and training of their disciples also. Ibn al-'Arabī has explained that since prophets avoid using Taṣarruf, therefore Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام got this job done by 'Āṣif ibn Barkhiyā. But the Qur'an has declared it the result of عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ (The knowledge of the book - 27:40). In the light of the wordings of the Qur'an, it seems preferable that it was an outcome of some prayer or of Al-Ism ul-A'ẓam which falls within the purview of Karāmah, and has nothing to do with Taṣarruf.

The assertion أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ (I will bring it to you before your glance returns to you - 27:40) may create confusion, because it gives the impression that this act was carried out with intent and control. That being so, it is a sign of Taṣarruf, because Karāmah is not under the control of a saint. The answer to this doubt is that presumably Allah Ta'ālā had already given the signal that if there would be a desire for that, He would fulfill it in no time.

This explanation is taken from the commentary 'Aḥkam ul Qur'an' by Sayyidī Ḥakīm ul Ummah Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanawī, on Sūrah

An-Naml. Apart from that, he has also written a pamphlet on Taṣarruf in Arabic under the title 'At-Taṣarruf', which I have translated in Urdu and has been published separately.

### Verses 42 - 44

فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكَ ۖ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ ۗ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ  
 مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ  
 اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ ۗ  
 فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ سَاقَيْهَا ۗ قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ  
 مِّنْ قَوَارِيرَ ۗ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ  
 لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

So when she came, it was said (to her), "Is your throne like this?" She said, "It seems to be the same, and knowledge (of truth) was given to us even before this and we have already submitted." [42] And she was prevented (from submitting before) by that which she used to worship instead of Allah. Indeed she was from a disbelieving people. [43] It was said to her, "Enter the palace." Then once she saw it, she thought it to be flowing water and uncovered her legs. He (Sulaimān) said, "This is a palace made of glasses." She said, "My Lord, I had surely wronged myself, and now I submit, alongwith Sulaimān, to Allah, the Lord of the worlds."

[44]

### Commentary

#### Did Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام marry Bilqīs?

The story of Bilqīs has ended in the above verses on the statement that she converted to Islam after coming to Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام. What happened after that? The Qur'an is silent on this. It is for this reason that when someone asked 'Abdullāh ibn 'Uyaynah whether Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام had married Bilqīs, he answered that her case has finished on this أَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (I submit, alongwith Sulaimān, to Allah, the Lord of the worlds - 44). The idea behind this

answer was that when Qur'ān has not divulged anything after that, it is not for us to probe any further. But Ibn 'Asākir has reported on the authority of Sayyidnā 'Ikrimah رضي الله عنه that Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام had married Bilqīs after that, and she was retained as the sovereign of her country. She was then sent back to Yemen, and Sayyidnā Sulaimān عليه السلام, used to visit her every month for three days. He got three palaces made for her in Yemen, which had no parallel of their kind. (Only God knows best)

## Verses 45 - 53

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَيْنِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَوْمَ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ ۗ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوا اطَّيَّرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَنْ مَعَكَ ۗ قَالَ طَّيَّرَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَكَانَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قَالُوا تَقَاسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ، ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا وَمَكَرْنَا مَكْرًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ ۗ أَنَا ذَا ذَمَّرْنَاهُمْ وَقَوْمُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَتِلْكَ بُيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِيَةٌ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَانجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

And We sent to Thamūd their brother Ṣāliḥ saying (to them), "Worship Allah". Then suddenly they became two groups quarrelling with each other. [45] He said, "O my people, why do you seek evil to come sooner before good? Why do you not seek forgiveness from Allah, so that you are treated with mercy?" [46] They said, "We regard you and those with you as a sign of bad omen." He said, "Your omen is with Allah, but you are a people

put to a test." [47]

And there were nine persons in the city who used to make mischief on the earth and did not put things right. [48] They said, "Let us swear a mutual oath by Allah that we shall attack him (Ṣāliḥ) and his family at night, then will say to his heir, 'We did not witness the destruction of his family and we are really truthful.'" [49] And (thus) they devised a plan and We devised a plan, while they were not aware. [50] So look how was the fate of their plan, that We annihilated them and their people altogether. [51] Now those are their houses, lying empty because of the transgression they committed. Surely, in this there are signs for a people who have knowledge. [52] And We saved those who believed and who used to be God-fearing. [53]

### Commentary

لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ (why do you seek evil to come sooner before good? - 27:46). Sayyidnā Ṣāliḥ عليه السلام is referring here to the demand of the infidels that he should bring the divine torment to them in this world, so that they may know his truthfulness. Therefore, "evil" in this sentence stands for torment, while "good" refers to their repentance and invoking divine mercy. It, therefore means, "Why are you asking me to bring the divine punishment before you repent?"

تِسْعَةَ رَهْطٍ (nine persons - 27:48). The word رَهْطٍ (Raḥṭ) is used for a group. Here each of the nine persons is called Raḥṭ presumably because they were regarded superior among their clan for having wealth and dignity. Each one of them had his own separate group of people, hence they are called nine groups. They were known as the chiefs of *Hijr*, which was a city of the people of Ṣāliḥ عليه السلام. *Hijr* was a well-known city of Syria.

لَنَبِيَّتِنَا وَأَهْلِهِ، ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ

We shall attack him (Saliḥ) and his family at night, then will say to his heir, We did not witness the destruction of his family and we are really truthful - 27:49.

The plan was that all of them together should attack him and his companions in the darkness of night, and kill them all. And when the claimant of the blood would make the claim, they would say that they did

not kill him, and also they did not know who had killed him. In saying so they would have uttered the truth because no one could have known who had killed whom in the darkness of the night.

The point to note here is that all the acts of infidelity, disbelief, killing and pillage were being performed by the infidels, rather than those among them who were hardened criminals. Yet they were careful that they don't speak a lie or get blamed for falsehood. This shows how great the sin of falsehood is, that even the perpetrators of heinous crimes avoid it for the sake of their self-respect.

The other thing worth noting in this verse is that the one whom these infidels had mentioned as the Walī or heir of Sayyidnā Ṣāliḥ عليه السلام was a man of his own family. So, why did they leave him out from being assassinated? The answer to this question is that he might have been the successor from the lineage point of view, but otherwise he could be an infidel and be a party with the infidels. There could have been the consideration that he might claim the compensation for the blood of Sayyidnā Ṣāliḥ عليه السلام because of his relationship with him. The other possibility is that he might have been a Muslim but enjoyed a prominent position and hence there could have been the risk of uprising and reprisal among the people. Only Allah knows best.

### Verses 54 - 59

وَلَوْطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ أَيْنَكُمْ  
لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۗ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ  
﴿٥٥﴾ فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِّنْ  
قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَّتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَانجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلاَّ أُمَّرَأَتَهُ  
قَدَرْنَاهَا مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا ۚ فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ  
الْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ ۗ  
أَللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

And (We sent) Lūṭ when he said to his people, "Do you

commit the shameful act while you can see (its shamelessness)? [54] Is it that you really come to men lustfully instead of women? No, you are a people committing acts of ignorance." [55] So, the answer of his people was not but that they said, "Expel the family of Lūṭ from your town. They are a people who over-indulge in purity." [56] So We saved him and his family, except his wife. We destined her to remain among those who stayed behind. [57] And We rained on them a rain. So evil was the rain of those who were warned. [58]

Say, "Praise belongs to Allah, and peace be on those of His slaves whom He has chosen." Is Allah better or that which they associate (with Him as His partners)? [59]

### Commentary

This incident has been related at many places in the Qur'ān, especially in Sūrah Al-A'rāf, where its necessary details have been discussed and may be consulted if required.

قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ (Say, "Praise belongs to Allah - 27:59). After describing some events of the prophets and earlier people, and the episodes of torments they faced, this sentence is addressed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that he should express his gratitude to Allah Ta'ālā, for his followers have been exempted from the punishment in this world. He ﷺ is further asked to say *salām* to the earlier prophets and God-fearing persons. Majority of the commentators have adopted this explanation, but some feel that this sentence is also addressed to Sayyidnā Lūṭ عليه السلام.

It appears that the expression الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَى (His slaves whom He has chosen - 27:59) is used in this verse for the prophets, like in another verse *salām* has been addressed to the prophets, وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ (And *salām* is on the messengers - 37:181). But Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās عليه السلام is of the opinion that it refers to the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This explanation is also adopted by Sufyān Ath-Thaurī. (Ibn Jarīr)

If the explanation of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās عليه السلام is adopted and the meaning of الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَى - 27:59 is taken for the companions, then there will be a case for saying "*Alaihis Salām*" to non-prophets also. This subject will be discussed in detail *Inshallah* under Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb for the verse

صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا (33:56).

### Ruling

This verse also teaches the formalities of an address, a sermon or a lecture, that it should start with the praise of Allah and the *ṣalāh* (*durood*) and *salām* to the prophets. This had always been the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in his addresses. His companions also adopted the same practice by commencing not only their addresses but also all the important jobs by praising Allah Ta'ālā and then *ṣalāh* and *salām* on the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Rūḥ).

### Verses 60 - 64

أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً ۖ فَأَنْبَتْنَا  
 بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ ۚ مَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا ۗ ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ  
 الَّذِينَ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ  
 خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ۗ ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
 مَعَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا  
 دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ  
 قَلِيلًا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ  
 يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا ۖ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ قَوْمٌ  
 يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنْ  
 السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ قَوْمٌ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ  
 صَادِقِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

Or the One who created the heavens and the earth and sent down for you water from the sky? Then We caused to grow with it gardens, full of glamor. It was not within your ability to grow their trees. Is there any god alongwith Allah? No, but they are a people who equate (others with Allah). [60]

Or the One who made the earth a place to settle and made rivers amidst it and made mountains for (making) it (firm), and made a barrier between two seas. Is there any god alongwith Allah? No, but most of them do not have knowledge. [61] Or the One who responds to a helpless person when He prays to Him and removes distress, and who makes you vicegerents of the earth. Is there any god alongwith Allah? No, but little you take lesson. [62] Or the One who guides you in depths of darkness on land and sea, and who sends the winds bearing good news before His mercy? Is there any god alongwith Allah? Allah is far higher than the *shirk* they commit. [63] Or the One who originated creation, then will reproduce it, and who gives you provision from the sky and the earth? Is there any god alongwith Allah? Say, "Bring your proof if you are true." [64]

### Commentary

أَمَّنُ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَّرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ

(Or the One who responds to a helpless when he prays to Him and removes distress - 27:62)

Word الْمُضْطَّرَّ (*Muḍṭar*) is derived from اِضْطَرَّ (*Idṭirār*), which means to be helpless and restless under some necessity, and that happens when someone does not have any support and friends. Hence, *Muḍṭar* is that person who has lost all hopes from everyone and has turned to Allah as the sole redresser of his woes. This explanation of *Muḍṭar* is adopted by Suddī, Dhun-nūn Al-Miṣrī, Sahl ibn ‘Abdullāh etc. (Qurṭubī). The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that such a person should supplicate in the following manner.

اللَّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُوا، فَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

‘O Allah, I am an aspirant of your grace. So, please do not leave me at the mercy of myself for a moment, and set right all my matters on Your own. There is no god except You’. (Qurṭubī)

### Supplication of a *Muḍṭar* is surely accepted because of its sincerity

Imām Qurṭubī has said that Allah Ta‘ālā has taken upon Himself to accept the supplication of a *Muḍṭar*. He has made declaration to this

effect in this verse. The main reason for it is that by divorcing all mundane supports and connections, beseeching from Allah, while regarding Him as the sole redresser is the sincerity at its best. Sincerity has a special position before Allah Ta'ālā. Whoever evinces sincerity, no matter if he is a believer or an infidel, a pious or a sinner, because of the auspiciousness of sincerity the divine favour gets attentive towards him. Allah Ta'ālā Himself elaborates this point while describing the traits of the infidels. He has said that when they are in water and the boat is caught in storm, and they are sure of their death, they call out to Allah with all sincerity, saying that they would be thankful to Him forever if He would save their lives. But when Allah Ta'ālā rescues them and brings them to land by accepting their supplication, they again indulge in associating Him with gods دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ (الى قوله) فَلَمَّا نَجَّيْنَاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ .

A Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ says that 'Three supplications are surely accepted, in which there is no room for doubt. One, from an oppressed person, two, by a traveler, and three, from a father against his children'. After citing this ḥadīth, Qurtubī has commented that in all these three cases the situation is the same as the supplication of a *Muḍṭar*, because when an oppressed person calls Allah after having been frustrated from mundane support and help, his condition is no different than that of a *Muḍṭar*. Similarly, a traveler is away from his dear ones, hence helpless, while in journey. Likewise, a father cannot plead for something against his children because of his paternal love and affection for them, unless he is totally dejected and heart-broken, and calls Allah to save himself from the misery of sufferings. 'Ajurri, a scholar of ḥadīth, has quoted on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Dharr ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said 'Allah Ta'ālā has pronounced that He shall never reject an appeal from an oppressed person, even if it is made by an infidel'. (Qurtubī) If a *Muḍṭar* or an oppressed person or a traveler has a feeling that his appeal to Allah has not been accepted, he should not be dejected and be skeptical, because sometimes the request is accepted but its manifestation is delayed due to some expediency and divine wisdom. As an alternative, such a person should search his soul to find out if there was any deficiency in his sincerity or concentration while praying to Allah Ta'ālā. (Only Allah knows best)

## Verses 65 - 75

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ بَلِ ادْرَكْ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهَا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ مِّنْهَا عَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا وَآبَاءُنَا إِنَّا لَمُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ لَقَدْ وَعَدْنَا هَذَا نَحْنُ وَآبَاءُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۗ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُنْ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ قُلْ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونَ رَدِفَ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَمَا مِنْ غَائِبَةٍ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٥﴾

Say, "No one in the heavens and the earth has the knowledge of the Unseen except Allah." And they do not know when they will be raised again. [65] Rather, their knowledge failed in the matter of Hereafter. Rather, they are in doubt about it. Rather, they are blind to it. [66] And said those who disbelieved, "Is it, when we and our fathers become dust, shall we really be brought forth? [67] Indeed, it was promised to us and to our fathers before. This is nothing but the tales of the ancients." [68] Say, "Travel in the land and see how was the fate of the sinners. [69] And do not grieve for them and do not be straitened because of what they plan. [70]

And they say, "When shall this promise come (to pass) if you are true?" [71] Say, "It is not unlikely that some part of that (punishment) which you seek to come soon is already following you closely." [72] And surely, your

Lord is graceful for the mankind, but most of the people are not grateful. [73] And surely your Lord knows for sure what their hearts conceal and what they reveal. [74] And there is nothing hidden in the heavens and the earth that is not (recorded) in a manifest book. [75]

### Commentary

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Say, "No one in the heavens and the earth has the knowledge of Unseen except Allah." - 27:65

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was instructed to tell people that all the creatures that live in the heavens, like angels, and all the creatures that live in this world, like humans and jinns, none of them have any knowledge of the unseen (*ghayb*) except Allah. In the above-referred verse it has been stated very clearly that it is an exclusive attribute of Allah Ta'ālā, and no one else, not even an angel or a prophet, could share this attribute. This subject has been dealt with in detail under verse No. 59 of Sūrah al-An'ām on page No.360 in the 3rd volume. In addition to that, I have written a separate treatise on the subject under the title (كشف الريب عن علم الغيب) which has been published in my book Aḥkām-ul-Qur'an in arabic. Those who are interested in this subject can refer to that.

بَلْ أَدْرَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْهَا ۚ بَلْ لَمْ يَمْنُنْ بِهَا عَمَّوْنَ

Rather, their knowledge failed in the matter of Hereafter.  
Rather, they are in doubt about it. Rather, they are blind to it.  
27:66.

There are different recitations for the word اِدْرَكَ (*iddāraka*) and their meanings are also different. Those who are interested should refer to different commentaries for the details. It is enough to understand here that some commentators have taken it to mean "completion" and have explained the verse thus: "Their knowledge and understanding will be completed in the Hereafter", because then the truth about every thing shall be laid bare. But knowledge of truth at that time will be of no avail, because they had been contradicting the Hereafter in the world. But some other commentators have taken the word in the meaning of 'having failed' and 'having been lost'. The sense in this case would be that their knowledge about the Hereafter was lost, and they could not understand

what it was.

### Verses 76 - 79

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَقْضَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ  
يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لَهْدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ  
يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ بِحُكْمِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ  
إِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾

Surely this Qur'ān mentions to the children of Isrā'īl most of the matters in which they dispute. [76] And it is guidance and mercy for the believers. [77] And surely your Lord will decide between them by His judgment, and He is the All-Mighty, All-Knowing. [78] So trust in Allah. Surely you are on the open truth. [79]

### Commentary

By describing Allah's omnipotence through different examples in the earlier verses, the reality of the Hereafter and the rational possibility of resurrection of the dead has been established. There is no logical ambiguity in that. Its definite occurrence is confirmed by the sayings of the prophets and the divine books that were revealed to them. Authenticity and establishment of any information is based on the veracity of the courier or the narrator. In this verse it is stated that the informant of this news is the Holy Qur'ān whose authenticity and truthfulness is beyond any doubt or contradiction. So much so that in matters in which the scholars of Banī Isrā'īl had differed strongly and could not resolve them, the Qur'ān has given them evaluated verdict to follow for correct judgment. It is but obvious that in matters where there is difference of opinion among the scholars, the only competent authority to overrule is the one who is superior in knowledge and status. Therefore, it is established that Qur'ān is an authentic informant. After this the Holy Prophet ﷺ was consoled that he need not be despondent over their antagonism. 'Allah Ta'ālā is to make judgment Himself in his case. He should have faith in Allah, because Allah's help and aid is with the truth. And there is no doubt that he is on the right path'. (Verse 79).

## Verses 80 - 81

إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمِعُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تَسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ  
 ﴿٨٠﴾ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمَىٰ عَنْ ضَلَّتِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ تَسْمِعَ إِلَّا مَنْ  
 يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

**Surely, you cannot make the dead hear, nor can you make the deaf hear your call when they turn their backs in retreat, [80] nor can you show the right path to the blind ones against their wandering astray. You can make no one listen (to you) except those who believe in Our verses, then submit themselves (to Allah). [81]**

## Commentary

It was the demand of love and affection the Holy Prophet ﷺ had for all human beings that he should save them all from the fire of *jahannam* by making them accept the message of Allah. It used to hurt him a lot if someone did not accept it. He used to feel as if someone's children were proceeding toward the fire by not heeding to the advice of his parents. Therefore, Qur'an has adopted different expressions to console him at many places. One such advice was contained in the sentence *وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ* وَلَا تَكُنْ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ (And do not grieve for them, and do not be straitened because of what they plan - 27:70) which has appeared in the earlier verse. In the above verse he has been consoled in a slightly different manner, that his job was only to convey the message of truth, which he had done admirably. If someone had not accepted this, it was not his fault or deficiency. So, he need not worry and be despondent. Rather it is their own fault that they have lost their sense of direction. Qur'an has described the loss of their sense of direction by presenting three examples. First, that they were like dead bodies in the matter of acceptance of truth, and thus cannot take any one's advice to their advantage. Second, that they were like the deaf man who does not wish to hear anything, rather they turn their back and go away if someone tries to give them any advice. Third, that they were like the blind that cannot see even if someone tries to show them the path. After providing these three examples it is said:

إِنْ تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

You can make no one listen (to you) except those who believe in Our verses, then submit themselves (to Allah). 27:81.

It is very clear that in the subject under discussion it is not purported to make the voice reach the listener, but what is intended here is that what is conveyed should be beneficial to the addressee. The Qur'an has defined the audition as non-audition if it is not beneficial from the objective point of view. This point is elaborated at the end of the verse where it is stated that you can cause to hear only those who are willing to believe. Should it mean to make them hear only, then the statement of the Qur'an would have been contrary to facts and observations, because there are many undeniable proofs that divine message was conveyed to the disbelievers, which they not only listened but also answered to reject. It is therefore, quite clear that here causing to hear means the understanding which is beneficial. Then by calling them as dead bodies, it is further emphasized that you cannot make them realize the truth, because even if the dead could hear and wish to accept the truth, it would not be to their avail. The dead have passed through the worldly life, where faith and good deeds did matter. After the death, both in Barzakh and the Hereafter, all infidels and disbelievers would wish for faith and righteous deeds, but then it would be too late. This statement of the verse does not bear out that the dead cannot hear. In fact this verse is silent on the subject of hearing by the dead. This subject needs separate study which follows:

### Can the dead persons hear?

The issue, whether the dead can hear or not, was one of the subjects on which the exalted companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had different points of view. Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar ؓ has declared the hearing of the dead as established, but Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضى الله عنها has negated this understanding. Because of this difference of opinion there are two groups among the companions and the *tabi'in* (generation next to them). Some believe that the dead do hear, while others deny it. This subject is mentioned in the Qur'an at three places. One is the same as referred above in Sūrah An-Naml. The other is in Sūrah Ar-Rūm with almost similar wordings, and in Sūrah Al-Fāṭir it has appeared with these words وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ مِّنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ, that is, 'You cannot cause those who are in

the graves to hear'. It is worth noting in all the three verses that none of them has declared that the dead cannot hear. The expression used in each one of the three verses is that 'you cannot cause them to hear'. The consistent expression used in all the three verses seems to be a clear indication that the dead may have the ability to hear but we cannot cause them to listen to us.

As against these three verses, another verse relating to martyrs reveals that they are bestowed with a special type of life in their graves. In this special life they also get food and are conveyed good tidings from Allah Ta'ālā about their dear ones . The verse reads as:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾  
 فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ۗ أَلَّا  
 خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

And never take those killed in the way of Allah as dead. Rather they are alive, with their Lord, well-provided, happy with what Allah has given them of His grace; and they feel pleased with the good news, about those who after them could not join them, that there shall be no fear for them, nor shall they grieve. (3:169-170)

This verse corroborates that even after death some intellect and perception may be left behind in the human spirit. Rather in the case of martyrs there is a hint that such a thing does happen. As for the argument that this position relates only to the martyrs, to whom the verse refers, and not to the ordinary dead, its answer is that at least it tells that after death some intellect and perception and understanding of the world may be left behind in the human spirit. The way Allah Ta'ālā has bestowed upon martyrs the honour of maintaining the connection of their spirits with their bodies and graves, He can also grace the other dead with the same ability. Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه, holds the view that dead do hear. This view is based on a Ṣaḥīḥ *ḥadīth*, which is reported by Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه. It is as follows:

مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَمُرُّ بِقَبْرِ أَخِيهِ الْمُسْلِمِ كَانَ يَعْرِفُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا فَيَسَلِّمُ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا رَدَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 رُوحَهُ حَتَّى يَرُدَّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَ (ذكره ابن كثير في تفسيره مصحح ابن عمر)

'When a person passes by the grave of a Muslim brother whom he knew when he was alive and he offers *salām* to him, Allah Ta'ālā returns his spirit into his body, so that he may return

the *salām*'. (Ibn Kathīr, declaring it as *Ṣaḥīḥ*)

This also proves that when a person visits the grave of a Muslim brother and offers him his *salām*, the dead listens to his *salām* and answers back. It happens like this that Allah Ta'ālā returns the spirit of the dead back to this world momentarily. It confirms two points. One, that dead can hear, and second, that their hearing and our causing them to hear is not in our control, but is dependent entirely on Allah's will. Whenever He wills, they can hear and whenever He does not will, they do not hear. The above-referred *ḥadīth* has made it clear that Allah Ta'ālā is gracious to let the dead hear the *salām* of a Muslim brother, and also grants him privilege to answer back. But for any other situation or utterance it is not known whether the dead can hear or not. The research carried out by Imām Ghazzālī and Allāmah Subki also corroborates that it is established by this Qur'ānic verse and *Ṣaḥīḥ āḥādīth* that under certain conditions the dead do hear the utterance of the living, but it is not known whether every dead person hears the utterance at all times of all those who are living. This also makes the Qur'ānic verse and narrations on the subject comparable. It is quite possible that the dead could hear the utterance of the living at certain times and could not hear at others. This is also possible that they may hear the utterance of some and do not hear of others. Yet there is another possibility that some dead could hear and others could not. It is also established by the verses of Sūrahs An-Naml, Ar-Rūm and Fāṭir that it is not under the control of human beings to cause the dead to hear; rather it rests with Allah alone to make them hear whenever He wills. Therefore, where it is established by the *Ṣaḥīḥ āḥādīth* that the dead did hear, we should believe it; and where it is not established, both the situations are possible. Hence, we should neither accept nor deny it. For further details of the subject, my treatise on the subject may be consulted. This treatise is in Arabic and is included in *Aḥkām-ul-Qur'ān*.

### Verse 82

وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ  
النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

And when the word will come to fall upon them, We will bring forth for them a beast from the earth who will speak to them that the human beings (i.e the infidels) did not believe in Our verses. [82]

### Commentary

#### The nature of the beast coming out of the earth, and its time and place

It is reported in Musnād of Aḥmad on the authority of Sayyidnā Ḥudhaifah ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that the Doomsday would not come until you witness ten signs of it. They are:

- (1) Appearance of the sun from the west.
- (2) Dukhān (Smoke).
- (3) Dābba-tul-arḍ, i.e the beast coming out of the earth
- (4) Coming out of Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj.
- (5) Descent of Sayyidnā 'Īsā ؑ.
- (6) Dajjāl.

7, 8, 9) Three lunar eclipses together – one in the west, second in the east and the third in the peninsula of Arabia.

10) A fire, that will emerge from the Gulf of Aden and drive every one towards the plain of *maḥshar*; wherever people will stop for the rest at night, the fire will also stop there, and will drive them again the next day. (Muslim, Tirmidhī)

This *ḥadīth* has informed us of the emergence of such an animal close to Doomsday that will talk to human beings. The *Tanvīn* of the word *Dābbah* indicates that this animal will be extra-ordinary. This animal will not be born by the normal way of propagation; instead, it will emerge from the ground all of a sudden. There is an allusion in this *ḥadīth* that the emergence of this animal would be one of the very last signs, after which the Doomsday will follow soon. Ibn Kathīr has reported in a lengthy *ḥadīth* on the authority of Sayyidnā Ṭalḥah ibn 'Umar ؓ through Abū Dāwūd Ṭayālīsī that this beast will emerge in Makkah from the mount of *Ṣafā*, and after cleaning the dust from its head will reach at a point between the Black Stone (Al-Ḥajar-al-Aswad) and the Station of Ibrāhīm (Maqām Ibrāhīm). Seeing this creature, people will start running helter-skelter. Only one group of people will stay behind. Then

the beast will make their faces glitter like stars. After that it will go out in the world, and put a sign of infidelity on the face of every infidel. No one will be able to get out of its grasp. It will recognize every believer and the infidel (Ibn Kathīr). And Muslim Ibn Ḥajjāj has reported on the authority of Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ؓ that he had heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying, which he did not forget, that among the last signs of the Doomsday the first would be the rising of the sun from the west, and after that *Dābbah* would come out. Out of the two signs whichever appears first, the Doomsday will follow soon. (Ibn Kathīr)

Shaikh Jalaluddin Maḥallī رحمه الله تعالى has said that after the appearance of *Dābbah* the obligation of inviting others to good deeds and forbidding them from the evils will cease to apply, and no infidel would convert to Islam after that. This statement is inferred from many *āḥādīth* and the statements of Ṣaḥābah. (Maẓharī). Ibn Kathīr has related many a things about the appearance and activities of *Dābbah*, most of which are not trustworthy. Therefore, only that much should be trusted and believed which is contained in the Qur’ān and authentic *āḥādīth*. Anything beyond that should be discarded, as it is neither of any value nor benefit.

As for the question as to what this *Dābbah* will converse with people, some commentators are of the view that it will communicate what is stated in the Qur’ān, that is *أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ* (that the human beings did not believe in Our verses). It will communicate the message on behalf of Allah Ta‘ālā that ‘Many did not believe Our verses before this’. It would mean that now the time has come that every one would believe, but then it would be too late, because it would not be acceptable then. Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ, Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī, Qatādah رحمه الله تعالى, have reported, which is corroborated by a narration of Sayyidnā ‘Alī ؓ also, that the *Dābbah* will converse with people normally, as people do among themselves (Ibn Kathīr).

### Verses 83 - 90

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجًا مِمَّنْ يُكَذِّبُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ  
﴿٨٣﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ وَقَالَ أَكْذَبْتُمْ بِآيَاتِي وَلَمْ تُحِطُوا بِهَا عِلْمًا أَمَّا

ذَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَوَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا فَهُمْ  
 لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لَيْسَكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ  
 مُبْصِرًا ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي  
 الصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۗ  
 وَكُلُّ ۙ أَتَوْهُ دَاخِرِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ  
 مَرَّ السَّحَابِ ۗ صُنِعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۗ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ ۙ بِمَا  
 تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا ۗ وَهُمْ مِّنْ فَزَعٍ  
 يَوْمَئِذٍ آمِنُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾ وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ ۗ  
 هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

And (remember) the day when We will gather from every nation a host of those who used to belie Our verses, and they will be kept under control. [83] Until when they will come, He (Allah) will say, "Did you belie My verses while you did not comprehend them with knowledge, or what was it that you used to do? [84] And the Word will come to fall on them because of their transgression, so they will not (be able to) speak. [85]

Did they not see that We made the night, so that they may have rest in it, and (made) the day to make them see? Surely, in this there are signs for a people who believe. [86] And (remember) the day when the Horn will be blown; so all those in the heavens and the earth will be in panic, except such as Allah wills. And All (of them) will come to Him in humility. [87] And you see the mountains (at present) taking them as fixed, while they will fly like the flight of clouds - an act of Allah who has perfected every thing. Surely, He is All-Aware of what you do. [88]

Whoever will come with the good deed will have (a reward) better than that, and such people will be immune on that day from any panic. [89] And whoever will come with evil deed, the faces of such people will

be thrown down into the Fire. You will not be recompensed but for what you used to do. [90]

### Commentary

فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ (and they will be kept under control - 27:83). The word used here is derived from *Waz'*, which means to stop. The sense here is that the people in front will be stopped, so that those left behind could catch up. Some have taken the word *Waz'* in the sense of 'pushing'. Hence, it would mean that they would be pushed while being brought to their stand.

وَلَمْ تُحِطُوا بِهَا عِلْمًا (while you did not comprehend them with knowledge - 27:84). There is an allusion in this verse that falsifying the message of Allah Ta'ālā is by itself a great sin, especially when one falsifies it without giving any consideration or thought, then the crime is doubled. This has brought to light that if an issue or subject is duly considered and thought over, and yet one could not get to the truth, in that situation the intensity of the crime is reduced. Nevertheless, the denial of the existence of Allah and His Oneness would not save any one from infidelity and adoption of the wrong path, and would thus lead to perpetual torment. It is because they are such self-evident matters that any mistake of judgment is not allowed in them.

وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ (And [remember] the day when the Horn will be blown; so all those in the heavens and the earth will be in panic - 27:87). The word *فَزِعَ* '*faza*' means being nervous or perplexed. In another verse on the same subject the word *فَزِعَ* *Fazi'a* is substituted by *صَعِقَ* *Ṣā'iqā* which means losing consciousness. If both these verses are taken to refer to the first blowing of the *Ṣūr* (the Horn) then the total sum of the two words would be that, at the time of the blowing of the *Ṣūr*, every one will get nervous and perplexed initially, and then will lose consciousness, and ultimately will die. Qatādah and some other Imāms of *tafsīr* have taken this verse for the second blowing of the *Ṣūr*, when all the dead will resurrect. Thus the meaning of the verse would be that all the dead would get up perplexed. Some have interpreted that *Ṣūr* will be blown thrice. On the first blowing, every one will get nervous and perplexed, which is called 'the blowing of *فَزِعَ* *faza*'. On the second blowing every one will die, which is 'the blowing of *صَعِقَ* *Ṣā'iqā*'. The third blowing will be the blowing for the resurrection, on which all dead will get up. But only two blowings are mentioned in the Qur'an and *Ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth*.

(Qurṭubī, Ibn Kathīr). Ibn Mubarak has quoted Ḥasan al-Baṣrī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that there will be a forty years gap in between the two blowings. (Qurṭubī)

إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللهُ (except such as Allah wills - 27:87). This exception is from *Faza'*, which means panic and perplexity. The sense is that there will be people who will not be nervous at all at the time of resurrection. There is a *ḥadīth* reported by Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that these people would be the martyrs. At the time of second life on resurrection they will not get nervous. (This is a Ṣaḥīḥ *ḥadīth* according to Ibn al-'Arabī – Qurṭubī). Sayyidnā Sa'īd ibn Jubair رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ has also said that the exception applies to the martyrs, who will assemble around the 'Arsh wearing their swords. Quashirī has observed that prophets are the very first included among them, because they have the status of martyrs also, and their position as prophet is still higher. (Qurṭubī)

The following verse will appear later in Sūrah Az-Zumar:

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ اِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللهُ

For the Trumpet shall be blown and whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is in the earth shall swoon, save whom Allah wills - 39:68.

This verse tells us that when the Horn will be blown, all those in the heavens and the earth will get unconscious, and then die. Here also an exception is made, which according to one *ḥadīth* is meant for six angels, namely Jibra'īl, Mik'ā'il, Isrā'fīl, Malakul-Maut and Ḥamalatul-'Arsh, who will not die by the blow of Ṣūr. Later, they will also die, as explained in the *ḥadīth*. Those who have held that *Faza'* and *Sa'aq* both relate to the same blowing, they have taken the exception, here as well, for the special angels, like Sūrah Az-Zumar. But those who have held that *Faza'* and *Ṣa'aq* relate to two different blowings, they interpret the exception in the present verse as referring to the martyrs, as explained above.

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسِبُهَا جَٰمِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ

And you see the mountains (at present) taking them as fixed, while they will fly like the flight of clouds - 27:88

The word تَرَى "tarā" in the beginning of this verse is used in Arabic for both present and future tense. Therefore, it can be translated as "You see"

or as "You will see". In the latter case, the verse would be referring to the mountains as they will appear on the Doomsday. The sense in that case will be that the mountains will be uprooted and blown like clouds, which though would appear stationary to the onlookers, but in reality will actually move swiftly. When huge bodies, whose beginning and end is not visible to the eyes, move in any direction, one does not perceive their movement, no matter how swiftly they move. They look like stationary objects, although they are moving. One could experience this while looking at a mass of cloud hanging overhead. One discovers their movement only when they move out so far away that a part of the sky is left bare towards the horizon. Based on this principle, the verse means that the mountains will seem, on the Doomsday, as if they are fixed, but it will be an illusion for an onlooker, because in reality they will be moving. Most of the commentators have interpreted this verse in this manner. The other interpretation is based on regarding the word "tarā" as a verb in the present tense and translating it as, "You see" instead of "You will see". In this case, the verse is referring to the present state of the mountains, as they look stationary, and an ordinary onlooker thinks that they will remain fixed forever and will never move from their place, but on the Doomsday they will be floating like clouds. This interpretation is adopted by Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanawī (and on that basis the verse is translated above as "You see")

Some scholars have pointed out that different conditions are described in the Qur'ān about mountains on the Doomsday. The first condition is that of **إندكك** Indkak and earthquake, which will envelop all the mountains of the world **إِذَا دُمِّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا** (When the earth is ground to powder-89:21) or **إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا** (When the earth is shaken with a mighty shaking - 99:1). The second condition is that their big rocks will become like carded wool **وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ** (And the mountains shall be like plucked wool-tufts - 101:5). This will happen at the time when the sky will become like molten copper. Mountain rocks will go up like carded wool, and the skies will come down and meet them in the middle **يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالْمُهْلِ** (Upon the day when heaven shall be as molten copper and the mountains shall be as plucked wool-tufts - 70:8-9). In the third condition the carded wool will no more remain a homogeneous body like rocks, but will turn into very fine particles **وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُنْبَثًّا**

(and the mountains crumbled and become a dust scattered - 56:5-6). In the fourth condition, the fine particles of mountain rocks will get dispersed **فَقُلْ** **يَنْسِفُهَا رَبِّي نَسْفًا** (So, you say, "My Lord will blow them up totally (as dust) - 20:105). In the fifth condition, the fine particles of mountain rocks, which will engulf the land like cloud of dust will be driven up by the winds. This cloud of dust will cover up the whole world, and will appear stationary, although there will be swift movement in it like clouds **تَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً** **وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ** (And you see the mountains (at present) taking them as fixed, while they will fly like the flight of clouds - 27:88). Some of these conditions will take place at the first blowing of the *Ṣūr*, and some after the second blowing, when the world will be made absolutely flat plain. There will be no caves or mountains left in the world, nor will there be any building or tree **فَقُلْ يَنْسِفُهَا رَبِّي نَسْفًا فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا لَا تَرَى فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَلَا أَمْتًا** (20:105-107). (Qurṭubī, *Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī*)

صُنِعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

An act of Allah who has perfected every thing. - 27:88

*Sun* means skillful act, and *itqān* means to make perfect and firm. Apparently this sentence is related to all the preceding subjects wherein Allah Ta'ālā's omnipotence and marvelous creations are described, where the alteration of day and night is mentioned, and the blowing of *Ṣūr* and resulting conditions of the Doomsday are related. It is to emphasize that all these situations should not amaze and astonish any one, because their Creator is not a man or an angel having limited knowledge and power, but the Lord of all the worlds. But if this sentence is read as referring only to the adjacent preceding sentence **تَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً** (And you see the mountains (at present) taking them as fixed - 27:88) then it would mean that the phenomenon about the mountains, that they look stationary, whereas in reality they are moving, is not something astonishing, because all these happenings are not beyond the power of Allah Ta'ālā, who is All-Powerful.

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا

"Whoever will come with the good deed will have (a reward) better than that" - 27:89

This description relates to the situation that will take place after the

Doomsday and the account taking. Here the word *ḥasanah* is purported for the *kalimah* of لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله (as explained by Ibrāhīm) or it is an expression of sincerity (as interpreted by Qatādah). Some have interpreted this to include complete submission. The sense is that every good deed will be recompensed by a reward better than the deed; but it should be remembered that a person's righteous acts could be considered as righteous only when he fulfills its first condition of having faith in Allah Ta'ālā. Then he would get an award better than commensurable to his good deeds. It means that he would be graced with eternal bounties of the Paradise, and would escape from all troubles and torments for good. Some have interpreted that the word "better" means here that the reward of one good deed would be awarded from ten times to seven hundred times more. (Mazharī)

وَهُمْ مِنْ فَرَعٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ آمِنُونَ

and such people will be immune on that day from any panic -  
27:89.

Word *Faza'* is purported here for any big calamity or perplexity. Thus the meaning of the sentence is that, while living in this world, every pious person is scared of his fate in the Hereafter, and as a matter of fact, he should be scared in the light of Qur'ānic verse إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ (70:28). The torment of Allah is not something to be forgotten and set aside. It is for this reason that even the prophets, the companions, and saints were always frightened and daunted. But after the account taking on Doomsday those who would bring the *ḥasanah* (the good deed contemplated in this verse) with them would be free from all fear and grief, and will live forever in complete tranquility. (Only Allah knows best)

### Verses 91 - 93

إِنَّمَا أَمِرتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدَةِ الَّتِي حَرَمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ  
وَأَمِرتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَأَنْ أَتْلُوا الْقُرْآنَ ۚ فَمَنْ  
اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ  
﴿٩٢﴾ وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ سَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا ۗ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ  
عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

I am but ordered to worship the Lord of this city which is sanctified by Him. And to Him belongs every thing, and I am ordered to be one of the Muslims (who submit themselves to Allah), [91] and to recite the Qur'ān; so whoever takes the right path, takes it for his own benefit. As for the one who goes astray, say (to him), "I am only one of the warners." [92] And say, "Praise belongs to Allah. He will show you His sign, then you will recognize them." And your Lord is not unaware of what you do. [93]

### Commentary

رَبِّ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدَةِ (the Lord of this city - 27:91). Majority of the commentators have taken the word بَلَدَةٌ "Baldah" (the city) for Makkah. Allah Ta'ālā is the Lord of all the worlds and the Lord of heavens and earth. Therefore, the particular mention of Makkah here is to show its revered splendor, and its respect and honour in the sight of Allah Ta'ālā. Word Ḥaram is derived from Tahrim, which means "to prohibit" and also means "complete respect and veneration", and because of this respect and veneration whatever special religious prohibitions are applicable to Makkah and its surrounding land are also included in it. For instance, whoever takes refuge in Ḥaram is secured. It is not allowed to kill or take revenge from any one in the Ḥaram. Even hunting of animals and cutting of trees is not permitted in the precincts of Ḥaram. These restrictions are enjoined in the verse وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا (and whoever enters there is secure - 3:97), while some of them have appeared in the beginning of Sūrah Mā'idah. In addition, verse لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ (do not kill game when, you are in Iḥrām - 5:95) also includes this subject.

(الحمد لله) Today on Shawwal 24, 1391 Hijrah the commentary of Sūrah An-Naml is complete. The Indian army has unleashed full-scalē war against Pakistan since Shawwal 14, and its aeroplanes are pounding Karachi heavily. Bombs are being dropped regularly every night on civil population as well. There is a complete blackout at nights. The houses get jolted with the explosion of the bombs. But by the grace of Allah there was no break in the writing of this commentary. During the last ten days of war twenty pages of the commentary were written.

**Alḥamdulillāh**  
**The Commentary on**  
**Sūrah An-Naml**  
**Ends here.**

# Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ

## (The Stories)

Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ was revealed in Makkah and contains 88 verses and 9 sections

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

### Verses 1 to 13

طَسَمَ ﴿١﴾ تِلْكَ آيَةُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ نَتَلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ نَبَا  
 مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي  
 الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيْعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يذَّبِحَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ  
 وَيَسْتَحْيِ نِسَاءَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾ وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ  
 عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعُّوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَيْمَةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ  
 الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٥﴾ وَنَمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ  
 وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ  
 أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِيفَ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي ۗ  
 إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ فَالْتَقَطَهُ آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ  
 لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا  
 خَاطِئِينَ ﴿٨﴾ وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرْتُ عَيْنِي لِي وَلَكَ ۗ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ ۗ  
 عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ

مُوسَىٰ فَرِغَاظٍ ۚ إِنَّ كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِ لَوْلَا أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ  
 مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَنْ جُنْبٍ  
 وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاصِعَ مِنْ قَبْلِ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ  
 أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَرَدَدْنَاهُ  
 إِلَىٰ أُمِّهِ كَىٰ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۚ وَلَنَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَٰكِنَّ  
 أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

**Tā Sīm Mīm. [1] These are verses of the clear Book. [2] We recite to you a part of the story of Mūsā and the Pharaoh with truth for a people who believe. [3]**

**Indeed, the Pharaoh had become high-handed in the land and had divided its people into different groups; he used to persecute a group of them, slaughtering their sons and keeping their women alive. Indeed he was one of the mischief makers. [4] And We intended to favour those who were held as weak in the land and to make them leaders and make them inheritors (of the land) [5] and give them power in the land, and to make the Pharaoh, Hāmān and their armies see (that) what they were fearing from (had happened). [6]**

**And We inspired the mother of Mūsā saying, "Suckle him (Mūsā). Then once you fear about him, cast him in the river, and do not fear and do not grieve. Surely We are going to bring him back to you and appoint him one of (Our) messengers. [7] So the family of the Pharaoh picked him up, so that he becomes for them an enemy and a (cause of) grief. Indeed the Pharaoh, Hāmān and their armies were mistaken. [8] And the wife of the Pharaoh said, (to the Pharaoh about Mūsā), "He may be a delight of eye for me and you. Do not kill him. It is hoped that he will be of benefit to us, or we will adopt him as a son." And they were not aware (of what was going to happen). [9]**

**And the heart of the mother of Mūsā became restless; indeed she was about to disclose this (the real facts**

about Mūsā), had We not strengthened her heart to remain among those who have firm belief (in Allah's promise). [10] And she said to his sister, "Keep track of him." So she watched him from a distance while they were not aware. [11] And We had already barred him (Mūsā) from (accepting) any suckling women, so she (his sister) said (to the Pharaoh's people), "Shall I point out to you a family who will nurse him for you, and they will be his care-takers?" [12] Thus We brought him back to his mother, so that her eye might have comfort and she might not grieve, and so that she might know that Allah's promise is true, but most of them do not know. [13]

### Commentary

Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ is the very last among the Makkī Sūrahs. It was revealed between Makkah and Juḥfah (Rābigh) during the migration. It is mentioned in some narrations that during the journey from Makkah to Madīnah when the Holy Prophet ﷺ reached near Juḥfah or Rābigh, Jibra'īl عليه السلام came to him and enquired whether he was feeling home sick, as he was leaving the place where he was born and spent all his life. To this the Holy Prophet ﷺ replied in the affirmative. Then Jibra'īl عليه السلام recited this Sūrah and gave him ﷺ the good tidings that ultimately Makkah will fall to him and come under his ﷺ control. The related verse is as follows:

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَأْدُكَ إِلَى مَعَادٍ

Surely the one who has enjoined the Qur'an upon you will surely bring you back to the place of return - 28:85

Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ begins with the story of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, first briefly then in detail. First half of the Sūrah contains Sayyidnā Mūsā's episodes with the Pharaoh, and towards the end of the Sūrah his episode with Qārūn is related.

The story of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام is related extensively in the Qur'an, at places briefly while at others in detail. In Sūrah Al-Kahf (Cave) that part of the story is related in which he encountered Al-Khaḍir عليه السلام. Then, in Sūrah Ṭāhā other parts of the story are related in some detail, while some details are related in Sūrah An-Naml. Now, in Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ they are being reiterated. In Sūrah Ṭāhā where Allah Ta'ālā has said about

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ (And We tested you with a great ordeal - 20:40). Imām Nasā'ī and some other commentators have penned down the entire story at that point. The writer has followed suit, and by quoting Ibn Kathīr has written the whole story under Sūrah Ṭāhā. All the relevant parts of the story, it's related important issues, and rulings have been discussed in detail under Sūrahs al-Kahf and Ṭāhā. For any reference of an issue or ruling it would be apt to look up there. Now in this Sūrah commentary will be restricted to brief explanation of the wordings of these verses.

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً (And We intended to favour those who were held as weak in the land and to make them leaders - 28:5). In this verse it is emphasized that the plan of the the Pharaoh was not equal to that of the divine fate, rather it turned out to be completely ineffective and he and his entire courtiers were befooled. On the basis of the dream and it's interpretation about an Isrā'īli boy from whom the life of the Pharaoh was at risk, and because of which hundreds of newly born Isrā'īli male issues were put to death on their birth, it so turned out that Allah Ta'ālā made that very boy to grow up in his own house. Not only that, but for the solace of his mother it was arranged to send him back to her for nursing in a most astonishing manner. On top of that the Pharaoh was made to pay a service charge for nursing, which according to some narrations was one Dīnār a day. Since this service charge was taken from an infidel with his consent, hence there is no confusion about its admissibility. The cruelty he had perpetrated to quell the risk was of no avail to him, because that very danger was ultimately made to rear in his own home, and ultimately erupted like lava. This way the dream came true, and he saw that happening with his own eyes. The verse وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ وَرَبِّي فِرْعَوْنَ (and to make the Pharaoh and Hāmān and their armies see [that] what they were fearing from (had actually happened - 28:6) describes this only.

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ (28:7) The word Waḥy (inspiration) is used here in its literal meaning. It does not mean the Waḥy that is peculiar to prophets. This point has already been explained under Sūrah Ṭāhā.

#### Verses 14 - 21

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ، وَاسْتَوَىٰ أْتَيْنَهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۗ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي

الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينٍ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ  
 فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ ۖ هَذَا مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ ۖ فَاسْتَعَاثَهُ  
 الَّذِي مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ ۗ فَوَكَرَهُ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ  
 عَلَيْهِ ۗ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالَ  
 رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَهُ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ  
 ﴿١٦﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ  
 ﴿١٧﴾ فَاصْبَحَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي اسْتَنْصَرَهُ  
 بِالْأَمْسِ يَسْتَصْرِخُهُ ۗ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّكَ لَغَوِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾ فَلَمَّا  
 أَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَبْطِشَ بِالَّذِي هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَّهُمَا ۗ قَالَ يَمُوسَىٰ أَتَرِيدُ أَنْ  
 تَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا بِالْأَمْسِ ۗ إِنَّ تُرِيدُ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِي  
 الْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ  
 أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْعَىٰ ۗ قَالَ يَمُوسَىٰ إِنَّ الْمَلَآئِمَآءَ يَأْتِمُرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ  
 فَاخْرُجْ إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ۗ  
 قَالَ رَبِّ نَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

And when he reached his maturity and became perfect, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. And in this manner We reward those who do good. [14] And he entered the city at a time of unawareness of its people; so he found in it two men fighting each other: This one was from his own group and that one from his enemies. So the one from his own group called him for help against the one who was from his enemies. So Mūsā struck him with his fist and finished him off. (Then) He (Mūsā) said (out of remorse), "This is some of Satan's act. He is indeed a clear enemy who misleads." [15] He said, "O my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me." So He forgave him. Indeed He is the most Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [16] He (Mūsā) said, "O my Lord, since

**You have favoured me, I will never be a supporter of the sinners."** [17]

**Then next morning he was fearful, waiting (for what comes next) when the man who sought his help the day before, shouted to him for help (again). Mūsā said to him, "You are surely an apparent trouble-maker." [18] Thereafter when he intended to grasp at the one who was an enemy to both of them, the latter said, "O Mūsā, do you want to kill me as you have killed a person yesterday? You intend nothing but to become a tyrant in the land, and you do not intend to be one of the peace-makers." [19]**

**And there came a man running, from the farthest part of the city. He said, "The chiefs are counselling each other about you, so that they kill you. So, leave (the city). I am one of your well-wishers." [20] So, he went out of it (the city) in a state of fear, waiting (for what comes next). He said, "O my Lord, save me from the cruel people." [21]**

### Commentary

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ، وَاسْتَوَى (And when he reached his maturity and became perfect - 28:14). The literal meaning of 'ashudd (أَشُدُّ) is to attain the peak of strength or intensity. For instance a person gradually develops from the position of juvenile weakness to the strength of adulthood. A time comes when he has attained full strength and vigour that he could achieve. That point in life is called 'ashudd. In different parts of the world and for different people this point in life varies according to climate, character of the land, race etc. Some people attain it early while others take time. 'Abd Ibn Ḥumaid has reported that Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ and Mujāhid have placed the age of 'ashudd as 33rd year of one's life. This is called the age of perfection or the age of discernment, when the development of body stops after reaching its peak. After this age a period of hold commences, which lasts until the age of forty. This period is mentioned in the verse as *Istawa* (translated above as became perfect). After the age of forty years the decline and weakness sets in. Hence, it can be said that 'ashudd (أَشُدُّ) of a person starts from the age of 33 years and lasts through 40 years. (Rūḥ, Qurṭubī).

أَنبِئْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا (We gave him wisdom and knowledge - 28:14) The word

(حُكْم) *Hukm* (translated above as 'wisdom') is used here for prophethood, and the word 'knowledge' refers to the knowledge of divine injunctions.

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينٍ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا (And he entered the city at a time of unawareness of its people - 15). Most commentators have interpreted that the word 'city' is used here for the main city of Egypt. The words 'he entered' indicate that Mūsā عليه السلام, had gone away somewhere out of Egypt. Then he entered back at a time when people normally sleep. It is also mentioned in the incident of killing of the 'Qibṭī' that it was the time when Mūsā عليه السلام had already announced his prophethood and had started preaching the religion of truth. As a result of his preaching some people had converted, and were known as his disciples. The word *مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ* (from his group - 28:15) is a proof of that. All these versions give credence to the narration which is quoted by Ibn Ishāque and Ibn Zaid that when Mūsā عليه السلام had started talking to the people about the religion of truth, the Pharaoh turned against him and wanted to kill him. But on the appeal of his wife, Sayyidah 'Āsiyah, he restrained himself, and instead commanded him to go in exile. After that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام shifted to some hiding place and would come to the city of Egypt occasionally in hiding. Most commentators are of the opinion that by *عَلَىٰ حِينٍ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا* (28:15) the time of afternoon is meant, when people generally take a siesta. (Qurtubī)

فَوَكَرَهُ مُوسَىٰ (So Mūsā struck him with his fist). *Wakaza* (وَكَّرَ) means to box *فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ* (28:15). The phrase of *Qaḍāhu* (قَضَاهُ) and *Qaḍā 'Alaihi* (قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ) is used when one is totally finished. Hence, here it means that he killed him. (Maḏharī)

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَهُ (He said, "O my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me." So he forgave him - 28:16). The gist of this verse is that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام regarded the killing of the infidel Qibṭī as a sin, despite the fact that it had happened without any intention on his part, because it was in conflict with his status of prophethood, and thus below his dignity. So, he begged Allah's pardon for the act, which was duly granted.

The first question that arises here is that this Qibṭī was an infidel combatant (*ḥarbi*) in the religious term. Hence, his killing was permissible and preferable, because he was neither a *dhimmi* (ذِمِّي), i.e the citizen of

an Islamic state nor under any covenant with Mūsā عليه السلام. Then why did Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام regarded it a sin and an act of Satan? His killing should have been regarded as an act worth the reward, because the Qibṭī was harming a Muslim unjustly, and got killed in the process when Mūsā عليه السلام tried to save the life of the Muslim. The answer to this question is that covenants of peace are sometimes written or spoken in express words, and sometimes they come into effect by consistent practice of the parties that amounts to an implied agreement and is as good as a written covenant. Violation of the covenants of this type is also prohibited in Islam. The covenant established by practice can be understood by the example that if in a non-Islamic state Muslims and non-Muslims are living in harmony and there is no conflict between them, and any pillage or fighting with each other is regarded as treachery, then this consistent practice of co-existence would be regarded as an implied agreement for peaceful living, and its violation is not allowed. The proof of this principle can be found in a lengthy *ḥadīth* of Sayyidnā Mughīrah Ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه that has been reported by Imām Bukhārī in his book in the chapter entitled as 'Kitāb Ash-Shurūṭ. The *ḥadīth* runs like this: Sayyidnā Mughīrah Ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه had good relations with a group of infidels before the advent of Islam, and later he killed them and took possession of all their wealth. Then he went to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and submitted to Islam, and presented all that wealth to him. On this action the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him *أما الإسلام فاقبل وأما المال فليست منه في شيء* (As far as your embracing Islam is concerned, I accept it, but I have nothing to do with this wealth ) Abū Dāwūd has quoted this *ḥadīth* like this: *أما المال فمأل غدر* (As for wealth, we have no concern with it). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم declared in this *ḥadīth* that he accepted his submission to Islam, but this wealth has been snatched by breach of trust and was a treachery, hence he did not have any desire for this wealth. Ḥafīz Ibn Ḥajar has observed in his commentary that this *ḥadīth* has laid down the principle that grabbing of wealth of the infidels during peacetime is not permissible. It is for the simple reason that people living together in a city or township or those who work together regard themselves secured from each other. The agreement established through their practice is like a trust, which must be honoured by each and every person, no matter whether he is a Muslim or an infidel. The property of infidels permitted for possession by the Muslims is only that which is acquired during a war

with them. It is not permitted to grab the wealth of infidels during peacetime, when one feels secured from one another. Qaṣṭalānī has observed in his commentary on Bukhārī as follows:

انّ اموال المشركين ان كانت مغنومة عند القهر فلا يحل اخذها عند الامن، فاذا كان الانسان مصاحباً لهم فقد امن كل واحد منهم صاحبه، فسفك الدماء و اخذ المال مع ذلك غدر حرام الا ان ينبذ اليهم عهدهم على سواء

‘No doubt the wealth of infidels is permitted (to take possession) during war or *jihād*, but in peacetime it is not lawful. Therefore, any Muslim living and socializing with infidels in the manner that they are safe and secure for each other, for him it is unlawful to slay them, or forcefully grab their wealth, unless the peace agreement established through practice is abrogated through an announcement’.

The gist of the discussion is that if the Qibṭī would have been killed with preconceived resolve in the presence of an implied peace agreement, it would not have been lawful. But Mūsā عليه السلام did not have the intention of killing the Qibṭī. He only hit him with his bare hands to save the Isrā’īlī from his grip. In the normal course, it should not have been fatal, but he died all the same by that blow. Then Mūsā عليه السلام realized that a lighter blow would also have done the job of getting rid of him. Realizing that harder blow was not needed, he repented and invoked Allah’s mercy.

### Special Note

The above principle was explained to me by Sayyidi Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thanāvī رحمه الله تعالى, when I was writing the commentary of Surah Al-Qaṣaṣ in Aḥkāmul-Qur’ān, the Arabic commentary written under his supervision. It is the last academic discourse of Sayyidi from which I have benefited, as he had completed this work on Rajab 2, 1362 A.H, and after that his sickness intensified and on Rajab 16, 1362, he passed away. انا لله . وانا اليه راجعون

Some commentators have observed that although killing of the Qibṭī was permissible, but prophets take extra care in special cases even in performing permissible acts and avoid them, unless they receive a cue from Allah Ta’ālā. On this occasion Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام did not wait for the permission from Allah Ta’ālā and acted on his own. Therefore, in view of his status as a prophet, he maintained that it was a sin on his part, and hence, invoked Allah’s pardon. (Rūḥ)

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ (He [Mūsā] said, "O my Lord, since You have favoured me, I will never be a supporter to the sinners." - 28:17). When Allah Ta'ālā pardoned this slip of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, he said in gratitude to Allah Ta'ālā that he would never again help a criminal. The second incident of the quarrel had proved that the Isrā'īlī in whose defense Mūsā عليه السلام had involved himself in the brawl was quarrelsome. Therefore, by declaring him a criminal he vowed not to help such a person again. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه while explaining this verse, has maintained that the word 'criminals' stands here for infidels. Qatādah has also interpreted the verse in almost the same way. On the basis of these commentaries it seems that actually the Isrā'īlī, whom Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had defended, was not a Muslim but he helped him considering that he was an oppressed person.

### Rulings

It is worth noting here that this saying of Mūsā عليه السلام has established two rulings about two issues. One, that even if an oppressed person is a sinner or infidel, he should be helped. The second ruling is that it is not permitted to help any criminal or oppressor. Scholars have argued on the basis of this verse that working in the employment of cruel rulers is also not permitted, for they too would be regarded as their associates. Many citations from the righteous *salaf* (elders) have also been quoted in support of this argument. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī) To provide support to the oppressors or to the infidels may take different forms. The different rulings about these forms are laid down in the books of *fiqh* in detail. This humble writer has also dealt with the subject in his Arabic book *Aḥkāmul-Qur'ān* with greater elaboration. The scholars interested in the subject may consult it.

### Verses 22 - 28

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تِلْقَاءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَى رَبِّي أَن يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٢٢﴾  
 وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ ۖ  
 وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ ۗ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا ۗ قَالَتَا  
 لَأَنسُقِيَّ حَتَّىٰ يُصْدِرَ الرَّعَاءُ ۗ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَسَقَىٰ

لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ  
 فَقِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ ۖ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي  
 يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۗ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ  
 الْقِصَصَ ۗ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ ۗ نَحْنُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَتْ  
 إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا بَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ ۗ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنْ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ  
 ﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنْكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي  
 ثَمْنِي ۗ حِجَجٍ ۗ فَإِنْ أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ ۗ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ  
 عَلَيْكَ ۗ سَتَجِدُنِي ۖ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ ذَلِكَ بَيْنِي  
 وَبَيْنَكَ ۗ أَيَّمَا الْأَجْلَيْنِ فَضَيْتُ فَلَا عُدْوَانَ عَلَيَّ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى مَا  
 نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

And when he set out towards Madyan, he said, "I hope my Lord will guide me to the straight path". [22] And when he arrived at the waters of Madyan, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) and found, aloof from them, two women keeping back (their animals). He said, "What is the matter with you?" They said, "We cannot water (our animals) unless the shepherds bring (their animals) back and our father is very old man." [23] So he (Mūsā) watered (their animals) for their sake, then he turned to a shade and said, "O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me." [24]

Then one of the two women came to him, walking with shyness. She said, "My father is calling you, so that he rewards you with something in return of your watering for us. So when he (Mūsā) came to him (the father of the women) and narrated to him the whole story, the latter said, "Do not fear; you have escaped from the wrongdoing people." [25] One of the two women said, "Dear father, hire him; the best man you hire is the one who is strong, trustworthy." [26] He (the father) said (to Mūsā), "I wish to marry one of these two daughters of

mine to you on the condition that you serve me for eight years. Then if you complete ten (years) it will be of your own accord. And I do not want to put you in any trouble; you will find me, Inshallah (God-willing) one of the righteous." [27] He (Mūsā) said, "This is (done) between me and you. Whichever of the two terms I fulfill, there should be no excess against me, and Allah is witness to what we are saying." [28]

### Commentary

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تَلْقَاءَ مَدْيَنَ (And when he set out towards Madyan - 28:22). Madyan (مَدْيَنَ) is the name of a city in *Shām* (a large territory now consisting of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine) which was named after Madyan, the son of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام. This area was outside the empire of the Pharaoh. It was eight days journey from Egypt. When Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام was taken over by the natural fright of the pursuing army of the Pharaoh, which was not in conflict either with the prophethood or with trust in Allah, he resolved to leave Egypt. Perhaps he decided to proceed toward Madyan because it was a habitation of the descendants of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, and he was also his progeny.

When Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام left Egypt, he was in a condition that he had neither any provisions for the journey nor any baggage, and also he did not know the route. In this state of helplessness he turned to Allah Ta'ālā and asked عَسَىٰ رَبِّيٰ أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ (I hope my Lord will guide me to the straight path - 28:22), Allah Ta'ālā accepted this prayer. Scholars have observed that the only food Mūsā عليه السلام had during this journey was the leaves of trees. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه has said that this was the first trial and test of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام. Details of trials and tests of Mūsā عليه السلام have already been described under Sūrah Ṭahā while quoting a lengthy *ḥadīth*.

وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ (And when he arrived at the waters of Madyan, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) - 28:23) مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ (waters of Madyan) refers to the well from where people of that place used to make their animals drink water. وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ (found, aloof from them, two women keeping back (their animals) - 23). That is he saw two girls stopping their goats from going to the water, so that they did not get mixed up with other goats.

“ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمْ قَالَتَا لَأَنْسُقِي حَتَّى يُصْدِرَ الرَّعَاءُ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ ” (He said, "What is the matter with you?" They said, "We cannot water (our animals) unless the shepherds bring (their animals) back and our father is very old man." - 28:23). The word خَطْبٌ *Khatb* means "matter". The sense is that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام asked the two girls 'What was it that you are stopping your goats from coming to the well for drinking water like other goats? The two girls answered that, in order to avoid mixing with men-folk, they used to make their goats wait until men had left the place after watering their animals. The question arose here whether they did not have any male member in the family to do this job . The girls answered this question on their own by saying that their father was very old and could not perform this job. This is why they were doing the job.

Some very important points are learnt by this incident. One, that it was the practice of the prophets to help the weak. Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام saw that two girls had brought their goats for drinking water, but they were unable to find room because of the rush of people. Therefore, he asked them about their problem. Two, that there is no harm to talk to stranger women, if no mischief is involved. Three, that although this incident had happened when *ḥijāb* was not enjoined, a situation that continued even in the early days of Islam (*ḥijāb* was enjoined in Madīnah after the Hijrah), but the underlying spirit of *ḥijāb*, i.e the natural instinct of modesty and bashfulness, was there even in those days. Because of this natural instinct the two girls preferred hardship rather than getting mixed with men-folk. Four, that it was not considered desirable for women even in those days to go out and perform such type of duties. It was for this reason that they put forward the justification that their father was very old and weak.

فَسَقَى لَهُمَا (So he (Mūsā) watered (their animal) for their sake - 28:24). That is Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام took pity on the girls and drew out water from the well and satiated their goats. It is reported in some narrations that the shepherds after making their cattle drink water used to place a very heavy stone on the mouth of the well to make it unusable, and hence these girls would have only the left over water for their herd. The stone was so heavy that ten men together could move it, but Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام removed it all by himself, and drew water from the well. Perhaps for this reason one of the two girls reported to her father that Sayyidnā Mūsā

عليه السلام) was very strong. (Qurṭubī)

ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ (Then he turned to a shade and said, "O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me." - 28:24). Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام did not have any food for the last seven days. He came under the shade of a tree and prayed to Allah describing his condition and need in an exquisite manner. The word *Khair* is sometimes used for wealth as in the case of خَيْرِهِ الوَصِيَّةُ (he leaves some wealth - 2:180). Sometimes it is used for strength like أَهْمُ خَيْرٌ أَمْ قَوْمٌ تُبَعِّعُ (Are they better, or the people of Tubba - 44:37) and sometimes for food as in the verse under reference. (Qurṭubī)

فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ (Then one of the two women came to him walking with shyness. - 28:25). In accordance with Qur'ānic practice the story has been summarized here. The full story runs like this: When the two girls reached home earlier than usual, their father enquired the reason for that. So they related to him the whole incident. Their father thought that he should make up for the favour Mūsā عليه السلام had done to his daughters. Hence he asked one of his daughters to bring him with her. She went to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام and talked to him with an element of modesty. This shows that despite the fact that *hijāb* was not enjoined by then, good women would not talk to men freely. She went to him with a need, so she talked with shyness. Some commentators have given the detail of her shyness that while talking she had raised her sleeve up to her face. The narrations as related in commentaries say that Mūsā عليه السلام had asked her to walk behind him and guide him from the back. The objective was that he could not cast his eye on her. Perhaps for this reason she told her father about him to be trustworthy.

Who was the father of these two girls? Commentators have different views on this subject. But Qur'ānic verses allude that he was Sayyidnā Shu'āib عليه السلام وَالْإِلَى مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا (7:85). (Qurṭubī)

إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ (My father is calling you - 28:25). It was possible at that time that the girl would have invited him on her own, but she did not do so. Instead, she conveyed her father's message to him, because it was against the modesty for a girl to invite a stranger at home.

إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ (The best man you hire is the one who is strong, trustworthy - 28:26), One of the daughters of Sayyidnā Shu'āib

ﷺ pleaded to her father that as he needed the services of a man to help him in his daily work at home, he might consider hiring him for this purpose. In support of her suggestion she said further that two qualities are required in a servant. One, that he should be strong, and the second, that he should be trustworthy. The girl pointed out that she had seen his strength when he removed the stone from the mouth of the well, and his integrity when he made her walk behind him.

### Two important conditions for hiring a person, and assigning a job

Allah Ta‘ālā made the daughter of Sayyidnā Shu‘aib ﷺ say something of great wisdom. In the present set up of employment, great emphasis is laid at the time of interviews on scrutinizing the degrees and experience of a candidate, but no attention is paid to ascertain his integrity and trustworthiness. As a result of this, there is neither efficiency nor honesty of purpose in the offices. On the contrary bribery and nepotism are so common that there seems to be no law in operation. If people could pay heed to this Qur’ānic verse, many a problems would be solved automatically.

فَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ (He (the father) said (to Mūsā), "I wish to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on the condition that you serve me for eight years. - 28:27). Sayyidnā Shu‘aib ﷺ made the proposal of marriage of his daughter to Mūsā ﷺ on his own. It shows that the guardian of girls need not wait for the proposal to come from the boy’s side. If a suitable good match is available, the girl’s guardian may take the lead, for this has been the practice of the prophets. To quote an example, Sayyidnā ‘Umar Ibn Khaṭṭāb ﷺ had offered his daughter, Sayyidah Ḥaḥṣah رضى الله عنها, for marriage to Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ﷺ and to Sayyidna ‘Uthmān ﷺ when she became widow. (Qurṭubī)

إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ (one of these daughters of mine - 28:27). Sayyidnā Shu‘aib ﷺ did not make the selection of one or the other girl for the proposal of marriage, rather he kept it vague. It was not the formal *nikāḥ*, that requires offer and acceptance in presence of two witnesses, but only a discussion to have his consent to work for eight years in lieu of marriage with a girl. Sayyidnā Mūsā ﷺ agreed to the proposal, and got married to one of the girls. The Holy Qur’ān does not describe every detail of a story, the happening of which is obvious from the context. Therefore, it

cannot be doubted here that without pinpointing the bride and without the presence of witnesses how the *nikāḥ* was solemnized. (Rūḥ, Bayān ul Qur'ān)

عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَنِي حَجَجٍ (on the condition that you serve me for eight years - 28:27). Eight years service and employment was regarded the *mahr* (dower)(the dower) of marriage. Scholars have different points of view on the issue, whether a service rendered to one's wife can be taken as a valid *mahr* (dower) or not. The subject is dealt with in detail in *Aḥkāmul-Qur'ān* in Arabic language, under Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ. Those who are interested can study the details there. For the common man it is enough to understand that if it is not allowed in the Muḥammadī law, it might have been permitted in the code of law followed by Shu'aib عليه السلام. It is not uncommon to have minor differences in the laws (Shari'ah) brought by various prophets.

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah has ruled in his *Zāhir-ur-Riwāyah* that the service rendered for one's wife cannot be considered as a valid *mahr* (dower). But in a later ruling by the scholars it is elaborated that though it is against the honour and dignity of husband to serve his wife in lieu of *mahr* (dower), but any duty performed outside the house, such as grazing of cattle or trading, can be made a substitute for it, provided a time frame is agreed upon before hand, as was in the case of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, where the parties had agreed before hand on eight years period of service. The reason is that the remuneration of the husband payable by his wife in this case will be treated as *mahr* (dower). (Badā'ī, from Nawādir Ibn Samā'ah).

Another question that arises here is that the *mahr* (dower) is the right of wife, and if it is paid to her father or any other relative without her consent, it will be taken as not paid. In this incident the words عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي are a proof enough that Shu'aib عليه السلام had hired him for his duty. So, the benefit of service went to him. In that situation how could this be regarded as *mahr* (dower) of the wife? The answer to this question is that it is quite probable that the herd of goats was the property of the girls, and therefore, the benefit of service went to his wife. Alternatively, if the goats belonged to the father and the wages were due from him, then the money of the wages payable by the father belonged to the wife, as her *mahr* (dower). It is lawful for a father to spend the money of his daughter

with her permission. It is quite obvious that this whole deal was carried out with the consent of the girl.

### Ruling

The word **أُنكِحَكَ** (I wish to marry...with you) has proved that the father had arranged the *nikāh*. Jurists are unanimous that it should be done as such. It is the father's duty and privilege to make arrangements of daughter's marriage. A girl should not arrange her own marriage. But there is difference of opinion between jurists on the issue whether the *nikah* is lawful or not, if a girl arranges her own marriage due to some need or pressure. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah has ruled that it is lawful. However, this verse is silent on the issue.

### Verses 29 - 35

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَىٰ الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ آنَسَ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ نَارًا ۖ  
 قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّي آتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ  
 مِنَ النَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِنْ شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ  
 الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبْرَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَنْ يُمُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ  
 الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّى  
 مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۖ يُمُوسَىٰ أَقْبِلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْأَمِينِينَ  
 ﴿٣١﴾ أَسْأَلُكَ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجُ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ وَاضْمُمُ  
 إِلَيْكَ جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ الرَّهْبِ فَذُنُوبِكُمْ بِرُءُوسِكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ  
 وَمَلَائِهِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَسِيقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ  
 نَفْسًا فَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَأَخِي هَارُونُ هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا  
 فَأَرْسَلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءًا يُصَدِّقُنِي ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُكَدِّبُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ قَالَ  
 سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكَ مُلْكًا سُلْطٰنًا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا ۖ  
 بِأَيْنَمَا ۖ أَنْتُمْ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمَا الْعٰلَمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

So, when Mūsā completed the term and set forth with his wife, he noticed a fire from the direction of the (mount) Ṭūr, he said to his wife, "Stay here; I have noticed a fire. May be I bring to you some information or an ember from the fire, so that you may warm yourself." [29] So when he came to it, he was called by a voice coming from a side of the right valley in the blessed ground, from the tree, saying, "O Mūsā, I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds." [30] And saying, "Throw down your staff." So when he saw it moving as if it were a snake, he turned back in retreat and did not look back. (Allah said to him), "O Mūsā come forward and do not fear; you are one of those in peace. [31] Insert your hand into your bosom, and it will come out white without any evil (disease), and press your arm to your side for (removing) fear. Thus these are two proofs from your Lord (sent) to the the Pharaoh and his chiefs. Indeed they are transgressing people." [32]

He said, "My Lord, I have killed a person from them; therefore I fear that they will kill me. [33] And my brother Hārūn is more fluent with his tongue than I am; so send him with me as a helper who will bear me out. I am afraid, they will belie me." [34] He (Allah) said, "We will make your arm stronger through (the help of) your brother and will make you have the upper hand, so they will not reach you (to cause any harm) because of Our signs.\* You both and those who follow you will be victorious." [35]

### Commentary

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ (So When Mūsā completed the term - 28:29). Then Sayyidna Mūsā عليه السلام completed his term of service, which was eight years compulsory and two years optional. A question arises here, whether he completed eight years of service or ten year's. Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī has reported that when this question was put to Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, he answered ten years, and added that prophets always fulfill their commitments, rather they do more than what they agree to. The Holy

\* Another possible translation with a slight change in punctuation is as follows: "and will make for you the upper hand, so they will not reach you (with any harm). Because of Our signs, you both and those who follow you will be victorious." (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

Prophet ﷺ was also in the habit of giving more than due to the one having a right. He ﷺ has also advised the Ummah to be selfless and considerate in the matters of employment, wages, and business dealings.

نُودَىٰ مِنْ شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبْرَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَن يَمْوَسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ (He was called by a voice coming from a side of the right valley in the blessed ground, from the tree, saying" O Mūsā, I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds" - 28:30). This subject was also mentioned in Sūrahs Ṭāhā and An-Naml in the story of Mūsā عليه السلام. In Sūrah Ṭāhā it is said إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ (it is Me your Lord - 20:12) and in Sūrah An-Naml نُودَىٰ أَنْ بُورِكَ مَنْ فِي النَّارِ (So when he came to it, he was called: "Blessed is the one who is in the fire - 27:8), while in the present Sūrah (Al-Qaṣaṣ) it appears as إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ (I am Allah the Lord of the worlds - 28:30). Although the wordings are slightly different here, yet the meanings are almost the same. The incident is related in the words which suited to the situation being described. كَذَا قَالَ (الامام). The refulgence that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had seen in the form of fire was only in the form of an example (*mithālī*), because it is impossible for a worldly being to see the actual refulgence of Allāh Ta'ālā. Mūsā عليه السلام is called لَنْ تَرَانِي (7:143) (You will never see Me) in respect of actual refulgence.

### The place also becomes auspicious if righteous deeds are performed there

فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبْرَكَةِ (In the blessed ground - 28:30). The Holy Qur'an has termed the mount Ṭūr as blessed ground. It is obvious that the reason of its being auspicious is the refulgence of Allāh Ta'ālā, which was manifested at that spot in the form of fire. It proves that if something virtuous happens at a place, that particular spot also turns auspicious.

### A sermon should have high degree of eloquence

هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا (He is more fluent in his tongue - 28:34). This verse points out that a high degree of oratory and eloquence is desirable for sermons and preaching, and there is no harm if one takes training in that.

### Verses 36 - 42

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرَىٰ وَمَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ

جَاءَ بِالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ وَمَنْ تَكُونُ لَهُ، عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ  
 الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهِ  
 غَيْرِي ۚ فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانَ عَلَى الطِّينِ فَاجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ  
 إِلَىٰ إِلَهِ مُوسَىٰ ۗ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ  
 وَجُنُودُهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا يُرْجَعُونَ  
 ﴿٣٩﴾ فَآخَذْنَاهُ وَجُنُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ ۚ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ  
 الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۚ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
 لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ وَاتَّبَعْنَاهُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً ۚ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُمْ  
 مِنَ الْمَقْبُوحِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

So when Mūsā came to them with Our clear signs, they said, "This is nothing but a forged magic, and we did not hear about it among our forefathers." [36] And Mūsā said, "My Lord knows best the one who has come with guidance from Him and who is going to have the best end of the abode. It is certain that the wrongdoers will not succeed." [37]

And the Pharaoh said, "O chiefs, I do not know of any god for you other than me. So kindle for me, O Hāmān, a fire on the clay (to bake bricks) and build for me a tower, so that I may look on to the God of Mūsā. And I deem him to be one of the liars." [38] And he and his hosts became over-proud in the land without justification and thought that they would not be returned to Us. [39] So We seized him and his hosts and threw them into the sea. Look then, how was the fate of the wrongdoers. [40] And We had made them leaders who called (people) towards hell. And on the Day of Judgment they will not be helped. [41] And We made a curse to pursue them in this world; and on the Day of Judgment they will be among those treated badly. [42]

### Commentary

فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانَ عَلَى الطِّينِ (So kindle for me, O Hāmān, a fire on the clay (to

bake bricks) - 28:38). When the Pharaoh planned to build a very tall palace for himself, he asked his minister Hāmān to get the bricks baked properly first, because half baked bricks could not take the load of a tall building. Some people have observed that the Pharaoh was the first one to have tough bricks baked for the buildings, as no one had used them before. Historical narrations have recorded that Hāmān had collected fifty thousand masons for building this palace. Skilled labour, such as carpenters and blacksmith, were additional. This palace was built so tall that there was no parallel to it in the world. When it was completed, Allah Ta'ālā commanded Jibra'īl (جبرائيل) to knock it down. He struck only one blow to it and it tumbled down in three pieces, killing thousands of soldiers of the Pharaoh's army. (Qurṭubī)

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ (And We had made them leaders who called (people) towards hell. - 28:41). Allah Ta'ālā had elevated the courtiers of the Pharaoh as leaders of their people, but these wrong-doers were busy inviting the people towards fire – *jahannam*. Most commentators have taken the expression 'invitation to fire' as a metaphor. That is, by fire the allusion is toward evil deeds that will result in burning in the fire of Jahannam. But according to the work of my respected teacher Sayyidnā Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Anwār Shah Kashmirī رحمه الله تعالى the reward of the Hereafter is the deed itself. One's deeds in this world will change their forms first in *barzakh* and then in *maḥshar*. The righteous deeds will change into flowers and gardens and take the shape of the bounties of paradise; and the evil deeds will turn into snakes and scorpions, ultimately manifesting themselves in various types of torments. Therefore, if someone invites any one in this world toward evil and infidelity, he in fact is bidding him to go into the fire. Although these evils do not manifest themselves in this world as fire, yet in reality they are fire. Thus there is no metaphor in the verse, and it rests with its true meaning. If this course of argument is adopted in explaining the verses of Qur'ān, then many of them will get rid of dependence on metaphors; and it will make the reading easy and straightforward. For instance, وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا (And they will find what they did all there - 18:49) or مَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنْ شَرِّ خَيْرٍ إِذْ يُرَى (Whoever does good to the measure of a particle will see it.- 99:7)

وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُمْ مِنَ الْمَقْبُورِينَ (And on the Day of Judgment they will be

among those treated badly - 28:42). *Maqbūhīn* is the plural of *Maqbūh*, which means spoilt, damaged or disfigured. Thus the meaning of the verse is that on the Doomsday their faces will be disfigured to turn black, and eyes will turn blue.

## Verses 43 - 51

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الْأُولَى  
بَصَائِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَمَا كُنْتَ  
بِجَانِبِ الْغُرُبَى إِذْ قَضَيْنَا إِلَى مُوسَى الْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنْتَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ  
﴿٤٤﴾ وَلَكِنَّا أَنْشَأْنَا قُرُونًا فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ وَمَا كُنْتَ ثَاوِيًا  
فِي أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ تَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا<sup>١</sup> وَلَكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَمَا  
كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الطُّورِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَكِنْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ رَبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا  
مَّا أَتَاهُمْ مِنْ نَّذِيرٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَلَوْلَا أَن  
تُصِيبَهُمْ مُّصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمْتَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَيَقُولُوا رَبَّنَا لَوْلَا أَرْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا  
رَسُولًا فَتَتَّبِعَ آيَاتِكَ وَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ  
مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوا لَوْلَا أُوْتِيَ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى<sup>٢</sup> أَوْلَمْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا  
أُوْتِيَ مُوسَى مِنْ قَبْلُ<sup>٣</sup> قَالُوا سِحْرَانِ تَظَاهَرَا<sup>٤</sup> وَقَالُوا إِنَّا بِكُلِّ  
كُفْرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قُلْ فَاتُوا بِكِتَابٍ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ هُوَ أَهْدَى مِنْهُمَا أَتَّبِعُهُ  
إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَإِنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكَ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ  
أَهْوَاءَهُمْ<sup>٥</sup> وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بَغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ<sup>٦</sup> إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ  
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

And We gave Mūsā, after We destroyed the earlier generations, the Book having insights for people and a guidance and mercy, so that they may take to advice.

[43] And you (O Muḥammad) were not there at the Western side (of the mount Ṭūr) when We delegated the matter to Mūsā, nor were you among those present, [44] but We created generations (after him) and a long time passed over them. And you were not dwelling among the people of Madyān, reciting Our verses to them, but it is We who do send messengers. [45] And you were not at the side of (the mount) Ṭūr when We called (Mūsā), but it (your prophethood through which you knew all this) is a mercy from your Lord, so that you warn a people to whom no warner has come before you, that they may take to advice. [46] And (We would not have sent the messenger) if there would have been no apprehension that, in case they suffered a calamity because of what their hands sent ahead, they would say, "Our Lord, why did You not send a messenger to us, so that we would be among the believers?" [47] But when the Truth came to them from Us, they said, "Why has he (the messenger) not been given (a book) similar to what Mūsā had been given?" Is it not that they denied what Mūsā had been given before? They said, "Both (Qur'ān and Torah) are works of magic that support each other." And they said, "We disbelieve each one of them." [48] Say, "Then bring a book from Allah which is better than both, in guidance, and I shall follow it, if you are true." [49] So if they do not respond to you, be sure that they are only following their desires. And who is more astray than the one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah. Surely Allah does not take the wrongdoing people to the right path. [50] And We have conveyed (Our) word to them one after the other, so that they may take to advice. [51]

### Commentary

(And We gave Mūsā, after We destroyed the earlier generations, the Book having insights for people - 28:43). The words "earlier generations" refer to the people of Nūḥ, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, and Lūṭ عليه السلام, who were destroyed before the time of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام because of their denial of truth. *Baṣā'ir* بصائر is the plural of *Baṣīrah* بصيرة, whose literal meaning is sagacity, insight and discernment. Here it is purported for that light or refulgence which Allah Ta'ālā bestows in the hearts of people with which they find out the truth and discern the distinction between right and wrong. (Maḥzarī)

If the word *Nās* ناس (people) is used in the phrase *بَصَائِرَ لِلنَّاسِ* (28:43) (insights for people) for the people of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, then the meaning of the verse is quite clear. No doubt for the people of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام Torah was the book of wisdom. But if the word is used for all people in whom the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ is also included, then the question would arise that the Torah, which is available to the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ, is not the original one. In this Torah many changes have taken place. So, how could this Torah be regarded as a book of wisdom for them? Moreover, it will mean that the Muslims too should benefit from the Torah, while there is a well-known *ḥadīth* that Sayyidnā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه once sought permission from the Holy Prophet ﷺ for reading Torah, so that he could improve his knowledge and benefit from the injunctions contained in it. On this the Holy Prophet ﷺ got angry and said that if Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام was alive, he too would have been required to follow him. (The essence of this retort is that he [Sayyidnā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه] should concentrate only on his teachings, and that he was not required to look into the teachings of Torah or Injīl). It is worth reminding here that it was the time when revelation of Qur’ān was still continuing, and in order to eliminate any possibility of mingling of *ḥadīth* with the Qur’ānic text, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had advised some of his companions to stop writing even the *ḥadīth*. Under such a situation it is obvious that reading of a cancelled divine book was not expedient. It, therefore, does not necessarily follow that reading of Torah and Injīl is banned for all times. On the contrary, reading and quoting by the companions of that part of these books in which coming of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was predicted is well established. Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Salām and Ka’b Al-Aḥbār رضي الله عنهما are quite well known for this. Other companions also did not raise a finger against it. The bottom line of this discussion is that it is allowed to benefit from the unaltered part of these books, which no doubt contains wisdom. But only those could draw any benefit from this who can distinguish between the altered and unaltered parts of the books; and they are the expert scholars. A common man should avoid such an exercise, lest he gets entangled in a quandary. The same ruling is applicable to all those books that are a mixture of right and wrong.

لِيُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أَتَتْهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ (so that you warn a people to whom no warner has come before - 28:46). The expression ‘a people’ is purported here for the

Arabs, who are the progeny of Sayyidnā Ismā'īl عليه السلام. No prophet was sent to this 'people' after Sayyidnā Ismā'īl عليه السلام until the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent. The same subject will follow in Sūrah Yāsīn. But this verse is not in conflict with the other verse *إِنَّ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ* (There is no community, but there has come a warner among them - 35:24). What the present verse means here is that there was no prophet in 'this people' for a long time after Ismā'īl عليه السلام. But after the arrival of the Holy Prophet ﷺ this void was filled up.

*وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ* (And We have conveyed (Our) words to them one after the other, so that they may take to advice. - 28:51). The word *وَصَّلْنَا* (*waṣṣalnā*) is derived from *تَوْصِيلٌ* (*Tauṣīl*), which literally means to strengthen the rope by adding more strings to its strands. Here it means that Allāh Ta'ālā has maintained the continuity of guidance. Certain advisory subjects are repeated in the Qur'ān in order to make them more effective.

### Certain rules for preaching

It shows that an important trait of preaching carried out by the prophets was that they used to convey the truth to people continuously. Rejection and falsifying of truth did not deter them at all from their mission. Instead, if someone did not listen to them the first time, they repeated it the second time, and if they did not succeed even the second time, they used to reiterate it a third time, and so on, without showing any sign of exhaustion. It is true that no preacher or sympathizer has power to change one's heart, but what the prophets could do was to keep on making their efforts without being dishearted or exhausted. Even today the same principle applies, and those who preach should take a serious note of it.

### Verses 52 - 55

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا أَمَّا بِهٖ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْتُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَ يَذَرُوهٗنَّ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ

وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلِّمْ عَلَيْنَا لَّا نَبْتَغِي  
الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

As for those to whom We gave the Book before this, they believe in it (Qur'ān). [52] And when this (Qur'ān) is recited to them, they say, "We believe in it. It is the truth from our Lord. And we are the ones who submitted (to it) even before it (was revealed)." [53] Such people will be given their reward twice, because they observed patience. And they repel evil with good, and spend from what We have given to them. [54] And when they hear absurd talk, they withdraw from it and say, "Our deeds are for us and your deeds are for you. Peace be on you. We do not seek (the way of) the ignorant." [55]

### Commentary

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ (As for those to whom We gave the Book before this, they believe in it. (Qur'ān) - 28:52). In this verse those people of the book are mentioned who had faith in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and revelation of the Qur'ān on the basis of the prophecies given by Torah and Injīl, even before the coming of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Qur'ān. Thus they converted to Islam when the Holy Prophet ﷺ announced his prophethood. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has reported that forty courtiers of the king Najāshī of Ḥabshah (Ethiopia) came to Madīnah when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was busy in the Battle of Khybar. They also joined the *jihād*, and some got wounded, but none was killed. When they noticed the economic hardship of the companions, they told the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they were, by the grace of Allāh, quite wealthy, and sought his permission to bring some of it when they would come next. On this occasion this verse was revealed (الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ (الى قوله) (52 - 54). (Marduyā, Ṭabrānī, Mazharī)

Sayyidnā Sa'īd Ibn Jubair ؓ has narrated that when Sayyidnā Ja'far ؓ had gone to Ḥabshah before the *hijrah* to Madīnah, and presented the teachings of Islam in the court of Najāshī, at that time Najāshī and many of his courtiers, who were people of the book, had submitted to Islam, as Allah Ta'ālā had put faith in their hearts. (Mazharī)

## Is the word Muslim restricted to the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ or it is common to all Ummahs?

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ (And we are the ones who submitted (to it) even before it (was revealed) - 28:53). The word used by these people of the book for their submission is 'muslims' which may also be translated as 'We were Muslims even before the revelation of Qur'ān'. If the word Muslim is taken here in its literal meaning, submissive or obedient, then the meaning is quite clear that the faith they had in Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet ﷺ, because of their books, is referred here by the use of words Islam and Muslims in its literal sense of submission. But if the word 'Muslim' is taken in the same meaning in which it is regarded as appellation of the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ, then it will signify that the words 'Islam' and 'Muslim' are not restricted to Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ alone, but they are common to the Ummahs of all the prophets. But some verses of Qur'ān suggest that words 'Islam' and 'Muslim' are special names of the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ, for example the assertion of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام recorded by the Qur'ān itself هُوَ سَمَّاكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (He named you as Muslims - 22:78). 'Allāmah Suyūṭī favours this course of argument and has written a book on the subject in support of his contention. He has explained this verse advocating that the word *Muslimīn* is used here in the sense that 'we were ready and prepared to accept Islam even before'. If one looks at the issue deeply, there is no conflict in the two versions; it is possible that Islam is the common attribute of the religion of all the prophets in its literal sense, and at the same time it is a special appellation of the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ. It is like the appellations of Ṣiddīq and Fārūq that are exclusive for Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهم اجمعين in the context of Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ but otherwise these words can apply to anyone else also falling within the scope of their attributive meaning.

أُولَئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ (Such people will be given their reward twice - 28:54). That is, the believers who are also people of the book will be rewarded twice. A similar promise is made for the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ مِنْكُمْ لِي وَرَسُولِهِ وَتَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا نُؤْتِهَا أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ (And whoever stands in obedience to Allah and His messenger and does righteous deeds, We will give her, her reward twice. - 33:31). In a *ḥadīth* of Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī three types of persons are mentioned for double reward

One, those people of the book who had faith in their prophets initially, and then developed faith in the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Two, the slave who is submissive and obedient to Allah Ta'ālā and His Messenger ﷺ, and also to his master. Three, the one who owned a slave girl, with whom he was allowed intercourse but he freed her and made her his formal wife by performing *nikāh*.

The point worth consideration in this verse is the cause for which these categories of Muslims are given their reward twice. One cause could be that they have done two good deeds for which they are entitled to double reward. In all these three cases there are two good deeds involved. In the case of believers two good deeds are faith in their own prophet first, and then in the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Qur'ān. In the case of the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, two good deeds are that they loved and obeyed the Holy Prophet ﷺ both as a prophet and as husband. As for the owner of the slave girl, his first good deed is to free her, and the second to marry her. But this explanation may be subjected to the objection that two rewards for two good deeds are applicable to all, according to norms of justice; so where is the distinction for the people of the book or believers, and the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, or the master of the slave girl? Keeping this objection in view I have answered the original question in another way which is fully described in my book *Aḥkām ul-Qur'ān* under Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ. According to that explanation, it is apparent by the wording of Qur'ān that in all these examples, the relevant persons will not get two rewards for two deeds, but they will get double reward for each single deed, because the principle of 'two rewards for two deeds' is applicable to all, according to the express declaration of the Qur'ān: *لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ* (I do not let go to waste the labour of a worker from you - 3:195), that is Allah Ta'ālā does not waste deeds of any one of you. In fact one will get reward for every single good deed he performs. Therefore the double reward contemplated for all these types, is that for every single good deed they will be awarded double the reward. For instance, they will be given two rewards for a single prayer, two rewards for a single charity, and two rewards for each one good deed like fasting, performing Ḥajj etc.. If one contemplates on the wordings of Qur'ān he will note that for giving two rewards the appropriate word was *أَجْرَيْنِ*, (two rewards) but instead of that Qur'ān has used the word *أَجْرُهُمْ* مرتين (their reward twice - 28:54), in

which there is a clear hint that all their good deeds will be written twice and they will get double the reward for each one of them.

As for the reason why these people have been chosen for such an extra ordinary reward, the straight answer is that it is Allah Ta'ālā's prerogative to declare any deed preferable or superior to other deeds, and enhance its reward. No one has the right to question as to why He has enhanced the reward for a particular act as compared to the other, or why has He increased the reward of fasting while He has not done so in the case of *zakāh* and charity. It is possible that the pedestal of deeds, mentioned in the verse under reference and the *ḥadīth* of Bukhārī, is higher in the sight of Allah in comparison to other deeds, and hence double the reward. Some prominent scholars have given the reason of this preference that they require excessive effort and hardship. This explanation is also probable, and the word *بِمَا صَبَرُوا* (because they observed patience) towards the end of this verse can be taken as a proof for the argument that the ground for double reward is their endurance on hardship. (Only Allah knows best).

وَيَذَرُهُنَّ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةِ (And they repel evil with good - 28:54). The scholars have made different assertions while explaining 'evil' and 'good deed' as they are contemplated in this verse. Some have explained that 'good deed' stands here for obedience, and 'evil' for sin, and the sense is that every good deed wipes out the sin, as is maintained in a *ḥadīth* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Sayyidnā Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ *اتَّبِعِ الْحَسَنَةَ السَّيِّئَةَ* (Perform a good deed after an evil deed, and it will wipe out the evil). According to this interpretation, the verse is praising these people that whenever they commit an evil act by mistake, they wipe it out by doing some good act. Some others are of the opinion that *Ḥasanah* (good deed) in this verse is used for knowledge and serenity, and *sayyi'ah* for ignorance and negligence. Thus it means that these people respond to the ignorant acts of others with serenity and forbearance and not with a similar ignorance. As a matter of fact, there is no contradiction in these explanations, because the words *ḥasanah* and *sayyi'ah*, that is virtue and evil, encompass all these things.

### There are two important advices in this verse:

Firstly, if someone commits a sin, its best remedy is that he should look for doing something good. The virtuous deed becomes expiation for the

sin, as quoted in the *ḥadīth* of Sayyidnā Mu'ādh رضي الله عنه above. Secondly, if a person behaves with someone badly, the wronged one is within his right to take revenge, provided he does not exceed the wrong done to him. However, it is much better for him that, instead of taking revenge, he returns the cruelty with kindness and the evil with virtue. It is an act of high degree of nobility of character. There are innumerable benefits in such an act, both in this world and in the Hereafter. In another Qur'ānic verse this advice is given in very clear words **إِذْفَعُ بِالْأْتِيهِ هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ** **وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ** (Repel with that which is fairer and behold, he between whom and thee there is enmity shall be as if he were a loyal friend - 41:34). It means that one should act kindly in return of cruelty. In this way his foe will become his sincere friend.

**سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ** (Peace be on you. We do not seek (the way of) the ignorant. - 28:55). These people have a good quality in that when they hear something stupid from an ignorant foe, they simply say *salām*, instead of giving a reply. They do not entangle themselves with the ignorant. Imām Jaṣṣāṣ رحمه الله تعالى has said that there are two kinds of *salāms*. One is for salutation, as Muslims do to one another. The other type is for *musālamah* (adopting peaceful attitude with others) and *mutārahah*, (to avoid debate) which is to convey to one's adversary that he does not wish to take note of the latter's stupidity. At this place the latter meaning is intended.

### Verse 56

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ  
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

**You cannot give guidance to whomsoever you wish, but Allah gives guidance to whomsoever He wills, and He knows best the ones who are on the right path. [56]**

### Commentary

The word *هَدَايَة* *hidāyah* (guidance) is used for several meanings. One meaning is to show the path, which does not necessarily mean that the one shown the path will reach his destination. Another meaning of *hidāyah* is to make one reach his destination. According to first meaning