



Surah Al-Fatiha & Al-Baqarah Insights & Reflections

فوائد القرآن الزكية (سورة الفاتحة وسورة البقرة)

النسخة الانجليزية

Compiled by:

Dr. Khalid Al-Hazmi

Professor of Islamic Education
at the Islamic University of Madinah

Translated by:

Ubaidur Rahman

M.A., Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)

Surah Al-Fatiha and Al-Baqarah: Insights and Reflections

Compiled by:

Dr. Khalid Al-Hazmi

Professor of Islamic Education at the Islamic University of Madinah

Translated by:

Ubaidur Rahman

M.A., Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)

Table of Contents

Content	Page Number
Introduction	1
Surah Al-Fatihah	4
Surah Al-Baqarah	10
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 1-5	10
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 6-10	16
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 11-13	21
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 14-15	26
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 16-20	29
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 21-25	34
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 26-27	41
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 28-29	44
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 30-33	48
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 34-39	52
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 40-46	58
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 47-50	65
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 51-53	70
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 54-57	72
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 58-61	76
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 62	83
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 63-66	85
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 67-73	88
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 74	93

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 75-77	96
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 78-82	99
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 83	103
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 84-86	107
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 87-93	112
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 94-96	119
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 97-98	122
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 99-103	125
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 104-105	133
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 106-108	136
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 109-113	141
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 114-115	149
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 116-118	153
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 119-123	157
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 124-126	165
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 127-134	172
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 135-141	182
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 142-143	190
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 144-145	199
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 146-148	204
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 149-150	208
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 151-152	212
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 153-157	215
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 158	222
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 159-163	225
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 164	231
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 165-167	234

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 168-169	240
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 170-171	244
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 172-176	248
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 177	256
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 178-179	262
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 180-182	267
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 183-185	271
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 186	279
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 187	282
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 188	286
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 189	288
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 190-195	292
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 196	299
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 197-203	305
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 204-207	316
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 208-210	320
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 211-212	324
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 213	328
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 214	333
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 215	336
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 216	338
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 217-218	343
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 219	349
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 220	354
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 221	359
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 222-223	362
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 224-225	370

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 226-227	374
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 228	377
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 229-230	382
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 231	389
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 232	394
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 233	398
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 234	406
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 235	409
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 236	413
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 237	416
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 238-239	418
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 240-242	422
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 243-245	426
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 246	433
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 247	437
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 248	441
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 249	443
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 250	448
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 251-252	450
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 253	454
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 254	457
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 255	460
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 256-257	465
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 258	469
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 259	472
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 260	476
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 261	479

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 262-263	482
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 264-266	486
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 267	492
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 268	497
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 269	499
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 270-271	501
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 272	503
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 273	506
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 274	509
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 275-276	511
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 277	516
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 278-281	518
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 282	522
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 283	533
Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 284-286	537

Introduction

All praise be to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his companions. I begin by thanking Allah, who revealed the Quran in clear Arabic to His servant and messenger, our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). He made it a reminder, a cure, guidance, mercy, and glad tidings for the believers, while serving as a warning for the disbelievers. Allah has preserved it from distortion and made it a beacon of light, knowledge, and evidence for all humanity.

Indeed, one of Allah's greatest blessings upon a person is to guide them to beneficial work, where they spend their time and life in what is useful and beneficial to others. All praise is due to Allah, who taught the Quran, who taught by the pen, who taught humanity what they did not know, opening the gates of knowledge to whom He wills among His servants. He taught humanity to read and write, and made the pen a tool for learning and writing.

Allah, the Most Merciful, said:

{الرَّحْمَنُ . عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ . خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ . عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ}

[The Most Merciful, who taught the Quran, created man, and taught him eloquence.]

(Surah Ar-Rahman: 1-4)

And He said:

{اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ . خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ . اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ . الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ . عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ}

[Read in the name of your Lord who created, created man from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous – who taught by the pen, taught man that which he knew not.]

(Surah Al-Alaq: 1-5)

All praise and thanks be to Allah, the Most High.

By the grace of Allah, I have been guided to this noble work, dedicated to the exalted words of the Lord of the worlds, the Quran. I found myself driven by love and desire to uncover some of the treasures of this glorious book, seeking the reward of the Lord of the worlds, and delighting in the sweetness and beauty of Allah's words, with their profound eloquence and abundant benefits that continue to flow endlessly.

I relied on supplication and seeking guidance from Allah, motivated by love for embarking on this significant and awe-inspiring task. With full trust in Allah, the Mighty, the All-Knowing, the Merciful, I sought His help and began studying the books of Tafsir (Quranic exegesis) for every verse of Allah's clear book, moving between their pages to benefit from the understanding of established scholars. I drew upon what Allah had granted them and began to extract benefits, organizing them with the meanings and indications of the verses from Allah's words, presenting them in a continuous flow without separating them by numbered points, so the reader does not feel a break between meanings, benefits, and indications.

I also carefully selected from the books of Tafsir what falls within the benefits without delving into the rulings, which is not my focus in this book. If I quoted something, I attributed it to its distinguished scholars.

Thus, the benefits of this book are not merely collected and transferred from the pages of Tafsir books. Though they contain some of that great effort, I clarified it in its place during editing. Therefore, these are deductions that I have drawn, by Allah's grace, from the meanings and indications of the Quranic verses and from what I understood from the words of the eminent scholars of Tafsir, upon whom Allah's mercy and blessings be upon them all. May Allah gather us with them, along with the prophets, the truthful ones, the martyrs, our parents, families, and all Muslims.

I began this grand and noble work on the 19th of Shawwal in the year 1437 AH, corresponding to the 24th of July 2016 CE. I ask Allah, the Exalted, to make me among those whom the Most Merciful guides in serving His Book, the wise and clear reminder. I hope to be among those whom Allah guides to what He loves and is pleased with, and that He makes it a beneficial deed and ongoing charity until the Day of Judgment. I pray that Allah enables me to complete it in a manner that pleases Him, that He guides me, inspires me with the clear truth, and accepts it from me, elevating my ranks in the highest paradise. May it be a beneficial and accepted deed. Indeed, He is Generous and Merciful.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his companions.

The Author: Prof. Dr. Khalid bin Hamid bin Mubarak Al-Hazmi

Insight from Surah Al-Fatiha

{بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ (١) الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٢) الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمِ (٣) مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ (٤) إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ
وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ (٥) اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ (٦) صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ
{(٧)}

[In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful (1). All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds (2). The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful (3). Master of the Day of Judgment (4). You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help (5). Guide us on the straight path (6). The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked Your anger or of those who are astray (7).] (Surah Al-Fatiha, 1:1-7)

Surah Al-Fatiha begins with the Basmala as its first verse. Allah says: {بِسْمِ اللَّهِ ِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ} [In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful], setting the tone for the first and most revered chapter in the Book of Allah. This opening with the name of Allah highlights the significance of the Basmala, emphasizing its high status and the importance of beginning any crucial matter with it. The Basmala encompasses three of Allah's most beautiful names: "Allah," "Ar-Rahman," and "Ar-Rahim," reflecting Allah's boundless mercy that envelops all creation. When a Muslim begins an action with the Basmala, they invoke these sacred names of Allah, as instructed in Surah Al-A'raf: {وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا} [And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them.] (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:180). For the reader, this translates to: "I begin in the name of Allah, the

Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful," establishing the oneness of Allah in His names and attributes.

Following the Basmala, the verse {الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ} [All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds] offers profound insights into the nature of praise and gratitude towards Allah. This verse signifies the complete and perfect praise owed to Allah alone, acknowledging His right to be praised and thanked above all. By opening the Quran with this verse, the message is clear: all forms of praise and gratitude are due to Allah, who is the sole creator, sustainer, and ruler of all that exists. It teaches the believer that Allah is the Lord of all realms, deserving of the highest praise and the most sincere gratitude, reminding them to honor and glorify Allah as He has described Himself and revealed to His servants in the Quran. This verse also affirms Allah's sovereignty and His absolute control over all matters, emphasizing His will in the creation and governance of the universe.

The phrase {رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ} [Lord of all the worlds] encapsulates the profound concept that Allah is the Lord of every realm: the realm of humans, the realm of angels, the realm of jinn, the realm of animals, the realm of plants, and indeed all that exists. He is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Creator and Sustainer of everything within them. There is no creator other than Him. In this way, Surah Al-Fatiha firmly establishes the Oneness of Allah in His Lordship, affirming His complete and exclusive authority over all creation.

This understanding highlights the crucial importance for a Muslim to internalize the significance of Allah's absolute sovereignty. It reminds us that whatever we possess is merely a trust and a gift from Allah, subject to His will at all times. Even those who are granted ownership by Allah cannot exercise control over their possessions except by His permission. No one can sell, buy, transfer, or fulfill any wish, nor can they prevent anything, except through the will of Allah. While a servant may act according to his own will, ultimately, this will is under the greater will of

Allah. As Allah advises in Surah Al-Kahf: { وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ ٱللَّهُ } [And never say of anything, "Indeed, I will do that tomorrow," without adding, "If Allah wills."] (Surah Al-Kahf, 18:23-24). Understanding this nurtures a deeper sense of reliance on Allah, prompting the believer to turn to Him, the true Owner of all things, for guidance and assistance in managing what has been entrusted to them. This extends to seeking Allah's help and protection in every matter, whether great or small, reinforcing the Oneness of Allah in His divinity. It is a reminder that mercy, forgiveness, and all forms of assistance should only be sought from the One who alone controls their existence.

Then comes the next verse describing Allah, {ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ} [The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful], which are two of Allah's noble names. These names embody the vast and profound meanings of mercy that inspire in the believer a sense of hope, optimism, and love for Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, who chose to describe and name Himself with these majestic and generous attributes. They encourage the servant to aspire for Allah's mercy, as the name "Ar-Rahim" specifically denotes the attribute of mercy, thereby strengthening the believer's hope in Allah's boundless mercy.

Imam Al-Qurtubi (RA) commented: "Since the attribute of {رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ} [Lord of all the worlds] might evoke a sense of awe and fear, it is coupled with {ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ} [The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful] to encourage and instill hope, thus combining both fear and hope in His attributes, which aids in obedience to Him and prevents disobedience" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 1/98).

As in Surah Al-Hijr, Allah says: { نَبِّئْ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ. وَأَنَّ عَذَابِي هُوَ ٱلْعَذَابُ ٱلْأَلِيمُ } [Inform My servants that it is I who am the Forgiving, the Merciful, and that My punishment is the painful punishment] (Surah Al-Hijr, 15:49-50). This duality serves as a profound lesson in guidance and leadership, particularly in fields like management, highlighting the importance of

balancing firmness in enforcement with compassion for others. This balance of encouragement and deterrence fosters psychological and emotional equilibrium, as well as balance in interaction and behavior.

This magnificent Surah also highlights Allah's sovereignty over the Day of Judgment, as expressed in the verse {مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ} [Master of the Day of Judgment]. This verse glorifies Allah as the sole owner of that day, serving as a reminder that on the Day of Resurrection, no soul will have power over another. As Allah says in Surah Al-Infitar: {يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَالْأَمْرُ {يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ} [The Day when no soul will have power over another, and the command that day will be with Allah] (Surah Al-Infitar, 82:19). This emphasizes the importance of a Muslim remembering that day as they recite this verse many times daily in their prayers, allowing it to remain ever-present in their mind, shaping their behavior and thoughts, motivating them toward all that is good and warning them against every sin.

The Quranic context then transitions to affirming the sincerity of worship to Allah alone, without associating any partners with Him: {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ} [You alone we worship]. There is none worthy of worship except Allah. In this verse, the servant acknowledges that they worship Allah alone, and this recognition carries with it the necessary implications—that no act of worship should be directed toward anyone other than Allah. By saying {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ} [You alone we worship], the servant confirms their submission to Allah and also acknowledges that they seek help only from Him in what is rightfully His: {وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} [And You alone we ask for help]. Though seeking help is inherently part of worship, singling it out here underscores its great significance and its connection to supplication, hope, fear, and love, which are the essence of worship. Seeking help is essentially a form of supplication from one who hopes for assistance in attaining what they love or averting what they dislike. It also involves turning to the one they love for support and trust. Thus, seeking help is a reliance on the One from

whom help is sought, and this reliance should be placed solely on Allah, the Blessed and Exalted.

This underlines the importance of understanding the meanings contained in this great Surah, particularly the knowledge of the greatness of our Lord and Creator, the Exalted. Among the lessons drawn from this majestic verse is the affirmation of Tawhid (the Oneness of Allah) in worship, directing all acts of devotion to Allah alone, for He is the only one deserving of worship. The Quranic context then moves to the supplication for guidance and the request for being rightly guided by Allah: { اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ } [Guide us on the straight path]. This is a profound request from the servant to their Lord and Creator, asking to be guided to the path of goodness, truth, and righteousness, and to be aided and steadfast in it. This supplication reflects the servant's neediness before Allah for guidance, urging them to persist in seeking Allah's guidance to the right path and to remain firm upon it. Many paths may entice and lead one astray, but there is only one true path – the { الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ } [straight path] – which leads to Allah and is pleasing to Him, the path that leads to His Paradise.

This entails adhering to Islam, the religion of Allah, described by Allah in the verse: { صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ } [The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor]. This is the path of those whom Allah has blessed, including the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous. There is no other straight path besides this, as Allah negates all other paths by saying: { غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ } [not of those who have evoked Your anger] – those who knew the truth and abandoned it, like the Jews – and { وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ } [nor of those who went astray] – those who lost their way from the truth due to ignorance and misguidance, like the Christians and others.

Among the significant insights of this noble and blessed Surah is that it serves as a spiritual remedy (ruqyah) for the sick. As mentioned in a hadith, a companion recited Surah Al-Fatiha over a man during a journey, and Allah healed him. When they returned, they informed the Prophet (ﷺ),

who remarked, "How did he know that it is a ruqyah?" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3/342, Hadith 5007).

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said to the companion, Sa'id bin Al-Mu'alla (RA), "Shall I not teach you the greatest Surah in the Quran before you leave the mosque?" The companion (RA) narrates: "He took my hand, and when we were about to leave, I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, you said you would teach me the greatest Surah in the Quran.' The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, '{ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ } [All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds]. It is the seven oft-repeated verses and the great Quran which I have been given." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3/342, Hadith 5006).

One of the profound benefits of this blessed Surah is highlighted in the following Hadith Qudsi: Allah Almighty said, "I have divided the prayer between Myself and My servant into two halves, and My servant shall have what he asks for. When the servant says, { الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ } [All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds], Allah says, 'My servant has praised Me,' and My servant shall have what he asks for. When he says, { الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ } [The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful], Allah says, 'My servant has extolled Me,' and My servant shall have what he asks for. When he says, { مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ } [Master of the Day of Judgment], Allah says, 'My servant has glorified Me.' This is for Me, and this verse is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall have what he asks for. When he says, { إِلَهِكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ } [You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help], Allah says, 'This is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall have what he asks for.' The rest of the Surah is for My servant.' When he says, { اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ. صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ } [Guide us on the straight path, the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked Your anger, nor of those who are astray], Allah says, 'This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what he asks for.'" (Sunan Ibn Majah, 2/1243-1244, Hadith 3784).

The Insights from Surah Al-Baqarah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

{الم (١) ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ (٢) الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ (٣) وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ (٤) أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (٥)}

[Alif, Lam, Meem (1). This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for the righteous (2). Those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them (3). And those who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain (4). It is they who are upon guidance from their Lord, and it is they who are the successful (5).] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:1-5)

The second chapter of the Quran begins with three disjointed letters, {الم}. These letters leave the human intellect bewildered, unable to grasp their full meaning. These three letters stand as a profound and enigmatic sign, leaving one astonished at their composition, something unheard of and beyond any preconceived linguistic structure. This sense of mystery naturally compels the listener to eagerly continue and discover what follows. The true meaning and intention behind these letters are known only to Allah. We believe in them and recite them as they have been revealed, acknowledging them as part of the unseen knowledge that Allah has kept hidden from us.

The purpose of these letters also serves as a test of faith, challenging believers to accept and acknowledge them as they are. Regarding their benefits, a group of scholars insists that we should contemplate their

significance and seek to derive lessons from them. As mentioned in "Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an," some scholars have said, "It is obligatory to reflect on them and explore the wisdom behind them" (Al-Qurtubi, 1/109).

One of the benefits of these letters is to capture attention. Qutrub, an expert in the Arabic language, mentioned that the Arabs used to turn away when they heard the Quran. However, when they heard {الم} and {المص}, they were intrigued by these unfamiliar sounds and, upon listening, were drawn into the harmonious and captivating flow of the Quran. This served to establish the Quran in their hearts and minds and to present an irrefutable argument against them (Al-Qurtubi, 1/109).

When these disjointed letters were revealed, the people were left perplexed. They were addressed in a language that they could not fully comprehend, which compelled them to listen more attentively. Human nature is drawn to the unknown, so when they listened, Allah then addressed them in language they could understand. This method served as a means of communication to ensure the message was delivered effectively. Although the specific meaning of these letters might remain unknown to them, it is believed that their significance is known to others and ultimately to the one addressed. This approach applies to all the disjointed letters in the Quran (Ibn al-Jawzi, Zad al-Masir fi Ilm al-Tafsir, 1/17).

This passage highlights the importance of creating curiosity in teaching and effectively capturing the attention of the audience. It emphasizes the need to make the listener aware of the value in what they are about to learn, whether it be knowledge, wisdom, or advice.

One of the key insights from the beginning of Surah Al-Baqarah is its declaration that the Quran is free from doubt: {ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ} [This is the Book about which there is no doubt]. This assertion is immediately followed by the proclamation that the Quran is {هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ} [a guidance for the righteous]. By first dispelling doubt and then affirming its guidance, the Quran draws the listener in, encouraging them to engage with its

teachings. As they listen, they are naturally drawn to the truths, moral virtues, and goodness it offers, as well as the beauty of its language and the miraculous nature of its eloquence. However, this guidance is fully embraced only by those who approach it with humility, as arrogance can close the heart to divine guidance.

Sheikh Ibn Sa'di (RA) notes that by negating doubt, the Quran inherently establishes certainty. This book is filled with certain knowledge that dispels confusion and skepticism. This principle is valuable, as the negation of something negative is a form of praise, highlighting the positive qualities that remain (Tafsir al-Sa'di, 1/31).

This teaches us the importance of beginning with the removal of doubt, uncertainty, and misconceptions when guiding others. By doing so, we clear their minds and hearts, making them receptive to truth and goodness. It also underscores the idea that the teacher or guide should be someone well-versed in what they are teaching, thereby earning the trust of their audience. The Surah opens with something that is beyond human understanding, {الم}, to make it clear that this book is not the work of any human, not even the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), but rather it is from Allah, the All-Knowing of the unseen and the seen.

This verse carries profound and intricate meanings, where the mind is left in awe. The various pauses in the verse provide different insights, with each pause offering a unique interpretation: {ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ} [This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for the righteous], {ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ} [This is the Book about which there is no doubt], {فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ} [In it is guidance for the righteous], and so on. Each pause reveals a new layer of meaning, showcasing the Quran's miraculous eloquence. This fluidity and richness in meaning, simply by altering the pauses, illustrate the Quran's profound depth. Indeed, glory be to the One who revealed such a text, challenging both humans and jinn with its unparalleled eloquence.

Another key insight is that the guidance mentioned in the verse is not confined to a specific domain or aspect of life. It is universal, encompassing all that is beneficial both in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah specifically mentions {هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ} [a guidance for the righteous] because those who approach the Quran with sincerity will find themselves guided by it. As they follow its teachings, they grow in righteousness, ultimately achieving piety through their engagement with the Quran's guidance.

This understanding is elaborated upon by scholars such as Imam Al-Qurtubi in "Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an" (1/108-113), Ibn al-Jawzi in "Zad al-Masir fi Ilm al-Tafsir" (1/18-19), and Ibn Sa'di in "Taisir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan" (1/31).

One of the insights drawn from these verses is the method of providing detailed explanation after a general statement. After mentioning the righteous (the muttaqeen) who benefit from what Allah has revealed, the Quran elaborates on the foundations of piety: belief in the unseen, establishing prayer, spending from what Allah has provided, believing in what was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), believing in what was revealed before him to previous prophets, and having certainty in the Hereafter.

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

[Those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them, and who believe in what has been revealed to you [O Muhammad] and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:3-4).

The practice of providing detailed explanation after a general statement has significant educational benefits. The general statement creates curiosity and

prepares the mind to grasp the essence of the message quickly. This is followed by detailed explanation, which helps in deepening understanding. In teaching, preaching, and conveying knowledge, starting with a general statement and then elaborating on it can effectively engage the learner's interest and enhance comprehension.

Belief in the unseen is mentioned first because it serves as the foundation for other aspects of faith and actions. Believing in the unseen involves intellectual submission to that which is beyond the perception of sight and hearing. This belief is a great blessing, and those who are granted this faith have received one of the highest blessings, upon which other blessings follow. Although the soul may find it challenging to fully act upon this belief, acceptance of it is less difficult.

Another point of significance is that Allah attributes provision to Himself by saying {وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ} [and spend out of what We have provided for them], rather than saying "what they have earned." This teaches that provision is a grace from Allah, and human effort is merely a means to attain it. Some may strive but gain little, while others may reap great benefits far beyond their efforts. This is further emphasized in Surah Adh-Dhariyat:

{وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ}

[And in the heaven is your provision and what you are promised]

(Surah Adh-Dhariyat, 51:22).

Sheikh Ibn Sa'di (RA) commented that Allah specifically mentioned belief in the Hereafter after the general mention of faith because it is the strongest motivator for both hope and fear, and thus for action (Tafsir al-Sa'di, 1/34).

The person who is certain of the Hereafter will prepare for it by fulfilling the required duties. The verses encourage this preparation by promising

great rewards – ultimate success and prosperity {وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ} [And it is they who are the successful]. This success refers to attaining what the person desires and avoiding what they fear.

After explaining the paths to success as outlined in the noble Quran, Allah then describes the characteristics of the disbelievers:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٦) خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (٧) وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ (٨) يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ (٩) فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ (١٠)

[Indeed, those who disbelieve—it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them—they will not believe (6). Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil. And for them is a great punishment (7). And of the people are some who say, "We believe in Allah and the Last Day," but they are not believers (8). They [think to] deceive Allah and those who believe, but they deceive not except themselves and perceive [it] not (9). In their hearts is disease, so Allah has increased their disease; and for them is a painful punishment because they [habitually] used to lie (10).] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:6-10)

After Allah Almighty described the attributes of the people of faith, piety, and worship, and their success in attaining prosperity, He then mentioned the state of the disbelievers who are stubborn, arrogant, and obstinate. These disbelievers have reached such a level of defiance and pride that they reject faith out of sheer stubbornness and arrogance. As a result, warnings have no effect on them and are of no benefit. Allah says: { إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ } [Indeed, those who disbelieve—it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them—they will not believe] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:6).

One of the lessons from this is that some people refuse to accept the truth, even when it is as clear to them as the sun at midday. A caller to Islam should not waste their time focusing solely on such arrogant individuals who have turned away from the clear truth. Allah has sealed their hearts, hearing, and sight because of their arrogance and rejection of the evident

truth—they are the defiant disbelievers. This underscores the danger of arrogance and the refusal to accept Allah's gift and grace.

Allah has deprived these individuals of benefiting from the sources of learning: the hearts with which people understand, the hearing with which they listen, and the sight with which they see. Allah says: { خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ } [Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:7).

Arrogance can manifest in major matters, such as rejecting Islam, faith, and the undeniable truth. It can also manifest in lesser matters. For example, a person who refuses to accept the truth from legitimate sources may find that Allah withholds from them what they arrogantly rejected. A person who looks down on someone weaker or in a less fortunate situation may one day find themselves in need of that very person, or they may even be placed under their authority in some aspect of life. This highlights the importance of humility, which drives one to perform righteous deeds, brings about tranquility, attracts goodness, and leads to the acceptance of truth and acting upon it.

Just as the believers are the successful ones, the disbelievers are the losers, facing a grievous punishment, as Allah says: { وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ } [And for them is a great punishment] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:7). This is both a reward for the believers and a recompense for the disbelievers.

Allah then describes another group of people—the hypocrites, who outwardly display faith while concealing disbelief. Allah says: { وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ } [And of the people are some who say, "We believe in Allah and the Last Day," but they are not believers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:8). Their actions are intended to deceive and manipulate: { يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ } [They [think to] deceive Allah and those who believe, but they deceive not except themselves and perceive [it] not] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:9).

Deception is to make someone believe something contrary to what is hidden in reality (Al-Baydawi, *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil*, 1/25). However, no one can deceive Allah, the Almighty, because nothing is hidden from Him. When they attempt to deceive Allah, it is a deception of Allah's religion, outwardly showing belief while concealing the opposite, just as they try to deceive the Messenger (ﷺ) by pretending to follow the religion while hiding their disbelief.

The hypocrite is a deceiver, foolishly thinking that he has outwitted others, while in reality, he only deceives himself. Allah says, {وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ} [They deceive not except themselves] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:9). Imam Al-Qurtubi (RA) explains: "This means that the consequences of their deception will fall back on them alone. Deception only works on those who are unaware of the inner realities, but when someone tries to deceive Allah, they are only deceiving themselves. This indicates that the hypocrites did not truly know Allah, for if they had known Him, they would have known that He cannot be deceived" (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 1/137).

This is because Allah is fully aware of their secrets, their inner thoughts, and what they conceal in their hearts, as well as the deceitful actions they will carry out in the future. Yet, they do not realize that by attempting to deceive others, they are only deceiving themselves. Allah says, {وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ} [They deceive not except themselves, and they perceive it not] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:9). This is one of the most disgraceful paths a person can take—walking among people, unaware that others know the reality of their vile actions, beliefs, and behaviors. They falsely believe that their hypocrisy protects them from being exposed, but in reality, they are naked in their conduct and morals, as Allah reveals their true nature to others, sooner or later. Or Allah may set in motion the exposure of their reality, as He says in Surah Fatir, {وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِ} [But the evil plot does not encompass except its own people] (Surah Fatir, 35:43).

People vary in their interactions; some are stubborn and arrogant, as Allah describes: {سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ} [It is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them—they will not believe] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:6). Others are deceivers, as mentioned: {يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [They [think to] deceive Allah and those who believe] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:9). These two types of people can be found on the level of faith and Islam, or even in everyday interactions between people. There are those who are openly defiant, and others who pretend to agree and accept, while hiding the opposite in their hearts. Both are among the worst and most disgraceful of character traits.

Allah's punishment for the arrogant who reject the truth is both in this world and the Hereafter. Allah says, {خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ أَبْصَارِهِمْ} [Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil. And for them is a great punishment] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:7).

One of the benefits of these verses is that they highlight the disease of the heart: {فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا} [In their hearts is disease, so Allah has increased their disease] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:10). Their rejection of the messengers, what was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), their denial of the truth, and their skepticism worsened the disease in their already sick hearts. As a punishment, Allah increased their disease. This emphasizes the importance of avoiding paths and behaviors that lead to rejecting the truth and falling into doubts. A person should cling to Allah and to what was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)—the Quran and the purified Sunnah. Just as one would protect their body from physical illnesses, they should protect their faith from anything that may sicken their heart with doubts and uncertainties. May Allah protect us from them. Allah has warned against this, as He says in Surah As-Saff, {فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ} [So when they deviated, Allah caused their hearts to deviate] (Surah As-Saff, 61:5). On the other hand, the more a person seeks guidance, the more Allah guides them, as He says in Surah Maryam, {وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى}

[And Allah increases those who were guided, in guidance] (Surah Maryam, 19:76).

Another important lesson is to avoid deception in religion, whether by trying to justify what Allah has forbidden or by neglecting what Allah has commanded. This is a characteristic of the hypocrites. Allah knows the treachery of the eyes and what the hearts conceal; nothing is hidden from Him in the heavens or on the earth.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ (١١) أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ (١٢) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (١٣)

[And when it is said to them, "Do not cause corruption on the earth," they say, "We are but reformers" (11). Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive it not (12). And when it is said to them, "Believe as the people have believed," they say, "Should we believe as the foolish have believed?" Unquestionably, it is they who are the foolish, but they know it not (13).] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:11-13)

Allah Almighty then explains the state of the hypocrites in how they perceive corruption and truth: {وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ} [And when it is said to them, "Do not cause corruption on the earth," they say, "We are but reformers"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:11). They see their hypocritical actions as righteousness, claiming, in their delusion and falsehood, that they are actually reforming. However, Allah rebukes their false understanding from above the seven heavens: {أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ} [Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive it not] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:12). They are the corrupters, corrupted by their own actions, yet they are oblivious to this reality due to their overwhelming disbelief, arrogance, and malice. They believe that what they are doing is right and good.

One of the insights from this verse is that a stubborn person does not reflect on what is being discussed or debated; instead, they focus on how to counter the argument. As soon as it is said to them, "Do not cause corruption on the earth"—due to their hypocritical actions, such as disbelief, sins, and revealing the secrets of the believers to the enemy—they respond with, "We are but reformers." This is an attempt to disguise their

falsehood as righteousness. This teaches us that the hypocrite and the stubborn person do not acknowledge the evil of their actions but instead justify them with arguments that they falsely believe will convince others, even though they know deep down that others see through their corruption. They walk arrogantly in their falsehood, believing that others do not perceive their hypocrisy, while their corruption is clear and evident to the righteous.

This also highlights that a true reformer, who loves righteousness, listens attentively, reflects, and contemplates to discern what is truly right and beneficial so that they may act upon it. A believer does not stubbornly resist righteousness; rather, they submit to it, knowing that corruption is the opposite of righteousness. Whether this corruption is in faith, acts of worship, morals, or in social, professional, or familial dealings, the believer avoids it by adhering to the truth without stubbornness.

Furthermore, corruption on earth is not limited to polluting its soil, water, or air; it also includes sins that provoke the wrath of the Lord, the Exalted. When the earth is corrupted with sins, Allah may punish its inhabitants for their actions, as He says in Surah Al-A'raf: { وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ } [And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth; but they denied [the messengers], so We seized them for what they were earning] (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:96).

Moreover, the stubborn hypocrite labels the righteousness of others as ignorance and foolishness. Allah says: { وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ آمَنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا } [And when it is said to them, "Believe as the people have believed," they say, "Should we believe as the foolish have believed?"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:13). They describe the righteous believers as foolish, a term they use to refer to someone of weak intellect who cannot manage affairs wisely. Out of their arrogance, they ask this in a scornful manner,

"Should we believe as the foolish have believed?" Their standards and values have been so distorted that they truly believe they are the righteous ones and that the believers are the foolish corrupters.

This teaches us that when a person's heart and mind are clouded with misguidance, they may see their corruption as righteousness and progress, justifying their actions with deceptive and false arguments. It also highlights the importance of discernment and patience in understanding what others say, avoiding the behaviors of hypocrites and the stubborn in their morals and actions.

The stubborn and obstinate person may label the truth, wisdom, and righteousness of others as foolishness, ignorance, and corruption, without realizing the corruption within their own mind and soul. This is the result of their arrogance and disbelief dominating them. Allah says: {أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ ۚ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ} [Unquestionably, it is they who are the foolish, but they know it not] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:13).

Allah responds to their false claims by affirming that they are indeed the foolish ones: {أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ ۚ} [Unquestionably, it is they who are the foolish]. He also describes them as being unaware of their own foolishness: {أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ} [Unquestionably, it is they who are the foolish, but they know it not]. Regarding their deception and corruption, however, Allah did not say they were ignorant, but rather that they are unaware of their true state: {وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ} [They deceive not except themselves, and they perceive it not] and {أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ} [Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive it not] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:9 and 2:12).

This subtle distinction in the Quranic language highlights the depth of the descriptions used. There is a precise difference between "not feeling" (لا يشعرون) and "not knowing" (لا يعلمون). Foolishness (سفه) involves a lack of wisdom and the inability to make sound decisions, so the most accurate description of such behavior is "not knowing," because they lack the

necessary understanding. Their actions resemble those of someone who lacks the rational mind that would otherwise guide them to faith, due to their foolishness. However, this does not mean they lack the intellect needed for responsibility, as stated in Surah Al-Mulk: { وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا { [And they will say, "If only we had been listening or reasoning, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze"] (Surah Al-Mulk, 67:10). Their deficiency relates to the lack of sound judgment, not the intellect required for accountability.

As for "not feeling" (الشعور), it refers to awareness linked to perception and sensation. They do not perceive or sense the consequences of their deception and corruption. They are oblivious to the fact that they are deceiving those who recognize their hypocritical deceit, and they do not sense that they are the ones causing corruption. As a result, they continue in their deception and corruption, while being exposed in their deceit and corruption, yet they do not perceive it. This is one of the most detrimental states a person can be in – may Allah protect us from it – when one loses the awareness and sensitivity to their own corruption and deceit, so they continue to deceive and corrupt, all the while believing they are clever and intelligent, unaware that others see through their deceit and corruption.

If the hypocrites and the obstinate ones label the believers as foolish for their faith, saying: { اَلْأَوْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ } [Should we believe as the foolish have believed?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:13), it should come as no surprise that throughout the ages, the truth, goodness, and righteousness, along with its adherents, have been similarly maligned by deniers and haters. Therefore, a believer should prepare themselves to hear unpleasant things from the enemies of the religion and deal with them wisely. The same applies when hearing the voices of falsehood attacking virtue – one should approach these situations with wisdom. This is part of the natural human differences in good and evil. Allah is fully capable of destroying them for their hypocrisy and disbelief, but His wisdom and forbearance, in accordance

with His divine plan, allow His creation to follow the path of His wisdom and patience.

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ (١٤) اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ (١٥)

[And when they meet those who believe, they say, "We believe"; but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say, "Indeed, we are with you; we were only mocking" (14). Allah mocks them and prolongs them in their transgression while they wander blindly (15).] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:14-15)

The Quranic context then illustrates the nature of the hypocrites' deceit, showing how they claim to be believers when they meet the believers: {وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا} [And when they meet those who believe, they say, "We believe"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:14). However, when they are alone with their leaders, they reveal their true loyalty: {وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ} [But when they are alone with their evil ones, they say, "Indeed, we are with you; we were only mocking"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:14). When they return to their “devils” and are alone with them, they disavow the believers and affirm their allegiance to their “devils,” who are their leaders. Some commentators have said these “devils” refer to the jinn, while others have said they refer to the soothsayers. However, the term “devils” (شَيَاطِينِهِمْ) in this context, which means those far removed from faith and goodness, encompasses all these interpretations. Allah knows best (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 1/145).

This is one of the subtleties of Quranic eloquence, where a single word can encompass multiple intended meanings. The term “devils” (شَيَاطِينِهِمْ) includes all individuals who exhibit the actions of devils. Glory be to the One who has amazed and challenged His creation with His Book. The precision in the Quranic language is also evident in how it describes their encounters with the believers as meetings (لقاء) and their encounters with their devils as private sessions (خلوة). {وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [And when they meet those who believe] and {وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ} [But when they are alone with

their devils] indicate that the believers' affairs are clear and open, with no secret plots, as their meetings are public. However, when the hypocrites meet their devils, it is in secret, away from the eyes of the believers. This gives a clear picture of the hypocrites' deceit and reflects the profound eloquence of the Quran.

The essence of these verses highlights the methodology of the hypocrites, which is based on a fundamental principle: outwardly agreeing with the believers while secretly opposing and betraying them, siding with the enemies of the believers in private. This calls for caution and vigilance against those who exhibit hypocritical behavior, as no matter how much they appear to agree outwardly, it is nothing more than deception. One who attempts to deceive Allah is undoubtedly more capable of deceiving others. This is a devilish trait, as Allah describes them: { وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا { إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ } [But when they are alone with their devils, they say, "Indeed, we are with you"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:14). Allah has described them with the very nature they have adopted, indicating that a person is described by the traits they adopt and make their way of life. Allah has labeled those they turn to as devils because their behavior is devilish.

This divine revelation exposes their reality so that the believers can clearly recognize the truth and beware of those who follow a hypocritical path. It also serves as a warning to believers to avoid such devilish behavior. The Prophet (ﷺ) warned against the person with two faces who comes to one group with one face and to another with a different face. He said, "You will find among the worst of people those who are two-faced, who appear to some people with one face and to others with another face" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 2/503, Hadith 3494). This refers to someone who approaches each group with what pleases them, concealing their true intentions.

One of the insights from these verses is the concept of justification and rationalization that often accompanies deviance. Those who are misguided tend to justify their corruption and misguidance to themselves and others.

When the hypocrites return to their devils, they say, {إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ} [Indeed, we are with you; we were only mocking] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:14). They rationalize their behavior to their devils by claiming that their interactions with the believers are mere mockery and that their true loyalty lies with their devils, their leaders in misguidance and enmity. However, Allah knows their true state and does not hasten to punish them immediately because He is forbearing. Instead, He prolongs their time in their transgression until He seizes them with His might and power. Allah says, {اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ} [Allah mocks them and prolongs them in their transgression while they wander blindly] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:15). This means that He will exact revenge on them, punish them, mock them in return, and recompense them for their mockery. The punishment is thus named after the sin, as the majority of scholars have interpreted (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 1/145).

This teaches the believer to be cautious and not to be deceived by the respite Allah gives to the tyrant in their transgression, nor to be impatient for Allah to destroy the transgressors and bring victory over them. As Allah says in Surah Aal-Imran: {لَا يَغُرَّتْكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ. مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَاؤُهُمْ {جَهَنَّمَ} وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ} [Do not be deceived by the [uninhibited] movement of the disbelievers throughout the land. [It is but] a small enjoyment; then their [final] refuge is Hell, and wretched is the resting place] (Surah Aal-Imran, 3:196-197). Similarly, a believer should be wary of engaging in sinful behavior, thinking that Allah's delay in punishment is a sign of approval. Allah is patient, but His punishment is severe and inevitable. The believer should not be influenced by the delay in punishment for the oppressor or the sinner, for Allah allows them to continue, but His grasp is powerful and unrelenting.

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبَحَتِ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ﴾ (١٦) مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ (١٧) صُمُّ بَعْضٍ عَمِّي فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ (١٨) أَوْ كَصَيْبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ (١٩) يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٢٠) {

[Those are the ones who have purchased error [in exchange] for guidance, so their transaction has brought no profit, nor were they guided (16). Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see (17). Deaf, dumb, and blind – so they will not return [to the right path] (18). Or [it is] like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder, and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps in dread of death. But Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers (19). The lightning almost snatches away their sight. Every time it lights [the way] for them, they walk therein; but when darkness comes over them, they stand still. And if Allah had willed, He could have taken away their hearing and their sight. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent (20).] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:16-20)

The Quranic narrative then shifts to describe the state and condition of the hypocrites: ﴿أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ﴾ [Those are the ones who have purchased error [in exchange] for guidance] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:16). These individuals chose misguidance over guidance, paying the price of guidance for the sake of acquiring misguidance. The beauty and precision in describing the hypocrites' conduct lie in how Allah describes their actions as a transaction—purchasing misguidance at the expense of guidance. What greater folly is there than this? What greater foolishness can there be? In any purchase, a person pays for something they desire, usually offering something of lesser value in exchange. This verse underscores the immense and catastrophic loss they incur in both this

world and the Hereafter. Allah then clarifies the outcome of this trade: {فَمَا رِبْحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ} [Their transaction has brought no profit] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:16). It is a losing deal, as they were not on the path of guidance that would enable them to "purchase" faith. Conversely, the believers are the ones who profit from their transactions with Allah. This highlights the importance of precise description in conveying intended meanings, teaching, and guidance, and the importance of detailed imagery in selecting expressions that accurately depict the message.

Allah then provides a parable to illustrate the condition of the hypocrites: {مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ} [Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:17). Allah uses this parable to allow everyone who seeks truth and guidance to understand their condition. The use of parables is one of the most effective ways to convey knowledge and understanding by clearly illustrating the situation. Al-Baydawi (RA) commented, "It is more effective for the heart and more convincing to the opponent" (Al-Baydawi, *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil*).

The hypocrites, who were in the darkness of disbelief, are likened to someone in complete darkness who kindles a fire to dispel the darkness of night around them. They initially benefit from the light of the fire, just as they initially benefit from the religion of Allah, which dispels the darkness of disbelief in belief, worship, morals, and all aspects of life. They recognized the truth of this religion through its light, just as they recognized the fire through its light. However, their desires and devils overpowered them, and they exchanged faith for hypocrisy. Allah then took away their light, just as the light of a fire goes out, leaving them in the darkness of disbelief. Their condition is then described as: {صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ} [Deaf, dumb, and blind – so they will not return [to the right path]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:18). They are in darkness, symbolizing disbelief,

unable to see anything, mute and unable to speak for anyone to hear, and thus unable to return to their previous state of faith.

The expression "they kindled a fire" (استوقد نارًا) is used in the singular form, while the extinguishing of the light is mentioned in the plural: { ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ } [بُنُورِهِمْ] [Allah took away their light] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:17). As Imam Al-Qurtubi (RA) explains, "The one who kindled the fire was one among a group, but when the light went out, it affected all of them" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 1/148).

This is a powerful and eloquent expression, even in its structure and organization. The Quranic language here is as precise as it is clear, perfectly matching the intricacies of the situation. Imam Ibn Kathir (RA) elaborates on Allah's words: { ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ } [Allah took away their light] by explaining that Allah removed what benefited them—the light—and left them with what harms them—the burning and smoke. { وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ } [And left them in darkness] refers to the darkness of doubt, disbelief, and hypocrisy. { لَا يَبْصُرُونَ } [They do not see] means they cannot find their way to any good, nor do they recognize it. Meanwhile, they are { صُمٌّ } [deaf] to hearing any good, { بُكْمٌ } [dumb] in speaking what benefits them, and { عُمْيٌ } [blind] in their misguided understanding and spiritual blindness (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/56).

From this, it is understood that a believer who has recognized the light of faith must take advantage of this parable by safeguarding the light of Islam in their heart, actions, and limbs through worship and obedience, and by avoiding the causes of weakened faith and its potential loss. This is to prevent them from losing it as the stubborn hypocrite did, for the extinguishing of the light of faith is like the extinguishing of a fire's light,

leaving one vulnerable to the devils who come in various forms and employ different methods of misguidance.

There is also a warning against self-conceit, which leads to arrogance, and against belittling other believers in their faith and worship, or mocking the ignorance of those who lack understanding. Instead, one should be grateful for their current state and offer sincere advice, guidance, and teaching without belittling or looking down upon others. Moreover, one must not become arrogant about the faith and worship they have been granted, or any other blessings Allah has provided, falsely believing that they achieved and maintained them by their own doing. There is also a warning against exchanging the blessings of Allah for sins that incur His wrath.

Allah then presents a parable about the hypocrite who dislikes hearing the voice of truth and the verses of Allah: { أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ } [Or [it is] like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder, and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps in dread of death. But Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:19).

Their example in turning away from the verses of Allah and avoiding the voice of truth is like a person struck by a rainstorm in the darkness of night, with the darkness of clouds, the darkness of rain, the sound of thunder, and the flash of lightning, all terrifying him. Similarly, when they hear the verses of Allah, they are overwhelmed with fear, just as a person puts their fingers in their ears, fearing death.

And Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers, as He says: { وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ } [And Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:19). None of them can escape Him, for He will gather them on the Day of Judgment. "Encompassing" can mean destruction, as in { وَأُحِيطَ } [And his fruit was encompassed (by ruin)] (Surah Al-Kahf, 18:42), and it can also mean the ability to control and seize them completely, so

they cannot escape from Him ever. It also encompasses knowledge, punishment, and whatever He wills. This demonstrates the precise description of their condition when hearing the truth and its light, as they feel it as a frightening thunder, due to the disbelief that brings upon them the threat of Allah's punishment.

Therefore, a believer must strive for steadfastness and continually ask Allah for firmness in faith. Umm Salama (RA) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) would frequently supplicate, {يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ} [O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart firm upon Your religion] (Sunan al-Tirmidhi, 5/503, Hadith 3522).

إِذَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (٢١) الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٢٢) وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٢٣) فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ (٢٤) وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِزْقًا قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَنْتُوا بِهِ مُتَشَابِهًا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٢٥)

[O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous (21). He who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a canopy and sent down from the sky rain and brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him] (22). And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful (23). But if you do not—and you will never be able to—then fear the Fire, whose fuel is people and stones, prepared for the disbelievers (24). And give good tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds that they will have gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow. Whenever they are provided with a provision of fruit therefrom, they will say, "This is what we were provided with before." But it is given to them in likeness. And they will have therein purified spouses, and they will abide therein eternally (25).] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:21-25)

The Quranic narrative then transitions to a call from Allah to all of humanity, urging them to worship Him: {إِذَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ} [O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you]. This great verse begins with Allah addressing all people with the phrase {إِذَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ} [O mankind], which carries the implication of drawing attention to a matter of immense importance—worshiping Him, the Almighty: {اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ} [Worship your Lord]. This highlights the significance of the call, which serves to alert and identify the intended audience. Allah addresses all of humanity, and some

have said that He specifically addresses the disbelievers. Those who believe the address is to all people argue that it serves as a reminder to the believers to continue in their worship and as an invitation to the disbelievers to begin worshiping Allah (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 1/157).

This indicates that a general and important address can be inclusive, targeting both those directly concerned and others, so that the latter may understand what is being conveyed to the primary audience in terms of guidance and warning. This serves to reinforce the continuity, reassurance, knowledge, and awareness of the importance for the believers, while also serving as a clear directive and warning to the disbelievers.

The verse also employs the method of providing reasoning after issuing a command. Allah commands all people to worship Him: { يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ } [O mankind, worship your Lord], and then explains the reason for His exclusive right to be worshiped, stating that it is He who has nurtured you with His blessings and created you from nothing. The command is coupled with reasoning related to His lordship, as seen in the phrase { يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ } [O mankind, worship your Lord], indicating that if the reader were to stop at the word { اعْبُدُوا } [worship], the full meaning of the command would not be complete without the phrase { رَبَّكُمُ } [your Lord].

Furthermore, the verse outlines the objective, linking it to the well-being of humanity: { لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ } [that you may become righteous]. This demonstrates that achieving righteousness leads to success in both worlds, as Allah states in Surah An-Naba: { إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا } [Indeed, for the righteous is attainment] (Surah An-Naba, 78:31). This serves as a valuable educational and motivational insight, emphasizing the importance of explaining the benefits and advantages that accrue to a person from what they learn or are asked to do, thus acting as a motivating factor. Human nature is inherently inclined towards seeking benefits.

The reasoning includes seven justifications:

1. {رَبَّكُمْ} (your Lord) – the one who nurtured you with His blessings.
2. {الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ} (who created you) – the one who brought you into existence from nothingness.
3. {خَلَقَ...الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ} (who created those before you) – He also created those who came before you, bringing them into existence from nothingness.
4. {جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا} (made the earth a bed for you) – He made the earth a spread where you sit, sleep, and walk upon.
5. {وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً} (and the sky a canopy) – He made the sky a structure like a dome above you.
6. {وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً} (sent down from the sky water) – He sent down rain, giving life to the earth and causing plants to grow, which nourish humans, animals, and all creatures.
7. {فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ} (brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you) – He produced fruits as sustenance for you.

Although animals and creatures share in consuming what the earth produces, the human being is singled out because they are the primary beneficiaries, with other creatures following suit. Allah subjected everything for human benefit, as He says in Surah Luqman: { أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ } [Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth?].

These are seven reasons that obligate the worship of Allah alone, with no partners. Each reason is immense, profound, and astonishing in its greatness. When one reflects on their creation and bodily composition, they are amazed by the complexity of their vision, hearing, intellect, understanding, and the movement of their limbs, among other aspects of Allah's magnificent craftsmanship. Reflecting on the successive generations, one is amazed by this continuous chain that only ceases by Allah's will. Considering the earth's vastness, its spread, its valleys between mountains, and the paths through which water flows to the seas, one is left in awe. Reflecting on the sky, the clouds that gather, and the rain

that descends, one recognizes the greatness of the Creator, who alone deserves worship. When pondering the relationship between the rain and the sprouting of plants, one is astounded by this connection, affirming that Allah is the Creator, and He alone deserves worship. Reflecting on the diversity of plants in their heights, sizes, shapes, and beauty, and the variety in the forms, sizes, and tastes of fruits, one is left in awe. Even reflecting on the variations within a single type of fruit can stir one's heart and mind towards faith, prompt the tongue to express gratitude and praise, and move the limbs towards obedience to Allah Almighty.

Following this clear and astonishing reasoning that draws attention to the greatness of His creation, Allah commands humanity not to attribute equals to Him, nor to direct any act of worship to anyone other than Him, who alone is worthy of it: {فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ} [So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know].

After this compelling reasoning, which affirms His sole right to worship and removes any doubt or obstacle to recognizing His divinity, the divine address then shifts to what was revealed to His Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ), namely the Quran. This transition is meant to remove any barriers to listening to, accepting, and understanding it. Allah says: {وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ} [And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:23).

In this verse, Allah addresses those who harbor doubt and skepticism about the Quran, challenging them to produce a single surah like it. This challenge is directed at the eloquent and articulate masters of the Arabic language, whether in poetry or prose, allowing them to seek help from whomever they wish among their supporters and witnesses: {وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ} [and call upon your witnesses other than Allah].

If their doubt is genuine, they should meet this challenge by producing a surah like the Quran, thus removing their skepticism and leading them to belief. However, if the obstacle is arrogance, it is because they have recognized the truth but stubbornly refuse to accept it. This indicates that the barriers to accepting truth, whether in belief, worship, education, or da'wah, may stem from either stubborn arrogance or ignorance, which may involve doubts about the authenticity of the information, simple ignorance, or compounded ignorance. Therefore, the educator or preacher must discern whether the obstacle is due to genuine doubt and incapacity or to stubborn arrogance, in order to address it appropriately.

Among the benefits of this divine statement is the importance of removing doubt (al-rayb) from the mind of the recipient. It highlights the need for the caller (da'i) to anticipate the possibility of such doubt in the one being called (mad'u) and to work to eliminate it. This underscores the importance of knowledge for anyone who takes on the responsibility of teaching and da'wah, as well as the significance of understanding the state of the one being addressed.

Another benefit is that the challenge encompasses two timeframes with no third option: the present {فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا} [But if you do not] and the future {وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا} [And you will never be able to]. This challenge serves as definitive proof that they will not be able to produce even a single surah like it {فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا} [But if you do not – and you will never be able to]. It clarifies that they will be incapable now and in the future. Ibn Kathir comments: "وَلَنْ" is a negation of possibility in the future, meaning they will never be able to do so. This, too, is another miracle, as it is a definitive and conclusive statement made in advance, without fear or hesitation, that this Quran will never be matched by anything like it, for all time (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/63).

He challenged them in Mecca and Medina on numerous occasions, despite their intense hostility toward him and their hatred of his religion. Despite

this, they were unable to meet the challenge. This is why Allah says, { فَإِنْ لَمْ } [But if you do not – and you will never be able to] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/63).

Following the challenge, the warning of the consequences is presented. { فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ } [Then fear the Fire, whose fuel is people and stones, prepared for the disbelievers]. This provides a pedagogical and da'wah lesson that warnings should follow a thorough and clear explanation, so that those who turn away from the truth out of doubt or laziness may be deterred.

The benefits also include maintaining a balance between warning and encouragement. After mentioning the fate of the disbelievers and what has been prepared for them, Allah mentions what He has prepared for the believers: { وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا } [And give good tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds that they will have gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow. Whenever they are provided with a provision of fruit therefrom, they will say, "This is what we were provided with before." But it is given to them in likeness. And they will have therein purified spouses, and they will abide therein eternally].

The verse begins with { وَبَشِّرِ } [And give good tidings], which emphasizes the importance of using the word "bashara" (good news) or its equivalents to encourage and mentally and emotionally prepare the recipient, as it carries within it the promise of good news, having a joyful and profound effect on the soul.

One of the profound benefits found in this verse is the brevity and lack of excessive detail regarding the descriptions of Paradise, its fruits, and rivers, as well as the levels of faith and types of righteous deeds. Despite the brevity, the reader of the verse can sense all the intricate details, which is part of the miraculous eloquence of the Quran. Additionally, it highlights

the significance of faith and righteous deeds, which, by Allah's mercy, grace, and generosity, grant the believer entry into Paradise.

The verse also includes an element of anticipation, starting with the phrase {وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [And give good tidings to those who believe], leading to the description of Paradise and its gardens beneath which rivers flow. There, the believers are provided with fruits, and each time they are given fruits, they say, "This is similar to what we had before." It is not exactly the same, but it resembles it in color while differing in taste and flavor. As they eat from the fruits, they are brought more, and they say, "This is similar to what we had before." The angels then tell them, "Eat, for the color is the same, but the taste is different." (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/66).

Moreover, in Paradise, they have purified spouses, free from all defects. The verse also emphasizes a crucial truth for humanity: {وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ} [and they will abide therein eternally], meaning an eternal life without death thereafter.

Another important benefit is the emphasis on the necessity of pairing faith with righteous deeds to attain and enter the Gardens of Allah: {وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ} [And give good tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds that they will have gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow].

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ (٢٦) الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ (٢٧)}

[Indeed, Allah is not timid to present an example – whether it is that of a mosquito or what is above it. As for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord. But as for those who disbelieve, they say, "What did Allah intend by this as an example?" He misleads many thereby and guides many thereby. And He misleads not except the defiantly disobedient (26) who break the covenant of Allah after contracting it and sever that which Allah has ordered to be joined and cause corruption on earth. It is those who are the losers (27).] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:26-27)

Sa'id reported from Qatadah that Allah does not shy away from mentioning the truth, whether it be something small or large. When Allah mentioned the fly and the spider in His Book, the people of misguidance said, "What did Allah intend by mentioning this?" So, Allah revealed this verse: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا} [Indeed, Allah is not timid to present an example – whether it is that of a mosquito or what is above it] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/67).

This highlights the importance of using parables to convey knowledge to the audience. One should not shy away from using an example, even if it seems small or insignificant to the learner, as the main objective is to convey the knowledge effectively. Similarly, one should not hesitate to convey the truth to others, using various appropriate methods that achieve the intended purpose and goal.

Additionally, it shows that the stubborn denier often diminishes the value of truth and its methods and contents by belittling it and describing it inadequately, to reassure themselves and to instill doubt and suspicion in others through mockery and ridicule of the truth.

This illustrates Allah's care for His servants in conveying the truth to them through all the means that can deliver His message, such as sending prophets, performing miracles, and diversifying methods to achieve the goal. It also emphasizes the importance of reflecting on the educational and da'wah methodology of the Quran and adopting its approaches in explanation and persuasion.

One of the lessons drawn from this is that people are divided into two groups regarding the truth: one group accepts it, while the other stubbornly rejects and resists it: { فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا { فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا [As for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord. But as for those who disbelieve, they say, "What did Allah intend by this as an example?"]

This underscores the importance for reformers, preachers, scholars, and teachers to prepare themselves for this diversity and difference in acceptance. If this difference in acceptance occurs concerning a great matter from Allah, delivered by a noble Prophet with an exemplary life (ﷺ), then how much more so for those who are lesser than him and for matters related to people's interests and other worldly issues that are varied and diverse?

It also teaches that a believer does not stubbornly resist when they see the truth and correctness. Instead, they relinquish any incorrect thoughts or understandings they may have had, accept the truth, and adhere to it, for rejecting the truth is the path of the defiant disbelievers.

The truth is embraced and guided by those who are rightly guided, while it is rejected by the rebellious who are characterized by breaking the covenant of Allah, severing what Allah has commanded to be joined, and spreading corruption on earth. Allah says: { يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ } [He misleads many thereby and guides many thereby. And He misleads not except the defiantly disobedient, who break the

covenant of Allah after contracting it and sever that which Allah has ordered to be joined and cause corruption on earth. It is those who are the losers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:26-27).

This teaches us that the truth divides people into two groups: those who are guided by Allah's signs and what His prophets have brought, and those who are defiantly disobedient. The path of the disobedient includes breaking covenants and agreements, severing what Allah has commanded to be joined – such as ties of kinship and relationships. It has also been said that this applies generally to everything Allah has commanded to be maintained, with ties of kinship being a part of it (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 1/171).

Additionally, part of their behavior includes spreading corruption on earth through disbelief, sins, and inviting others to disbelief (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm al-Tafsir*, 1/44). These individuals are the true losers, for they have lost the Hereafter, which is the eternal life – either filled with bliss for the believer or with torment for the disbeliever.

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (٢٨) هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (٢٩)

[How can you disbelieve in Allah when you were lifeless and He brought you to life; then He will cause you to die, then He will bring you back to life, and then to Him you will be returned (28). It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth. Then He directed Himself to the heaven, and made them seven heavens, and He is Knowing of all things (29).] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:28-29]

This noble verse begins with a rhetorical question, preceded by a reproachful inquiry directed at the disbelievers regarding their disbelief in Allah, even though it is well established among them that they did not exist, that they were once nothingness, and then Allah brought them into existence. They were born as infants, lived for a period determined by Allah, and then, like others before them, they will die. This question serves as both a reproach and a statement of undeniable truth, one that no person can reject. The verse goes on to highlight another truth, one that the disbeliever must recognize and the ignorant should heed: the resurrection after death. Belief in the resurrection is necessitated by the understanding of these initial truths—nonexistence, creation, and death. The One who created human beings from nothing, gave them life, and then causes them to die, is certainly capable of resurrecting them once more. Resurrection is not difficult for the One who created and brought His creatures into existence from nothing.

This confirms the profound effectiveness of this instructional and declarative method, which brings the addressee back to a truth they know and cannot deny. It is also a dialogical method that provokes rational reflection, urging the listener to recognize what they may have been heedless of or deliberately ignoring. It is as if the addressee's inner voice admits: "Yes, I did not exist before, then the One who created me brought

me into life, and just as He causes others to die, He will cause me to die. Therefore, the One who created me is certainly able to resurrect me again, which necessitates belief in Him and worshiping Him alone, without any partners." Allah says: { كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ } [How can you disbelieve in Allah when you were lifeless and He brought you to life; then He will cause you to die, then He will bring you back to life, and then to Him you will be returned].

This type of rhetorical question, which includes an affirmative statement, stimulates the mind to contemplate, and it challenges the heart to reflect on how such an evident truth could be overlooked by any rational person. This demonstrates the importance of using this method in intellectual discussions, by confronting the addressee with the undeniable truths they already acknowledge, and then logically deriving from those truths the related matters, in a gradual progression until they are led to the intended conclusions and insights.

The verse that follows further reinforces the truth of creation and life, emphasizing the boundless power of Allah, for whom nothing is difficult, thus affirming the necessity of faith and the abandonment of disbelief. Allah says: { هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا } [It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth]. Everything on earth was created and brought into existence by the One who brought you into existence. Here, the verse invites reflection on life after nonexistence, and faith, while also drawing attention to the blessings present on and within the earth, reminding humanity that these are created for them. It encourages humans to contemplate the harmony between their existence and the existence of what they need on earth, recognizing the balance and perfect alignment between human needs and what has been provided on earth to fulfill them. Who else could have established this harmony and created this balance between what exists on earth and the needs of humanity? Even the seemingly minor or luxurious needs, such as the varying flavors of a single fruit, were created by Allah with meticulous precision. Take, for example,

the countless varieties of dates, each with subtle differences in taste, sweetness, color, size, and shape—even among dates from the same palm tree—let alone the diversity found across different trees.

The text also uses generality rather than detail to describe the types of blessings contained within the earth, as the reality itself demands such generality to encompass the profound truths. This general approach suffices, without the need for details that Allah mentions in other verses.

The Quranic presentation in this noble verse employs a method of captivating the listener's attention through brevity, focusing on general concepts rather than being distracted by details. This approach demonstrates the effective technique of addressing the intellect with truths of immense magnitude without burdening it with the specifics of what exists on earth, how plants grow from nothing, then wither and die, only to be revived by rain after the dryness. This highlights the importance of relying on generality in discussions and dialogues concerning major concepts, without delving into details that might lead the mind away from the overarching truths.

After the addressee has grasped the reality through observation, thought, and reflection, they are then guided to a greater and more profound truth. Allah says: {ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ} [Then He directed Himself to the heaven, and made them seven heavens, and He is Knowing of all things]. Here, Allah the Almighty explains that He intended and proceeded to create the heavens, forming them into seven heavens.

This gradual approach in addressing and alerting the mind is aimed at leading to faith. After clarifying that humankind once did not exist and was brought into being, then will die like others, and will be resurrected, then return to Allah, and after establishing that the earth and everything within it were created for human benefit, fulfilling their needs in a harmonious manner, the person is naturally led to acknowledge that the One who created them, the earth, and all it contains, is the same One who

created the heavens. They will then believe that the heavens are seven, as Allah, the All-Knowing and All-Aware, has informed.

The verse concludes with the statement {وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ} [and He is Knowing of all things], signifying that after establishing the matter of creation and affirming His absolute worthiness of worship, Allah declares His vast knowledge, encompassing all things, with nothing beyond His awareness.

This noble verse highlights that reflecting on the existence of humans, who once were nothing, and their eventual death after being brought into existence, along with contemplation of the creatures on earth, naturally leads to faith in the Creator, the Almighty.

It also emphasizes the importance of believing in Allah and worshipping Him alone, ensuring that worship is directed solely to His Majesty. The verse underscores the significance of reflection, the importance of methodical persuasion, gradual teaching, understanding the state of the one being invited to faith, and drawing attention to what is already known, in order to guide them towards the truth and greater understanding.

The verse also demonstrates Allah's mercy towards His creation, as He addresses them with the best and most impactful methods. He created the earth for them and everything on it and within it, making it subservient to their needs. Allah created a harmony between their needs and the provisions on earth, ensuring that whatever they require is available on earth as signs and blessings pointing to the Creator, the Almighty. All praise and thanks are due to Allah. O Allah, we ask You for guidance and steadfastness on the truth.

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠) وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٣١) قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ (٣٢) قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (٣٣)

[And when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know." And He taught Adam the names – all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, "Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful." They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise." He said, "O Adam, inform them of their names." And when he had informed them of their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed." [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:30-33].

These verses illustrate the beginning and the prelude to the creation of the father of humanity, Adam (peace be upon him). The Qur'an reveals these hidden truths, known only to Allah, to show humanity how their creation began and what transpired concerning them, including Allah informing His angels about the creation of Adam and his progeny. This is a favor from Allah upon the children of Adam, as He mentioned them in the highest assembly even before their existence: {وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي { الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً } [And when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority"]].

Ibn Kathir refers to this favor, explaining that in the context of { إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي { الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً } ["I will make upon the earth a successive authority"], it means a succession of people, one after another, generation after generation:

meaning people who will succeed each other, generation after generation, and era after era (Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/72).

These noble verses also demonstrate that the angels possess knowledge only to the extent that Allah has taught them, as He said to them, {إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا { لَا تَعْلَمُونَ } [Indeed, I know that which you do not know]. The angels themselves acknowledge the limitation of their knowledge when they say, {سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ} [Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise].

These verses also teach that Allah bestows His knowledge and favor upon whomever He wills among His creation. He granted Adam the knowledge of the names that the angels were not given, signifying Allah's exclusive favor: {وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ قَالُوا { سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ } [And He taught Adam the names—all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, "Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful." They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise." He said, "O Adam, inform them of their names." And when he had informed them of their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:30-33).

The distinction given to Adam (peace be upon him) and subsequently to his progeny, by teaching him the names, is a manifestation of Allah's generosity and favor toward humanity. {وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا} [And He taught Adam the names—all of them], meaning the names of all things and their designated meanings. Allah taught Adam both the words and their meanings, down to even the smallest and largest of names, such as "the

bowl" and "the small bowl." (Ibn Saadi, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/51).

This requires humanity to express gratitude for the blessings of existence and knowledge. It is Allah who has bestowed upon humans the knowledge they possess; therefore, they should not become arrogant and proud of their knowledge, for it is Allah who granted them this ability to comprehend, memorize, derive, innovate, and create. Without this noble distinction from Allah, humans would not have reached the level of knowledge, development, and innovation that they have in various fields.

These noble verses also indicate that the angels continuously glorify and sanctify Allah, and they do not disobey Him. They do not engage in the corruption that occurs among humans. Allah describes them, saying, { قَالُوا { أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ } [They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know"].

This reflects the comparison based on the knowledge that the angels had. However, Allah clarified that He possesses knowledge and understanding of what they do not know, saying, { قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ } [Indeed, I know that which you do not know]. These verses also suggest that the angels were informed by Allah before the creation of Adam that some of the descendants of humans would engage in corruption, involving killing, looting, injustice, and disbelief. However, Allah knew that there would also be among humans prophets, righteous individuals, the truthful, the devout, the striving, and the benevolent.

These verses highlight the humility and respect of the angels in their conversation with Allah, as they said, { لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا } [We have no knowledge except what You have taught us]. Following this admission of their limited knowledge, they glorified Allah, acknowledging His absolute wisdom and knowledge, saying, { إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ } [Indeed, You are the

Knowing, the Wise]. This emphasizes the importance for humans to say "Allah knows best" when they do not know something and to refrain from speaking arrogantly about what they are ignorant of, thereby adopting the virtuous character of the noble angels.

The verses also stress the importance of glorifying Allah when acquiring knowledge and being aware of one's ignorance. They confirm that whatever knowledge or observation is hidden from creation in the heavens and the earth is not hidden from Allah; He knows what is revealed and what is concealed. As Allah says, { أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ } [Did I not tell you that I know the unseen of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed].

This understanding of Allah's knowledge necessitates a sense of awe and fear of Him, constant self-awareness, and turning to Him in every small and significant matter, seeking to avoid harm or gain benefit.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ (٣٤) وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٣٥) فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ (٣٦) فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (٣٧) قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٣٨) وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٣٩) {

[And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam," and they prostrated, except for Iblis. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers. And We said, "O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will. But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers." But Satan caused them to slip out of it and removed them from that [condition] in which they had been. And We said, "Go down, [all of you], as enemies to one another, and you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time." Then Adam received from his Lord some words, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful. We said, "Go down from it, all of you. And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve." And those who disbelieve and deny Our signs - those will be companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:34-39].

These verses highlight the esteemed position of humans before Allah Almighty, as He commanded the angels to prostrate before Adam (peace be upon him) as a gesture of honor to him and as an act of worship to Allah Almighty. Obedience to Allah is a form of worship to Him, exalted be His Majesty. The verses also demonstrate the angels' compliance with their Lord's command without objection, affirming the importance of obedience to Allah without intellectual resistance. This signifies that divine revelation should be prioritized over intellect, given the perfection of divine revelation and the limitations of human intellect. The verses further reveal

that Iblis refused to prostrate out of arrogance, and as a result, he became one of the disbelievers. In contrast, the other angels obeyed their Lord and were among the honored ones.

{وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ} [And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblis. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:34)

Arrogance is a barrier to goodness, as it prevents a person from attaining their interests, success, and salvation. This is evident in the behavior of some who witnessed the messengers and the clear evidence against them, yet arrogantly rejected the truth, similar to the disbelievers of Quraysh and others who, despite knowing the truth, and recognizing our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his character, and his virtuous qualities both before and after his prophethood, still refused to believe out of arrogance.

These verses affirm that Allah speaks, that He commands and prohibits, and that He is not questioned about what He does, while the servants are questioned and held accountable. They also illustrate the profound wisdom behind Allah's commands and prohibitions, and the limited knowledge of created beings.

The verses indicate that the original dwelling of Adam (peace be upon him) and his wife was in Paradise, which underscores the concept of returning to Paradise after death for those who obey Allah through faith and righteous deeds. Allah says: {وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا} [And We said, "O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will."] This also affirms the reality of eating in Paradise, its vastness, the fact that its food is abundant and delightful, and the freedom of movement within it and enjoyment of its blessings: {وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا} [and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will.]

The verses also indicate that Allah's wisdom necessitates testing His servants. He tested Adam by forbidding him to eat from a specific tree: { وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ } [But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers.] The verses further illustrate the consequences of trials and general accountability: { فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ } [lest you be among the wrongdoers.] This indicates that disobedience to the Lord is an injustice to oneself, necessitating obedience and avoiding sin. One should not question the reasoning of the Prophet's commands if they are not understood, for Allah's wisdom is absolute.

The verses also reveal that Satan has been an enemy to humanity since Allah created our father, Adam (peace be upon him). Allah says: { فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ } [But Satan caused them to slip out of it and removed them from that [condition] in which they had been.] This serves as knowledge for his descendants, teaching them to take Satan as an enemy and to beware of his whispers and misguidance, which aim to drive them away from Paradise.

Allah says about the consequence of that sin: { وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ } [And We said, "Descend, [as enemies] to one another."] This indicates that Paradise is not a place for enmity and hatred, but rather a place of bliss, and that the place for enmity is the earth. These verses establish the argument against humanity that their primary enemy is the accursed Satan. His demonic capabilities include leading humans astray, embellishing sin, and presenting convincing arguments to commit it, which necessitates caution to avoid being distanced from Paradise as Adam (peace be upon him) was expelled from it. Allah says: { وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ } { مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ } [And We said, "Descend, [as enemies] to one another, and you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time."]

In His saying: { وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ } [And you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time] there is evidence that

the dwelling place of the children of Adam and Satan is on earth until an appointed time, meaning until a limited time—each individual's life until their death and humanity's existence until the Day of Judgment, and the end of life on earth. Thus, it is a temporary abode until a fixed time known to Allah. Allah has made the earth a {مَتَّعَ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ} [provision for a time], which includes all that one enjoys, such as food, clothing, life, and other necessities. Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an (1/219)

Among the insights from this is the knowledge that worldly life is a provision for a limited time. As such, it is incumbent upon humans to enjoy what is in it in preparation for the Hereafter, and to ensure that every enjoyment therein leads to the bliss of Paradise, using it as a means to reach the eternal abode, as this world is a transient place, destined to end after a short time.

The phrase {إِلَىٰ حِينٍ} ["for a time"] catches the mind's attention, as it indicates that worldly pleasures are temporary, work in this world is temporary, and the enemy, Satan, is with him... but only for a time. Therefore, one should take him as an enemy only for a time, be patient for a time, and persist in obedience to Allah Almighty for a time. Let Allah's statement {إِلَىٰ حِينٍ} ["for a time"] be a source of strength, hope, and a path that helps one overcome every obstacle on the road to Paradise. {وَلَكُمْ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ} [And you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time.]

Then, the mercy and care of Allah Almighty continue to follow and surround man, as He taught Adam (peace be upon him) words from his Lord, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, He is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful. Despite Adam's sin (peace be upon him), Allah is merciful and kind to this human being: {فَتَلَقَّىٰ آدَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ ٱلَّتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ} [Then Adam received from his Lord some words, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful.] Adam learned these words from Allah, saying:

"Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves" –he acknowledged his sin and sought Allah's forgiveness, and Allah accepted Adam's repentance. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Kalam al-Mannan) (1/53)

This mercy, care, grace, and honor bestowed upon mankind obligate the servant to love his Lord and Creator, who has bestowed upon him numerous blessings and exceptional care, honoring him and treating him with utmost kindness.

Allah Almighty then reveals at the end of the noble verse two great attributes of His: {إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ} [Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful.] Allah informs us that He is the Acceptor of Repentance for those who repent, seek forgiveness, and return to Him, and that He is Merciful. These attributes necessitate that the servant repents and returns to Him, hoping for His mercy, submitting to Him out of love and longing for His generosity and mercy, and fearing His punishment and the loss of His blessings.

The verses describe the command for Adam and Eve to leave Paradise and descend to earth. This descent was a result of Satan leading Adam astray, which led to him eating from the forbidden tree. The command to descend marks the beginning of human life on earth. Allah says: {قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا} [We said, "Descend from it, all of you."]

Allah's mercy continues to follow His servants by promising them –and His promise is true—that He would send them guidance through messengers and books, which clarify the correct path and the straight way. Allah says: {فَإِنَّمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا { وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ } [So there will surely come to you guidance from Me, and whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray in the world nor suffer in the Hereafter. But those who disbelieve

and deny Our signs will be the inhabitants of the Fire. They will abide therein eternally.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:38-39)

Out of His mercy, Allah has clarified the condition and outcome of those who follow His guidance – they will neither fear the present nor the future, nor will they grieve over what has passed. This is because fear and grief are forms of pain, panic, and distress related to the present and future. Grief is related to something that has passed, causing regret and sorrow, while fear is related to the present and future, inducing anxiety.

Allah's law is the guidance that protects humanity from evil and brings them good if they obey and follow His guidance. As for those who disbelieve and deny Allah's guidance and signs, their fate is eternal residence in the Fire.

This Creator, the Owner, blessed and exalted be He, clarifies, explains, and guides His servants to His path and His guidance. He accepts repentance, forgives, and pardons those who repent and obey, and He shows mercy to His servants by His grace and favor. He is their Owner and the Owner of all that they possess. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the servant, who is owned, to be merciful, guiding, forgiving, and pardoning to those like him among Allah's servants, even though he does not own them, but is a servant like them to Allah Almighty.

The noble verses conclude with a promise of severe punishment for those who disbelieve: {وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ} [And those who disbelieve and deny Our signs – they are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally.] This is a stern warning from the One who never breaks His promise, so that mankind may beware of disbelief and the grievous loss that results in eternal residence in the Fire.

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّيَ فَارْهَبُونِ ۚ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَمَا أُنْزِلَتْ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أَوَّلَ كَافِرٍ بِهِ ۚ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِيَّيَ فَاتَّقُوا ۚ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ۚ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ۚ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ۚ ﴿٢٩﴾ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ﴾

[O Children of Israel, remember My favor that I have bestowed upon you and fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant [from Me], and fear [only] Me. And believe in what I have sent down confirming that which is already with you, and be not the first to disbelieve in it, and do not exchange My signs for a small price, and fear [only] Me. And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it]. And establish prayer and give zakah and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience]. Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason? And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah] who are certain that they will meet their Lord and that they will return to Him.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:40-46)

The Quranic context then shifts to Allah's message to the Children of Israel, highlighting His mercy towards them. The address is direct and serves as a reminder to them, also informing the believers and others of Allah's immense kindness towards them. Israel refers to Jacob (peace be upon him). In this context, Allah describes the general blessings bestowed upon the Children of Israel and demands their complete fulfillment of the covenant so that they may receive the promised reward in full: { يَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ } ﴿٢٤﴾ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّيَ فَارْهَبُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾ [O Children of Israel, remember My favor that I have bestowed upon you and fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant [from Me], and fear [only] Me.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:40)

The address begins with the word "O" (يا), which serves as a call for their attention and invites them to listen carefully to the One addressing them.

They are then referred to as the descendants of their prophet, Jacob (peace be upon him), who is also known as Israel: {يَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ} [O Children of Israel], which reflects Allah's kindness in addressing them with honor. Allah reminds them of the blessings He has bestowed upon them, blessings they are well aware of and which will be further explained in upcoming verses, insha'Allah: {اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ} [remember My favor that I have bestowed upon you].

Following this reminder of Allah's known blessings, He commands them to fulfill the covenant they made with Him: {وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي} [and fulfill My covenant], so that He may fulfill the promises made to them: {أَوْفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ} [that I will fulfill your covenant]. Here, the kindness of Allah is evident in His address, as He gradually draws their attention with eloquence and impact, beginning with the call, then connecting them to their prophet Jacob (peace be upon him), reminding them of His blessings, and finally commanding them to fulfill the covenant, which will result in Allah fulfilling His promise to them.

This passage highlights the importance of gradual and organized communication in speech, education, and invitation to faith. It also emphasizes the value of reminding and correcting thoughts in a manner that awakens the heedless without causing them to feel attacked. In Allah's address to the Children of Israel, there is no harshness or assault, which teaches us that when offering advice, one should not start with expressions of blame or attack. Instead, one should seek to awaken the listener's natural inclination toward listening and responding. This also underscores the significance of using gentle and kind language when addressing others, choosing the most endearing and preferred terms. If Allah addresses His servants in such a gentle manner, it is even more appropriate for people to address each other similarly.

One of the lessons from this noble verse is the importance of general guidance before providing details. Presenting a general idea first captures

the listener's attention and creates an eagerness to learn the details that follow. This method is highly effective in encouraging reflection and contemplation, leading the mind back to the truth that must be acted upon. Additionally, reminding people of blessings invokes a sense of modesty and gratitude in the mindful listener, encouraging them to continue listening and following the guidance, except for those whose hearts are afflicted with stubbornness and disease.

Moreover, the detailed mention of the Children of Israel serves as evidence of the prophethood of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He lived in Mecca as an unlettered man who neither read nor wrote, which removes any suspicion that he had prior knowledge of these detailed accounts known to the Children of Israel. This also highlights that the Quranic guidance is meant for all people, including those who received earlier revelations, such as the Children of Israel.

This noble verse serves as a reminder to the Children of Israel of the numerous blessings bestowed upon them and calls them to fulfill the covenant that Allah, blessed and exalted, made with them. This covenant entails believing in Allah, His messengers, and upholding His laws so that they may receive the full reward from Allah. They are also commanded to fear and revere Allah, for such reverence leads to obedience: {وَأَيُّيَ فَارْهُبُونِ} [and fear [only] Me.]

Allah then commands them to believe in what He has revealed, namely the Quran, which confirms the truth of the scriptures already with them: {وَأَمِنُوا} [بِمَا أَنزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أُولَٰ كَافِرِينَ] [And believe in what I have sent down confirming that which is already with you, and be not the first to disbelieve in it.] This indicates that the People of the Book, with the knowledge from their previous scriptures, recognize the truth of the Quran, which serves as a sign for them of the authenticity of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his message.

After clarifying the truth and confirming it for them, Allah prohibits them from being the first to disbelieve in it. This is part of a gradual method of explanation and affirmation. The discourse then transitions to forbidding them from prioritizing the fleeting benefits of this world over the signs of Allah, which bring good in both this life and the Hereafter: { وَلَا تَسْتَرْوْا بِآيَاتِي } [and do not exchange My signs for a small price.] Allah forbids them from trading His signs for a trivial gain, emphasizing that any worldly gain is insignificant compared to faith in His signs, which are of the highest and greatest value.

This passage illustrates the varied style of discourse in the Quran, combining reminders, commands to fulfill the covenant and practice piety, and a call to believe in what was revealed to Muhammad (ﷺ). It is supported by irrefutable evidence, as the Quran does not contradict the scriptures already with the People of the Book but rather confirms them. Following this, there is a prohibition against undervaluing the signs of Allah after the truth has been made clear to them. It is likened to someone who exchanges Allah's signs for something insignificant. Prioritizing one's desires or anything imagined to be valuable over Allah's signs and commands is akin to purchasing them for a trivial price. This emphasizes that the reward from Allah is precious, and a true believer would not trade it for anything contrary to it, thinking it would bring benefit. The signs of Allah are far too great to be exchanged for a small gain, and everything else is insignificant in comparison to the greatness of Allah's signs, His promises, warnings, and the eternal gardens of Paradise.

Allah then issues a command of utmost importance: { وَإِلَيَّ فَاتَّقُونِ } [and fear [only] Me]. The fear of Allah compels obedience and the prioritization of belief in His signs over trivial worldly gains. Choosing a small gain indicates that the fear of Allah has departed from the heart.

This passage highlights that true piety compels obedience, while the lack of piety results in disobedience. A person can gauge the extent of their piety

by their level of obedience to Allah, their fear of committing sins, and their hope in His mercy.

The passage then brings a prohibition to the Children of Israel against mixing truth with falsehood and against concealing the truth. Allah says: {وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ} [And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it]]. This verse implies that they know the truth with absolute certainty. The act of mixing truth with falsehood can only be done by someone who has a real understanding of both. This verse exposes them to the reality of what they know, reaffirming for them the truth of the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ). They know him as well as they know their own selves, due to the truth they possess, which aligns with what our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) brought. This implies that those knowledgeable of the truth must be cautious and avoid mixing it with falsehood or concealing it from others for some imagined benefit.

The gradual approach in guidance and clarification then moves to the command of performing acts of worship: {وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ {الرَّاكِعِينَ} [And establish prayer and give zakah and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience]]. Mentioning prayer once and referring to it again through the act of bowing serves as a reaffirmation of its importance generally, and of joining those who perform it specifically. This stylistic choice beautifully avoids repetition while adding the meaning of communal participation. It also illustrates that referring to the whole by mentioning a part implies the inclusion of the whole, as the obligation cannot be fulfilled without all its parts. Mentioning a part does not mean neglecting the whole, which cannot be truly fulfilled without all its components. Similarly, referring to prayer as "prostration" does not mean substituting prayer with just prostration, as seen in Allah's words in Surah Al-Furqan: {وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا} [And those who spend the night to their Lord prostrating and standing.] (Surah Al-Furqan, 25:64)

The passage then continues with another critical tone, condemning the actions of those who command others to do good while failing to adhere to it themselves. This includes not following what Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) brought: {أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ} [Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:44). Part of righteousness is to follow what Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) brought. The Jews of Medina would say to those among them who had connections with the Muslims of Medina, "Remain steadfast in what you are upon, and follow what this man commands you, for indeed, his command is the truth." By "this man," they meant Muhammad (ﷺ). They would instruct others to do this but would not do it themselves. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an) (1/248)

This emphasizes the importance of being cautious about commanding others to do good while not following it oneself. It also applies to someone who, when advised to do good, arrogantly refuses to follow it. Allah describes such behavior as that of someone who lacks understanding: {أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ} [Then will you not reason?]. It is as if they have not used their intellect or benefited from it. This underscores the significance of being perceptive, humble before the truth, and overcoming one's desires. Someone who knows the truth and good but does not follow it, or commands others to do so without practicing it themselves, is like one who does not use their intellect and has not benefited from it.

Allah, the Exalted, then guides towards the best support for upholding the truth and performing good deeds, which is patience and the establishment of prayer. Allah says: {وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ} [And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive (to Allah)] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:45). This indicates that patience is a powerful means to steadfastness, acceptance of the truth, and perseverance in it, as the self requires patience to resist its desires. It also involves resisting the temptations of both human and jinn devils by remaining patient in obedience and avoiding sin. Similarly, prayer has a

profound effect in invoking Allah's help for those who perform it, assisting them in doing good and repelling evil. However, prayer is difficult and burdensome for those who are not humble and submissive to Allah, while it is light and easy for those whose hearts are humbled before Him. This implies that those who lack humility feel the weight of performing it, finding it burdensome.

Humility (khushu') entails fear, stillness, submission, and the humbling of the heart before Allah, the Most High. This teaches us that after reliance on Allah, the best support a Muslim can seek is patience and prayer. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) would resort to prayer whenever a matter troubled him. Hudhayfah (RA) reported: "When the Prophet (ﷺ) was troubled by something, he would pray." (Ahmad) (3/330) No. 23299.

إِذَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ (٤٧) وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ (٤٨) وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِنَ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يَدْبَحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ وَفِي ذَلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ (٤٩) وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمْ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنجَيْنَاكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ (٥٠)

[O Children of Israel, remember My favor that I have bestowed upon you and that I preferred you over the worlds. And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all, nor will intercession be accepted from it, nor will compensation be taken from it, nor will they be aided. And [recall] when We saved you from the people of Pharaoh, who were afflicting you with the worst torment - slaughtering your sons and keeping your women alive. And in that was a great trial from your Lord. And [recall] when We parted the sea for you and saved you and drowned the people of Pharaoh while you were looking on.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:47-50].

These noble verses repeatedly remind the Children of Israel, using the form of an address and drawing their attention to the blessings that Allah bestowed upon them: { يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ } [O Children of Israel, remember My favor that I have bestowed upon you and that I preferred you over the worlds.] This reminder is also an instruction for the believers to learn from the experiences of those who came before them. Among these reminders is the favor that Allah granted the Children of Israel over all other people: { وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ } [And that I preferred you over the worlds.] From this preference, another truth can be discerned, namely, that this Holy Qur'an, if it had been from anyone other than Allah, would not have said to them: "Indeed, Allah preferred you over the worlds." Such praise and commendation confirm that these are the words of Allah, and that this Prophet is truthful (peace and blessings be upon him), who does not speak from his own desire but conveys the revelation that has been revealed to him.

This Quranic context underscores the importance of repeated reminders for exhortation, warning, and cautioning against the consequences of disobedience and the rejection of the truth. Allah reminds them of His additional favors, highlighting that He preferred them over the people of their time, and some say over all the worlds, due to the presence of prophets among them. (1) Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* (1/256).

The command to have piety then follows, which necessitates belief and faith in the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and in what he brought: {وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا} [And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all.] This command is delivered through a reference and reminder of the Day of Judgment. Here, Allah the Exalted points to the unique characteristics of that Day, making it unnecessary to mention its consequences. This method subtly implies the severity of that Day, where no one will be able to benefit or assist another in any way except by their own deeds – no friend, relative, or anyone else can be of any help: {وَلَا يُفْلِحُ} [nor will intercession be accepted from it.]

Allah then clarifies another aspect of that Day: {وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ} [nor will compensation be taken from it, nor will they be aided.] This refers to the disbelieving souls whose grave sins have left no room for Allah's pardon or the acceptance of intercession. This punishment signifies the disbelief of those who do not believe in the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and in what he brought, including those from previous heavenly religions. Regarding intercession, its details and types are explained in books of Islamic creed.

The progression described here reaches its ultimate culmination in the Day of Judgment, emphasizing the individual's deeds and the absence of any help or intercession from others. On that day, one cannot ransom themselves with anything; this reality necessitates fear and self-accountability. It reminds the servant that they must sever their reliance on anyone other than Allah to save them and protect them from the horrors of

that day. Neither tribe, lineage, status, nor being a descendant of righteous people, prophets, or anyone else will avail a person. The individual must sever all ties of dependence on anyone other than Allah. This has educational and da'wah implications, highlighting the importance of beginning with the blessings to remind people of them, as this evokes a sense of modesty in the upright individual towards the Benefactor. Then, the reminder of what encourages righteousness, acceptance of truth, and sincerity is followed by a warning to conclude the approaches.

After the warning, Allah returns to remind them of the blessings again, indicating His mercy and His desire for people to be guided and repent to Him. Thus, He renews the call and reminder with various consecutive methods, neither tediously long nor insufficiently brief. What mercy could be greater than this divine mercy, which points to His beautiful names and exalted attributes, blessed and exalted be He? He then transitions them to the reminder of the blessing of being saved from Pharaoh. Allah saved them from his tyranny and humiliation: { وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ ۖ الْعَذَابِ } [And [recall] when We saved you from the people of Pharaoh, who were afflicting you with the worst torment] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:49). He humiliated them by making them do the hardest labor, subjecting them to the worst forms of torment. (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi Ilm al-Tafsir* (1/65).

This is a summary of the suffering inflicted upon them by Pharaoh, so that they may fully grasp the entire matter before delving into the details and explanations that necessitate gratitude to the One who saved them. Allah says: { يُدَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ } [slaughtering your sons], for what calamity could be greater than this one from which Allah saved you? Indeed, { وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ } [and keeping your women alive], meaning they spared their daughters for servitude and humiliation. (The Above Reference)

Thus, Allah the Blessed and Exalted reminded them of the blessing of saving them from Pharaoh, who had humiliated them, slaughtered their

sons, and subjected them to immense suffering: {وَفِي ذَٰلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ} [And in that was a great trial from your Lord] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:49). This deliverance was a great act of kindness from Allah.

The variation in style, diversification, and repetition serves as a stimulus for the mind, provoking thought and reminding individuals of all that guidance entails, whether it encourages adherence to good or warns against evil until a person returns to their senses.

At this point, it is necessary for a person, when directing themselves or others, to remember the blessings, to be reminded of them, and to recall how Allah has saved them from calamities, illnesses, and trials, how He has shielded them from the gaze of their enemies, how He has preserved their security, honor, wealth, and religion. They should also remember and remind others of that day when no one will benefit from another's deeds, and no one will come to their aid. All aspects of reminder and the means of grace serve as a way for the soul to return to the truth by Allah's permission, blessed and exalted be He.

Allah then reminds them of another blessing with miraculous signs, as He says: {وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنجَيْنَاكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ} [And [recall] when We parted the sea for you and saved you and drowned the people of Pharaoh while you were looking on] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:50). The first blessing was the parting of the sea, splitting it and making it a path. The second miraculous Qur'anic blessing was their passage between the two parts of the sea. The third blessing was their salvation from Pharaoh. The fourth blessing was the drowning of Pharaoh, and the fifth blessing was that they witnessed these miracles—the parting of the sea, the drowning of their enemy before their eyes, their own salvation, safety, and victory.

This magnificent verse highlights the blessings of Allah and His unparalleled power, which no creature can ever withstand. It emphasizes that Allah is capable of destroying the arrogant, oppressive tyrant and that He is ever-watchful, and when He seizes, His grip is that of the Mighty, the

Powerful. This necessitates caution against the consequences of arrogance and defiance before the unmatched power of Allah, which no force can resist. The verse also indicates that Allah is capable of granting victory to the oppressed, and all that is required of them is to rely on Allah, the Strong, the Mighty. This illustrates that among the attributes of Allah, blessed and exalted be He, are strength, power, support, and mercy. It further demonstrates that Allah is capable of making events unfold contrary to the natural laws He Himself has established as the Mighty, the Strong, and that He can empower the weak by destroying their enemies. All of this compels love for Him, fear of Him, and hope in Him, and that nothing is beyond His power in the heavens or the earth.

وَإِذْ وَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ (٥١) ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ (٥٢) وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ (٥٣)

[And [recall] when We made an appointment with Moses for forty nights, then you took [for worship] the calf after him while you were wrongdoers. Then We forgave you after that so perhaps you would be grateful. And [recall] when We gave Moses the Scripture and criterion that perhaps you would be guided.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:51-53].

Then comes another rhetorical shift, highlighting what the Children of Israel did despite those overwhelming blessings: they worshiped the calf instead of Allah. As Allah says: {وَإِذْ وَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ} [And [recall] when We made an appointment with Moses for forty nights, then you took [for worship] the calf after him while you were wrongdoers.] This verse explains how society, or some of its members, can slip due to impatience in obedience, imitating others in their religion, or following the whispers of Satan. Allah promised Moses forty nights to bring down the Torah, but the people did not have the patience to wait for the completion of the appointed time. Instead, they worshiped the calf in the absence of Moses, during the time they were awaiting the blessing of receiving the Torah. This highlights the need for people to be cautious about the dangers of impatience in achieving their goals in ways that conflict with Allah's guidance, such as hastening to gain wealth through unlawful means, deceit, bribery, and other aspects of life. These actions are forms of self-oppression, as confirmed by the verse: {ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ} [Then you took [for worship] the calf after him while you were wrongdoers.]

The calf was crafted by the Samiri, yet despite this transgression, Allah forgave them: {ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ} [Then We forgave you after that so perhaps you would be grateful.] This demonstrates the immense forgiveness of Allah, encouraging the person to thank their Lord who

forgave them and opened the door of repentance, which necessitates gratitude to Him, blessed and exalted be He. This gratitude involves both belief and action in obedience, and the tongue should constantly praise and thank Allah, who is the Giver of all blessings and the one truly deserving of gratitude.

And among the additional blessings of Allah is that He gave Moses the Book and the Criterion so that they might be guided: { وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ { وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ } [And [recall] when We gave Moses the Scripture and criterion that perhaps you would be guided.] The divinely revealed books given to Allah's prophets, such as the Torah, are immense and noble blessings. These books were meant to guide the followers of Moses (peace be upon him). This necessitates that Muslims take heed of the previous nations and express gratitude to Allah for the blessing of the Qur'an, which Allah revealed to our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

{وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِئِكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (٥٤) وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذْتُمُ الصَّاعِقَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ (٥٥) ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ (٥٦) وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ (٥٧)}

[And [recall] when Moses said to his people, "O my people, you have wronged yourselves by taking the calf [for worship]. So repent to your Creator and kill yourselves. That is best for [all of] you in the sight of your Creator." Then He accepted your repentance; indeed, He is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful. And [recall] when you said, "O Moses, we will never believe you until we see Allah outright"; so the thunderbolt took you while you were looking on. Then We revived you after your death that perhaps you would be grateful. And We shaded you with clouds and sent down to you manna and quails, [saying], "Eat from the good things with which We have provided you." And they wronged Us not - but they were [only] wronging themselves.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:54-57]

In these verses, Allah describes the interactions between Moses (peace be upon him) and his people, detailing what he commanded them and how they responded. Moses informed them that they had committed a great injustice against themselves, explaining that this injustice was due to their worship of the calf instead of Allah: {وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ} [And [recall] when Moses said to his people, "O my people, you have wronged yourselves by taking the calf [for worship]."] The verse subtly emphasizes their state and the ruling upon them (you have wronged yourselves) before explaining the reason (by taking the calf). By stating the ruling first, it captures attention and directs the heart towards understanding the reason for the ruling. This showcases a rhetorical and instructional eloquence, emphasizing the importance of style in stimulating the mind to follow guidance, the text, knowledge, and the intended message.

Allah then explained the remedy for that grave sin, which is repentance to Him, the Almighty, who created them and brought them into existence from nothing: {فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ} [So repent to your Creator]. Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, commented on the phrase "to your Creator" by noting that it highlights the gravity of their offense. They were called to repent to the very One who created them, even though they had worshipped another besides Him. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/96).

This indicates the severity of the act of shirk (associating partners with Allah), as they were commanded to kill themselves: {فَاقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ} [So kill yourselves. That is best for you in the sight of your Creator.] This implies that Allah decrees as He wills, and none can overturn His judgment. He is the Sovereign who questions but is not questioned, as He says in Surah Al-Anbiya: {لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ} [He is not questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned.] This also highlights Allah's mercy towards this Ummah, as He did not command them to kill themselves as atonement for shirk but instead commanded them to repent, seek forgiveness, and abandon the sin. Allah then described Himself with attributes befitting Him: {فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ} [Then He accepted your repentance; indeed, He is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.] Allah is indeed the Most Forgiving and Most Merciful, which are two great blessings that warrant gratitude and praise to Allah, who is worthy of all praise. Hence, He forgave them despite their grave sin.

Allah then illustrates the continued defiance of the Israelites, saying: {وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ} [And [recall] when you said, "O Moses, we will never believe you until we see Allah outright."] They persisted in their conditions and arrogance by demanding to see Allah openly as a prerequisite for their belief. This serves as a warning against arrogance and persistence in falsehood, as such behavior can lead to severe consequences. When Allah's punishment descends, it is severe, as He says regarding their punishment: {فَأَخَذْنَاكُمُ الصَّاعِقَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ} [so the thunderbolt took you while

you were looking on.] Yet, from Allah's power and mercy, He revived them after their death so they could fulfill their destined lifespans: {ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ ۖ} [Then We revived you after your death that perhaps you would be grateful.] This demonstrates Allah's immense power and ability, from which nothing can escape, emphasizing the necessity of fearing Him, obeying Him, and seeking His pleasure. Allah then urges them to be grateful: {الْعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ} [that perhaps you would be grateful], indicating that they should show gratitude to Allah for reviving them after their death so that they could complete their lifespans. This also serves as a reminder of the significance of gratitude, especially when receiving blessings despite one's sins and shortcomings, as Allah treats His servant with forbearance and generosity, not according to what the servant deserves due to their disobedience and shortcomings.

Then Allah teaches the believers and reminds the Children of Israel of what happened to their ancestors, how they behaved, and how Allah dealt with them through His mercy and wisdom, so that they may recognize His favor and understand that the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) is true, and that what he brought is true. Allah says: {وَوَهَبْنَا لَكُمْ الْأَنْعَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوَٰى} [And We shaded you with clouds and sent down to you manna and quails]. He reminds them of the blessings bestowed upon their forefathers despite their persistence and arrogance. Allah, in His wisdom and mercy, shaded them with clouds and sent down manna and quails upon them. Manna is described as a sweet substance like honey, or it is said to be any provision that is received without effort. As for quails, it is a small bird known as "samman." (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/60).

It is also said that manna refers to a type of truffle or the taranjabin. This verse serves as proof for them and others of the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ), as the Qur'an informs them of things they knew, which the Prophet (ﷺ) could not have known except through revelation. Among the lessons derived from this is that Allah is the Provider, who, when He

wills to provide for a servant, does so through the simplest and easiest means. He is also the One who bestows rain, guiding the clouds by His command from one place to another, and He sends it down in the measure needed by His creatures. After the rain has fallen according to what Allah has decreed without causing flooding or destruction, the clouds move on according to His will. Glory be to the Creator who has decreed its time, amount, and place, and controls its movement and transition. Allah then clarifies that they wronged themselves through their disobedience: { وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ } [And they wronged Us not - but they were [only] wronging themselves]. This indicates that whatever calamity befalls a person is due to their own wrongdoing.

{وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ
وَسَنَزِيدَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (٥٨) فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا مِّنَ
السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ (٥٩) وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا
عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِن رِّزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْنُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ (٦٠) وَإِذْ
قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَن نَّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْبِئُ الْأَرْضُ مِن بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا
وَعَدْسِهَا وَبِصَلِّهَا قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ اهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ وَضُرِبَتْ
عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبِ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ
ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ (٦١)}

[And [recall] when We said, "Enter this city and eat from it wherever you will in [ease and] abundance. And enter the gate bowing humbly and say, 'Relieve us of our burdens.' We will [then] forgive your sins for you, and We will increase the doers of good [in goodness and reward]." But those who wronged changed [those words to] a statement other than that which had been said to them, so We sent down upon those who wronged a punishment from the sky because they were defiantly disobedient. And [recall] when Moses prayed for water for his people, so We said, "Strike with your staff the stone." And there gushed forth from it twelve springs, and every people knew its watering place. "Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption." And [recall] when you said, "O Moses, we can never endure one [kind of] food. So call upon your Lord to bring forth for us from the earth its green herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions." [Moses] said, "Would you exchange what is better for what is less? Go into [any] settlement and indeed, you will have what you have asked." And they were covered with humiliation and poverty and returned with anger from Allah [upon them]. That was because they [repeatedly] disbelieved in the signs of Allah and killed the prophets without right. That was because they disobeyed and [habitually] transgressed.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:58-61].

The context continues to highlight Allah's reminders to the People of the Book about what occurred with their ancestors, reinforcing the truths they already know through the Quran. This emphasizes the importance of

evidence and proof, and the significance of reminders in guiding people towards goodness. Reminding people of these truths engages both the intellect and emotions, steering them towards the appropriate response to blessings.

Allah reminds the believers and others, particularly the Jews, of what happened to their ancestors and the grace He bestowed upon them. After the period of wandering ended—following their refusal to engage in jihad—Allah commanded them to enter the city, which Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) identified as Jerusalem. (Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*: 1/102).

Allah demonstrated His mercy towards them after their punishment of wandering by commanding them to enter the city where they would find security and abundant goodness: {قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا} [We said, "Enter this city and eat from it wherever you will in [ease and] abundance"]. This indicates that they were granted the ability to enjoy a comfortable and plentiful life from any place in the city, suggesting that it was a blessed land with ample provisions. They were then commanded on the manner of their entrance: {وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ} [And enter the gate bowing humbly and say, 'Relieve us of our burdens']. The word {سُجَّدًا} implies submission, obedience, and worship, as prostration signifies humility. The word {حِطَّةٌ} implies asking Allah to forgive their sins. This underscores the importance of humbling oneself before Allah according to His commands, and that blessings and prosperity come through obedience, gratitude, and seeking forgiveness. The consequences of arrogance, defiance, and rebellion are severe in both this world and the Hereafter. Although these verses address the Children of Israel, they serve as a lesson for believers to avoid the pitfalls into which other nations have fallen.

Allah confirms that if they enter the city as commanded, He will forgive their sins and increase the rewards for those who do good. Allah says: {يُغْفَرُ

فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ { [We will forgive your sins for you, and We will increase the doers of good [in goodness and reward]].

However, there are those who disobey and exchange Allah's blessings with ingratitude, necessitating caution against their actions. Allah says: { فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ { [But those who wronged changed [those words to] a statement other than that which had been said to them]. Despite all this, some replaced obedience with disobedience, a behavior that can occur at any time among those described as wrongdoers. Some replace the blessing of wealth with extravagance and wastefulness, others replace the blessing of health with sin, and some misuse the blessing of children by leading them away from righteousness or by using them for sinful purposes. There are also those who distort prescribed acts of worship by altering them contrary to Allah's intended purpose. Consequently, Allah's punishment descends upon those who substitute the commanded words: { فَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ { [So We sent down upon those who wronged a punishment from the sky because they were defiantly disobedient]. Allah punished them with torment because of their transgression. This teaches the importance of avoiding disobedience and altering Allah's commands, as Allah has the forces of the heavens and the earth at His disposal. His punishment can manifest in health, provisions, worries, humiliation, and other forms of torment.

Allah then further illustrates His generosity towards their ancestors when Moses asked for water for them, and Allah provided it in the simplest manner, without hardship or difficulty. Allah says: { وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا { [And [recall] when Moses prayed for water for his people, so We said, "Strike with your staff the stone." And there gushed forth from it twelve springs]. This shows that Allah's provision is immense, easy, and without hardship for those whom He wishes to provide for, as the mere striking of the stone with a staff caused water to gush forth, becoming a miracle before their eyes.

The phrase {استسقى موسى لقومه} (Moses prayed for water for his people) in the verse emphasizes the importance of turning to Allah first before resorting to other means, as the word "استسقى" (prayed for water) signifies a request. This is because the One who owns and controls all means is Allah, the Almighty, the Subduer. Nothing is easy except what Allah makes easy. It is by Allah's grace that He caused twelve springs to flow, corresponding to the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel, so that each tribe would drink from the water they knew was designated for them by Allah's grace, knowledge, wisdom, and power: {فَإِنفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرَبَهُمْ} [And there gushed forth from it twelve springs, and every people knew its watering place].

Allah then outlines how they should manage these blessings, commanding them to drink from this water and eat from what He has provided without causing corruption: {كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ} [Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption]. Allah attributes the provision to Himself, indicating that all food and drink available to creation is a provision from Allah, and it is necessary for creatures to attribute it to Allah. No one should attribute their sustenance to their own efforts but rather connect it to Allah's grace, generosity, and favor, as He is the one who provides and facilitates its availability.

The prohibition against corruption in the verse indicates that those who have been blessed by Allah must not use those blessings in sin or to corrupt the earth and its inhabitants. After growing weary of the manna and quails and remembering their previous life in Egypt, the Israelites asked Moses to pray to Allah to bring forth from the earth the foods they used to have. Allah says: {وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَن نَّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْبِئُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ} {بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومَهَا وَعَدْسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا} [And [recall] when you said, "O Moses, we can never endure one [kind of] food. So call upon your Lord to bring forth for us from the earth its green herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions"]. This illustrates the quickness with which humans

grow bored, even if they are given the finest and most delightful things on earth, as they were with manna and quails. Despite this, they asked for what the earth produces. This emphasizes the importance of patience and training oneself to recognize the reality of goodness and blessings, rather than being distracted by variety and losing sight of the greatness of the blessings at hand. A person must cultivate their soul towards higher virtues, recognizing that the human soul is often restless and desires what it does not have. Once it attains something, it desires something else, and this cycle only ends with disciplining and refining one's character.

Therefore, when a person understands these human tendencies – such as impatience and the desire for what is out of reach or not yet possessed – it requires them to discipline themselves. They should not allow themselves to descend to the baser nature that seeks and substitutes the inferior for the superior, but rather, they should elevate themselves to a higher, purer nature and not chase after every novelty, for they will soon tire of it once they have indulged in it. Understanding this nature necessitates acting with wisdom. A wise person, like Moses (peace be upon him), who has been disciplined by Allah, responds to their request with astonishment: {أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ} [Would you exchange what is better for what is less?]. This is an expression of surprise at such a request, as it is indeed strange to ask for something inferior after Allah has granted the best and finest. This also indicates that a leader, when responsible for a people, should clarify matters for them, and he has the right to question and express astonishment. Moses then said to them: {اهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ} [Go into [any] settlement, and indeed, you will have what you have asked]. He sent them down to Egypt after they desired the inferior, indicating that what they requested could be found in any of the cities of the earth. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/105-106).

After all these blessings that Allah provided for them, rescuing them from the humiliation and disgrace they were in, and after witnessing so many signs, their impatience, obstinacy, and repeated disobedience led Allah to

impose upon them a state of abasement. Allah says: { وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذَّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ } [And they were covered with humiliation and poverty and returned with anger from Allah]. Allah describes the types of punitive consequences they faced: humiliation in their bodies and poverty in their hearts. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/63).

And they incurred Allah's anger. It is said that "ذلة" (humiliation) refers to degradation and poverty; a Jew, even if wealthy, carries the marks of poverty and subservience in his appearance and status. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an: 1/292).

This is evident in the design of their clothing, which appears tattered even though it is newly made. This should alert the believer to be cautious of imitating them, as their appearance suggests poverty despite their wealth, and their behavior reflects ingratitude towards Allah's blessings and mercy by showing defiance and impatience. It is crucial not to become discontent with blessings or fail to show gratitude due to a base nature. Instead, one should strive to elevate their soul to the nature of a devout, thankful worshipper who acknowledges and values Allah's blessings. Allah's punishment is severe, as they "بأؤوا" (returned) with anger from Allah.

Allah then explains the reason for imposing the punishment of humiliation, poverty, and returning with His anger upon them: { ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ } [That was because they [repeatedly] disbelieved in the signs of Allah and killed the prophets without right. That was because they disobeyed and [habitually] transgressed].

These sins brought about Allah's wrath upon them, highlighting the need to avoid sin, as it leads to Allah's anger. Allah is Generous and Merciful; He loves the obedient, thankful, repentant servant who turns back to Him, values the blessings, and does not scorn them through wastefulness or

other forms of disregard. It is also essential to be diligent and keen in following the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ {

[Indeed, those who have believed and those who were Jews or Christians or Sabeans - those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness - will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:62).

After explaining the condition of those who disobeyed His commands and committed prohibitions, and the punishment He inflicted upon them, Allah, the Exalted, clarifies the reward for the righteous who obeyed Him from among the past nations – those who believed in the prophets before, including the Jews, Christians, and Sabeans, who were a sect among the Jews or Christians. Allah says: { إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ } [Indeed, those who have believed and those who were Jews or Christians or Sabeans - those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness - will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:62).

This verse signifies that they will have the best reward, and the same applies until the Day of Judgment. Anyone who follows the unlettered Prophet (Muhammad ﷺ) will attain eternal happiness, and they will have no fear for what is to come, nor will they grieve for what they leave behind (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/107).

This reflects Allah's justice, as He does not wrong those who were guided by the teachings of the prophets sent to them, who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteous deeds. However, after the advent of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), Allah abrogated all previous religions, and only Islam is accepted. As Allah says in Surah Aal-Imran: { وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ }

يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ [And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers] (Surah Aal-Imran, 3:85).

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (٦٣) ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (٦٤) وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ (٦٥) فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ (٦٦) {

[And [recall] when We took your covenant and raised over you the mount, [saying], "Take what We have given you with determination and remember what is in it that perhaps you may become righteous." Then you turned away after that. And if not for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy, you would have been among the losers. And you had already known about those who transgressed among you concerning the Sabbath, and We said to them, "Be apes, despised." And We made it a deterrent punishment for those who were present and those who succeeded [them] and a lesson for those who fear Allah.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:63-66]

The noble verses continue to describe the condition of the Children of Israel, explaining how Allah raised Mount Sinai above them and took from them a solemn and binding covenant to uphold the Torah, to read it, and to act upon it with diligence, perseverance, and patience in following the commands of Allah, so that they might fear Allah's punishment and become among the righteous. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/65).

Allah says: {وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} [And [recall] when We took your covenant and raised over you the mount, [saying], "Take what We have given you with determination and remember what is in it that perhaps you may become righteous."]

This verse serves as a reminder from Allah to the Children of Israel and a lesson for others about what happened to them, so that they may learn from those who came before. It highlights the importance of the methodology of reminders in da'wah (calling to Islam) and education, and

the significance of presenting the facts that encourage a person towards obedience and warn them against disobedience.

The taking of the covenant indicates its importance, especially when it is with Allah, who created and owns everything. The raising of the mount signifies the immense power of Allah and His mercy towards creation, as He frightened them with something that would cause astonishment and awe—raising the mountain above them. Without His mercy, He would have destroyed them with it. This account from Allah also underscores the importance of adhering to the religion of Allah with seriousness and effort, as well as the importance of learning and teaching it to others, and spreading it among people. Through this, a Muslim can avoid Allah's wrath and attain the piety that will lead to success in this life and the hereafter.

Despite the covenant that was taken from them and their witnessing of the mountain being raised above them, they still turned away, as Allah says: {ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ ۚ} [Then you turned away after that]. Yet, despite this, Allah's favor is immense: {فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ} [And if not for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy, you would have been among the losers]. This indicates that Allah's favor and mercy upon His servants are great, and without this divine favor and mercy, loss would have been certain, and no sinner would have been given the opportunity to repent. It is also from His favor and mercy that He sent the messengers, and the last of them is our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

This great cosmic event suggests that natural occurrences such as earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, eclipses, and wars serve as signs for all people. The verses then refer to the well-known story among the Children of Israel regarding those who transgressed on the Sabbath, for which Allah's wrath descended upon them, turning them into apes. Allah says: {وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ} [And you had already known about those who transgressed among you concerning the Sabbath,

and We said to them, "Be apes, despised." These are the people whose story Allah elaborated upon in Surah Al-A'raf, but here the story is mentioned briefly. The brief mention of the story here serves to pique interest in learning more about the details of this incident. This underscores the importance of using summary followed by detail to encourage interest and further inquiry into the verses to uncover more details.

This event also highlights the severity of sin and how easily Allah can punish the sinner, even with consequences that the sinner could never have anticipated. Allah turned them into despised apes by simply saying to them, {كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ} [Be apes, despised], and they became lowly, despised apes.

Sin can lead to the humiliation of the sinner, so believers should be wary of the dangers of sin and constantly seek Allah's guidance, assistance, and rectitude.

Allah then explains that the punishment of the Sabbath violators was made a warning for others: {فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ} [And We made it a deterrent punishment for those who were present and those who succeeded [them] and a lesson for those who fear Allah]. This indicates that when others witness a punishment or the enforcement of Allah's limits, it serves as a punishment for the guilty and a warning for others. It helps them understand the truth of the religion and the consequences of defying Allah. It is also a {موعظة للمتقين} [a lesson for those who fear Allah], encouraging them to reflect, thereby increasing their faith and distancing them from sin while making them more cautious of it.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً ۖ قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ (٦٧) قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بِكْرٌ عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ ۖ فَافْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ (٦٨) قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا لَوْثُهَا ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقْعَ لَوْثُهَا تَسُرُّ النَّظِيرِينَ (٦٩) قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ ۚ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ (٧٠) قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا شِئَةَ فِيهَا ۚ قَالُوا الْآنَ جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ (٧١) وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (٧٢) فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَى وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (٧٣)

[And [recall] when Moses said to his people, "Indeed, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you take us in ridicule?" He said, "I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant." They said, "Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is." [Moses] said, "He says, 'It is a cow which is neither old nor virgin, but median between that,' so do what you are commanded." They said, "Call upon your Lord to show us what is its color." He said, "He says, 'It is a yellow cow, bright in color - pleasing to the observers.'" They said, "Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is. Indeed, [all] cows look alike to us. And indeed we, if Allah wills, will be guided." He said, "He says, 'It is a cow neither trained to plow the earth nor to irrigate the field, one free from fault with no spot upon her.'" They said, "Now you have come with the truth." So they slaughtered her, but they could hardly do it. And [recall] when you killed a man and disputed over it, but Allah was to bring out that which you were concealing. So We said, "Strike him with part of it." Thus does Allah bring the dead to life, and He shows you His signs that you might reason.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:67-73].

The verses then address a situation and story involving Moses (peace be upon him) and his people concerning the murder of a man from the Children of Israel. They disagreed and argued over who the killer was, and the matter escalated to the point where it could have caused great strife among them, had Allah not clarified the truth. Moses told them, in order to reveal the identity of the killer, {إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً} [Indeed, Allah

commands you to slaughter a cow] (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/66).

The details of the situation reveal their objection to their prophet, as he spoke to them, conveying the command of Allah (Exalted is He). They responded, {قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا} [They said, "Do you take us in ridicule?"]. They should have complied with Moses (peace be upon him), for he was a prophet and messenger from Allah sent to them, who would neither lie nor mock them. It is inconceivable to suspect a prophet of such behavior, especially when he explicitly stated, {إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقَرَةً} [Indeed, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow]. He did not say, "I command you to slaughter a cow," but rather emphasized that the command came from Allah. This underscores the importance of having good expectations of the prophets and the significance of obedience.

Furthermore, matters should not be judged by mere rational analysis or personal whims; rather, the acceptance of Allah's commands requires submission and obedience, regardless of whether the wisdom behind them is apparent or beyond human understanding. Moses responded to them by saying, {أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ} [I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant]. This response emphasizes the principle of countering ill thoughts with gentle words. It indicates that a wise person does not act or speak like the ignorant in response, but instead, speaks in a manner that upholds the truth and dispels falsehood. The ignorant are those who make light of serious and important situations, which highlights the importance of avoiding ignorance in matters that require seriousness and are not to be taken lightly.

Moses' words, {أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ} [I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant], also underscore the importance of seeking refuge in Allah to protect oneself from injustice or to distance oneself from qualities or accusations that are untrue. Seeking refuge in Allah is a source of strength that the servant relies on.

When Moses conveyed Allah's command to them, they responded by saying, {قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ} [They said, "Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is"]. They were not satisfied with the general description of it being a cow but insisted on knowing the precise details of its description. Moses then told them, {إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بَكْرٌ عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فَافْعَلُوا مَا } {تُؤْمَرُونَ} [It is a cow which is neither old nor virgin, but median between that; so do what you are commanded]. The cow was neither old nor young but of an intermediate age. Moses emphasized that they should carry out the command as instructed, indicating the importance of promptly acting without overcomplicating matters with excessive questions, which could make the task more difficult. This suggests that strictness and exaggeration can lead to impracticality.

However, they did not comply with the command given by their prophet Moses (peace be upon him). They further insisted, {قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا} [They said, "Call upon your Lord to show us what is its color."]. Moses replied, {إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقْعِ لَوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ النََّاظِرِينَ} [He says, 'It is a yellow cow, bright in color - pleasing to the observers']. Yet again, they persisted, saying, {قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ} [They said, "Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is. Indeed, [all] cows look alike to us. And indeed, we, if Allah wills, will be guided"]. Moses then clarified, {إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا شِئَةَ فِيهَا} [He says, 'It is a cow neither trained to plow the earth nor to irrigate the field, one free from fault with no spot upon her'].

He directed them that the cow was not used for tilling the land or watering the crops and was free from any defects. Only then did they say, {الآن جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ} [Now you have come with the truth], and they finally slaughtered the cow, though they were hesitant and almost did not do it.

Their statement, {الآن جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ} [Now you have come with the truth], implies that they considered what was said before as not entirely truthful, reflecting their stubbornness and obstinacy. This situation illustrates the

importance of making things easy, a principle that was central to the practice of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He would always choose the easier of two options whenever possible, establishing a behavioral guideline for Muslims to follow.

Moses then instructed them to take a part of the cow and strike it upon the deceased. When they did so, the dead man was brought back to life, and he identified his killer before returning to death as he was before (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/112).

So, Allah revealed what they were concealing about the murderer. Allah says: {وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ} [And [recall] when you killed a man and disputed over it, but Allah was to bring out that which you were concealing]. This verse serves as evidence to them and to others that Allah is capable of resurrecting the dead and that nothing is beyond His power. Allah does whatever He wills, and in this case, He chose to return life to the dead man through the striking of his body with a part of the cow. This demonstrates that one of Allah's laws is to use means, though Allah is fully capable of reviving him by simply saying "Be," and he would be alive. Glory be to Allah, the Most High, the Most Powerful.

This event also confirms to the People of the Book that the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) is true and that the Quran is true, as it recounts events from their past, even though Muhammad (ﷺ) was an unlettered prophet who neither read nor wrote.

Among the lessons derived from this event is the significance of the relationship between the name of Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow) and this extraordinary, miraculous event, which serves as a clear sign from Allah to demonstrate His power over resurrection and the ability to make the dead speak after being brought back to life. The dead person regains his senses and remembers everything that occurred and what he did.

This also highlights that judgment belongs solely to Allah, who decrees as He wills and in whatever manner He chooses, as He made the cause for reviving the dead man a part of the cow. The dead man was struck with the cow's bone, and life returned to him. Truly, this great surah is rightfully named "Al-Baqarah" (The Cow). The command belongs to Allah before and after all things.

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

[Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder. For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:74).

This noble verse clarifies what happened to the Children of Israel after they witnessed the manifest signs that should have caused their hearts to tremble, making them submissive to Allah's commands and directives. These signs, such as the descent of manna and quails, their rescue from Pharaoh, the drowning of their enemy before their eyes, and their entrance into the sacred land, should have instilled love and obedience towards Allah. The splitting of the sea, the drowning of Pharaoh, the raising of Mount Sinai above them, and the resurrection of the dead before their eyes were all events that should have inspired fear, obedience, and compliance. However, their hearts became hardened after witnessing these clear signs that necessitated obedience. Allah says: {ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً} [Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder].

This indicates that there are minds that do not respond to the truth, no matter how many signs and proofs they see, and there are hearts that remain unaffected by blessings or fear. Even if they submit temporarily, they quickly revert to their previous state of deviation. Out of Allah's grace, He has assigned believers the duty of guiding others towards goodness and offering direction, but He has not tasked anyone with the responsibility of granting guidance that leads to success. True guidance, where a person willingly chooses to obey Allah, is a gift that Allah reserves for Himself, as He says in Surah Al-Qasas: {إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ}

يُشَاءُ] [Indeed, you do not guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He wills] (Surah Al-Qasas, 28:56).

The noble verse indicates that when the heart becomes hardened and its hardness intensifies, it no longer responds, and its severity surpasses even that of stones. In fact, stones are more responsive than a human heart that has become hardened: { وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشْقُقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ } [For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah]. Some stones split open, causing rivers and springs to flow, and others crumble in fear of Allah, like Mount Sinai when Allah manifested Himself to it, and the trembling of Mount Uhud when the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his companions stood upon it. This verse teaches that even inanimate objects react to the signs of Allah with fear, as Allah says about the stones: { وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ } [And there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah]. Similarly, Allah says in Surah Al-Hashr: { لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْنَاهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ } [If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah] (Surah Al-Hashr, 59:21). When Allah manifested Himself to the mountain, it crumbled: { فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا } [And when his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, He made it collapse] (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:143). Similarly, Mount Uhud trembled when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his companions ascended it, and the trunk of the palm tree moaned when the Prophet (ﷺ) no longer leaned on it.

Thus, some stones are superior to the hearts of certain people who, despite knowing the truth, do not believe in Allah. The verse concludes by affirming Allah's knowledge and denying any attribute of heedlessness that is characteristic of creation: { وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ } [And Allah is not unaware of what you do]. By negating heedlessness, which is a human

trait, Allah is praised with eloquence through the negation of its opposite. This negation implies the perfection of Allah's attribute of knowledge. This statement is a form of praise through the denial of deficiency, affirming that Allah is complete and possesses the attribute of perfection. Nothing escapes His knowledge, whether it is the secrets that humans conceal or the intentions they harbor in their hearts, let alone what they reveal. All is known to Him, the Exalted.

{أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِن بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (٧٥) وَإِذَا لَفُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بِغَضِهمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُم بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ (٧٦) أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ (٧٧)}

[So do you hope that they would believe for you while a party of them used to hear the words of Allah and then distort it after they had understood it while they were knowing? And when they meet those who believe, they say, "We have believed"; but when they are alone with one another, they say, "Do you talk to them about what Allah has revealed to you so they can argue with you about it before your Lord?" Then will you not reason? But do they not know that Allah knows what they conceal and what they declare?] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:75-77].

The discourse then shifts to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) with a rhetorical question that expresses astonishment at their hope for the conversion of a group of Jews in Medina: {أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ؟} [So do you hope that they would believe for you?]. This reflects the believers' eagerness for their conversion to Islam, and the Prophet's (ﷺ) and his companions' keenness for their conversion indicates the importance of prioritizing the desire to save the disbeliever from the Hellfire over neglecting and abandoning their invitation to Islam, especially those who are neighbors and close to the believers. This implies the priority of loving good for others through Islam rather than leaving them in disbelief.

This divine instruction also suggests that the believers were unaware of the true nature of that group of Jews, which Allah clarified to them, as will be explained. It also emphasizes the general concern for guiding others. The Ansar (may Allah be pleased with them) were keen on the conversion of the Jews due to their close relationship and proximity. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/2).

This highlights the loyalty of the Ansar to the rights of neighbors and close companions, but Allah knows the realities that are hidden from humans

except through His knowledge. The verse clarifies that there is no hope for their conversion: { أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِن بَعْدِ } [So do you hope that they would believe for you while a party of them used to hear the words of Allah and then distort it after they had understood it while they were knowing?].

This verse explains why it is unlikely that they would believe, as a group from among their ancestors had reached the point where they would hear the words of Allah and then distort it after understanding it. That is, some of their ancestors knew the truth and yet turned away from it. So how can you hope for the conversion of these people after they have known the undeniable truth?

This indicates that not everyone who rejects the truth is ignorant of it; some reject the truth while knowing it with certainty. Indeed, some go so far as to distort it after understanding and being certain of it. This highlights the importance of being wary of desires, envy, and arrogance, which can prevent a person from accepting the truth. If these traits can prevent a person from accepting something as significant as matters of faith, how much more likely are they to obstruct in lesser worldly matters like trade, professional interactions, public administration, and private dealings where people's interests are intertwined, and in other aspects of life. This calls for caution against the dangers of arrogance, envy, and personal desires, as they are the tools of both human and jinn devils.

Allah then describes the behavior of the hypocrites towards the believers and among themselves: { وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بِبَعْضِهِمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ } [And when they meet those who believe, they say, "We have believed"; but when they are alone with one another, they say, "Do you talk to them about what Allah has revealed to you so they can argue with you about it before your Lord? Then will you not reason?].

Allah exposes the hypocrites by revealing that they display faith to the believers, but when they are alone with each other, they rebuke one another for telling the Muslims about the truth of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) prophethood and the authenticity of his religion, which they recognized from the revealed scriptures. They argue that this admission could be used as evidence against them by the Muslims before Allah, asking, "How can you disbelieve when you outwardly profess Islam, acknowledge its truth, and affirm the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ)?" This implies that they are not ignorant, but rather they feign ignorance and foolishness.

Allah then says about them: {أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ} [But do they not know that Allah knows what they conceal and what they declare?]. This rhetorical question serves as a rebuke and reprimand for them, emphasizing that Allah is fully aware of both their hidden intentions and their outward actions.

This explanation highlights the vastness of Allah's knowledge and His complete awareness of everything that a person reveals or conceals; nothing is hidden from Him, exalted be He. The previous verses also indicate that one of the traits of hypocrites is to outwardly display Islam while concealing disbelief. This necessitates that believers be cautious of the deceit of disbelievers and avoid adopting similar behavior in their dealings, as such actions are characteristic of hypocritical and devilish conduct.

{وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِي وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ (٧٨) فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ (٧٩) وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٨٠) بَلَى مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَاطَبَةُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٨١) وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٨٢)}

[And among them are unlettered ones who do not know the Scripture except through wishful thinking, but they are only assuming. So woe to those who write the "scripture" with their own hands, then say, "This is from Allah," in order to exchange it for a small price. Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn. And they say, "Never will the Fire touch us, except for a few days." Say, "Have you taken a covenant with Allah? For Allah will never break His covenant. Or do you say about Allah that which you do not know?" Yes, whoever earns evil and his sin has encompassed him - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally. But they who believe and do righteous deeds - those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:78-82]

Allah, the Exalted, clarifies that among the People of the Book, there are those who are unlettered, unable to read or write, and thus unaware of the contents of the scripture that Allah revealed to them. These individuals entertain false hopes and assumptions about Allah without knowledge, relying only on conjecture. This highlights the danger of speaking about Allah's book without knowledge, saying, "This cannot be," or "This is incorrect," or "This is permissible," or "This is forbidden," and so on, based solely on personal assumption rather than understanding.

This condemnation implies praise for its opposites: knowledge and the importance of speaking with knowledge. It also emphasizes the virtue of scholars and the learned who speak with knowledge and understanding, not based on mere assumptions. It underscores that some people might dare to speak about Allah's religion without proper knowledge, which is a dangerous path. A Muslim should seek refuge in Allah from speaking

without knowledge or seeking religious guidance from those who are not qualified. The verse {إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ} [They are only assuming] indicates that assumption is not knowledge; rather, it is conjecture and delusion. One should not speak on religious matters until they have confirmed knowledge, which is the firm understanding of a matter in its true nature.

Allah then warns those who distort the scripture and write things contrary to what Allah revealed, falsely attributing their fabrications to Allah and claiming it is from Him, all to gain some worldly benefit. {فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ} {الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا} [So woe to those who write the "scripture" with their own hands, then say, "This is from Allah," in order to exchange it for a small price]. Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "These are another group of the Jews, those who invite others to misguidance by lying and fabricating lies against Allah, consuming people's wealth unlawfully." (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/121)

And although this was said about the Children of Israel, their stories serve as a lesson and a warning against following their path, as there are people among humanity who might adopt similar behaviors. Allah then expresses His threat against them, saying: {فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ} [So woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn]. "Woe" here signifies destruction and doom. Some scholars have said that "Wail" is the pus at the bottom of Hell, while others have described it as a valley in Hell so intense that if mountains were placed there, they would melt. In a hadith, it is mentioned that "Wail is a valley in Hell into which the disbeliever will fall for forty autumns before reaching its bottom." (Tirmidhi, 5/299-300, Hadith 3164; it is weak according to Da'if al-Jami', Hadith 6148).

In this verse, two grave dangers and punishments are highlighted: the first is {فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ} [So woe to them for what their hands have written], and the second is {وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ} [and woe to them for what they earn].

This underscores the severe danger of lying against Allah on its own and the grave danger of profiting from Allah's verses.

This illustrates that a scholar bears a tremendous and significant responsibility, but in return, he holds a high rank with Allah. With great responsibility comes a great reward, by Allah's permission. Indeed, Allah, the Rich and Generous, does not waste the reward or the rank of those who carry the trust and honor of knowledge of the Quran and the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ).

Allah then explains the justification and reasoning of those who belittle the Book of Allah, who follow this path of belittling Allah's signs to gain some trivial worldly benefit. Allah says about them: {وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً} [And they say, "Never will the Fire touch us, except for a few days"]. This shows that a person might justify for themselves an excuse that encourages them to pursue what they desire, even though this justification is false and baseless. Even if the punishment were for a few days, could a person endure it? But Allah refutes this justification, saying: {قُلْ أَنْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ {يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ} [Say, "Have you taken a covenant with Allah? For Allah will never break His covenant. Or do you say about Allah that which you do not know?"]. {بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ} [Yes, whoever earns evil and his sin has encompassed him - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally].

This indicates that a person should only speak with knowledge and should not create justifications and excuses for themselves to make the unlawful permissible or to trade Allah's verses for a small price. Allah's reward is precious, and its price is Paradise for those who adhere to His commands as He has ordained. After explaining the punishment for those who falsely attribute lies to Allah, Allah says: {وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ} [But they who believe and do righteous deeds - those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally].

This is the reward for the believer who performs the righteous deeds that are commanded, safeguarding Allah's commands and not trading them for a trivial price. Such a person will not lie against Allah or take His punishment lightly.

So, O Allah, protect us from Your punishment and Your retribution, and guard us from speaking without knowledge regarding Your Book and Your religion.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَٰئِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ

[And [recall] when We took the covenant from the Children of Israel, [enjoining upon them], "Do not worship except Allah; and to parents do good and to relatives, orphans, and the needy. And speak to people good [words] and establish prayer and give zakah." Then you turned away, except a few of you, and you were refusing.] [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:83]

The noble verse clarifies that Allah took solemn covenants from the Children of Israel to worship Him alone without any partners, to be kind to their parents, relatives, orphans, and the needy, and to speak kindly to people by enjoining good, forbidding evil, and using gentle and good speech. They were also commanded to establish prayer and give zakah, as detailed in the verse. This verse highlights that the laws of Allah encompass the fundamental principles of religion, which are based on worshipping Him with pure monotheism and rejecting any form of shirk (associating partners with Him): { لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ } [Do not worship except Allah]. It emphasizes that worship should be directed to Allah alone, without any partners.

The verse also emphasizes the importance of noble morals and kindness to others: { وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا } [and to parents do good and to relatives, orphans, and the needy, and speak to people good [words]]. Additionally, it includes acts of worship such as prayer and zakah: { وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ } [and establish prayer and give zakah].

This verse elucidates Allah's right to be worshipped, which is fundamentally rooted in monotheism, as true worship cannot be fulfilled without recognizing and actualizing this principle, dedicating all acts of worship solely to Him without partners. Belief in Him necessarily includes belief in the messengers who conveyed His message, the scriptures they

brought, and the honored angels who delivered these scriptures. Thus, genuine and correct worship of Allah requires fulfilling the pillars of faith, even if they are not explicitly mentioned in this verse, as they are implied and necessary for worship and monotheism.

This verse also underscores the gravity of shirk, which opposes monotheism, and affirms that worship should be directed solely to Allah without any partners: {لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ} [Do not worship except Allah]. Whoever associates anything with Allah has not fulfilled the monotheism that Allah has commanded.

The verse then elucidates the profound right of parents, which is encapsulated in the word "إحسانا" (kindness). This term is so comprehensive that it encompasses all aspects and attributes of kindness, making it unnecessary to detail every component. It implies that nothing that contradicts kindness should be said or done, and nothing essential to kindness should be omitted. The concept of "إحسان" is broader than mere benevolence; it surpasses justice and extends to an exaggerated level of generosity and honor. While justice is obligatory, "إحسان" goes beyond justice to the point of excessive kindness and honor. Thus, kindness towards parents has become an obligation, moving from a meritorious act to a required duty by the command and decree of Allah, to the extent that children are required to go to the utmost lengths in fulfilling it.

This highlights that the rights of parents are elevated to the highest level, with no specific limits to their fulfillment, especially since the one who commanded it is Allah, the Generous Creator. In this command, there is a special honor and care for parents from Allah Himself. It reflects the lofty morals of Islam and its great guidance in honoring parents, which is part of the completeness of the religion and its ethics, as well as the mercy, blessings, and favor of Allah.

This also demonstrates the miraculous eloquence of the Quran, as every word in this verse carries profound and significant meanings with minimal

expressions. The verse particularly emphasizes the immense right of parents by specifically mentioning them even though they are included among the relatives (ذوي القربى). Additionally, it prioritizes the right of parents over that of relatives and others, highlighting the importance and establishing the hierarchy of responsibilities.

The noble verse outlines the rights of close relatives in a general manner, which is evident to those of understanding, as they vary in degrees, rendering a detailed explanation unnecessary. The noble virtues then extend to orphans and the needy, and finally, encompass all people, with the command: {وقولوا للناس حسنا} [And speak to people good words], which includes all noble manners, avoidance of immoral behavior, and the safeguarding of others' rights. Neglecting these rights or violating them contradicts the concept of beneficence. The emphasis on orphans and the needy, and their precedence over others, underscores their importance and the necessity of special care, as the divine law specifically draws attention to them. This special mention serves as a reminder to give them extra care and attention due to their inability to secure their basic needs, such as food, drink, guidance, and care. The verse stands as a marvel in its profound articulation, conveying extensive legal principles with the fewest words.

Then, Allah commands the establishment of prayer, which is an act of worship between the servant and their Lord {وأقيموا الصلاة} [And establish prayer]. Following this, the obligation of Zakat is mentioned, which is also an act of worship, but its performance is among people {وآتوا الزكاة} [And give Zakat]. It is the practical interaction and compassion between those whom Allah has enriched by His bounty and those whom He has made dependent on others by His wisdom. This legislation, with its meanings and comprehensiveness encompassing benevolence and mercy, is a clear proof that it could only be from Allah. It reflects the intricacies of His command and legislation, in perfect harmony with the innate nature, and with the eloquence of its expressions and the comprehensiveness of its meanings.

Allah then explains the condition of the Children of Israel in applying the principles of this legislation {ثم توليتم إلا قليلاً منكم وأنتم معرضون} [Then you turned away, except a few of you, and you were refusing], as they turned away from fulfilling what they had committed to, except for a few of them. In this, there is a clear explanation and a warning for those who come after them not to follow their example. It also serves as an indirect admonition that can be understood and recognized upon hearing or reciting it.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا تَخْرُجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ (٨٤) ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرَجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِّنكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِهِمْ تَظَاهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَإِن يَأْتِوكُمُ أُسَارَىٰ تُفَادُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَن يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (٨٥) أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يَخَفُفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ (٨٦)

[And when We took your covenant, "Do not shed each other's blood or evict one another from your homes." Then you acknowledged this while you were witnessing. Then, you are those [same ones] who are killing one another and evicting a party of your people from their homes, cooperating against them in sin and aggression. And if they come to you as captives, you ransom them, although their eviction was forbidden to you. So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part? Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection, they will be sent back to the severest of punishment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. Those are the ones who have bought the life of this world [in exchange] for the Hereafter, so the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be aided.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:84-86)

The noble verse explains that Allah took solemn covenants from the Children of Israel that they should not shed each other's blood, nor expel one another from their homes. They acknowledged this covenant, accepted it, and bore witness to it themselves. This was the foundation of their religion.

Allah, the Exalted, then clarifies the condition of the Jews during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in Medina, highlighting their involvement in warfare, and condemning them for their transgressions against their scripture. They were engaged in conflicts with the Aws and Khazraj tribes, who later became the Ansar after embracing Islam and supporting the Prophet (ﷺ). In pre-Islamic times, the Aws and Khazraj were idol

worshippers, frequently involved in wars. The Jews of Medina were divided into three tribes: Banu Qaynuqa and Banu Nadir, who were allies of the Khazraj, and Banu Qurayza, who were allies of the Aws. When war erupted, each Jewish tribe fought alongside their respective allies, resulting in Jews killing fellow Jews, which was forbidden in their religion and clearly prohibited in their scripture. They would also expel each other from their homes and loot their belongings. Allah says: { وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ } (٨٤) [And when We took your covenant, "Do not shed each other's blood or evict one another from your homes." Then you acknowledged this while you were witnessing (84)].

However, when the war subsided, they would ransom the captives according to the Torah. { ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِّنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظَاهَرُونَ } (٨٥) [Then you are those [same ones] who are killing one another and evicting a party of your people from their homes, cooperating against them in sin and aggression. And if they come to you as captives, you ransom them, although their eviction was forbidden to you (85)].

In doing so, they adhered to the Torah's ruling on ransoming captives, but contradicted it by engaging in warfare, shedding blood, and expelling each other from their homes. This verse serves as a reprimand, expressing disapproval of their actions, and pointing out the contradiction in ransoming captives after the cessation of hostilities, while it was originally forbidden for them to expel and kill one another.

This emphasizes the greatness of Allah's Shariah, which safeguards lives and forbids the shedding of blood unjustly. It also prohibits disrupting the social order, spreading injustice by overpowering the weak, seizing their property, expelling them, and displacing them from their homes. Such actions may lead to the scattering of families and the breaking of their unity.

It also highlights the dangers and sins of manipulating Allah's religion by selectively applying some parts of it while disregarding others, implementing what suits them and abandoning what does not. This behavior is characteristic of the ignorant among the Jews, as indicated by the verse {أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ} [So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part?].

The Quran uses the phrase {تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ} [killing yourselves] to stir the heart of the reader and listener of Allah's Book, as if a person is killing themselves. The phrase was not "يَقْتُلُ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا" [some of you kill others], but instead, it was {تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ} [killing yourselves] to make one feel that when they unjustly kill another, it is as if they are killing themselves, considering the tragedy of taking innocent lives, which Allah has forbidden except by right. Ibn Kathir said, "This is because the people of one faith are like a single soul."

As the Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"You see the believers in their mutual mercy, love, and compassion as one body; when one part of it is in pain, the rest of the body reacts with sleeplessness and fever"* (Sahih al-Bukhari, 4/93, Hadith 6011).

The phrase {تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ} [killing yourselves] carries a profound implication, suggesting that the people of one faith are like a single body. When one among them kills unjustly, it is as if the killer has destroyed parts of his own body. How could such an act be fitting? Consequently, Muslims are obliged to view themselves as one body; it is inconceivable to sever and tear one's own body into pieces or to strive in tearing it apart into warring factions, leading to enmity, fighting, and the unlawful spilling of blood, seizing of wealth, and violating of honor.

In this context, the reciter of Allah's Book perceives the precise expression and the clear Quranic description of the gravity of exile, as Allah Almighty said {وَتُخْرَجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِنْكُمْ} [and you expel a party of your people]. The word "مِنْكُمْ" [from among you] implies cutting a part from the whole, as if they had cut off a part of themselves, and then acted against this part, which is a

member of the whole, in sin and aggression, a deed that is forbidden. What could stir the heart more profoundly than this eloquent description, with its meanings that leap into the heart and cling to it?

This revelation from Allah about what they possess in the Torah demonstrates and affirms to them and others that this Quran is the Word of Allah, and that the one who brought it is a Messenger from Allah. Thus, Muhammad (ﷺ) is indeed a Messenger and Prophet from our Lord. How else could he inform them of such precise details in their scripture?

One of the lessons here is that confronting an opponent with undeniable truths they are familiar with, and which they cannot deny, is a powerful way to establish proof against them. The Quran presents this in the context of affirming the reality and condemning the action {أَفْتَوُمْنُونِ بَعْضَ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ} [So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part?], and immediately following this comes the penalty for those who committed these heinous violations. However, the penalty is introduced with a provoking rhetorical question. Allah says: {فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ} [Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you?], followed by the answer in the form of a statement to stir the intellect and emotion toward correcting the course: {فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا. وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَى أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ} [Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection, they will be sent back to the severest of punishment?]. In this world, they face disgrace and shame, known to the people. As for the Day of Resurrection, there will be severe punishment. This implies that disgrace in this world is a form of punishment, as it brings shame and a terrible reputation that harms a person among people, underscoring the importance of fearing Allah's punishment – both disgrace in this world and severe punishment in the Hereafter. In this world, Allah disgraces the sinner with shame that haunts him, disrupts his life, and sours his happiness, depriving him of worldly joy and subjecting him to torment in the Hereafter. Allah concludes the verse with {وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ} [And

Allah is not unaware of what you do], denying any notion of negligence on His part, which is a quality attributed to creatures. The denial here implies praise and the perfection of His attributes, as Allah says, { لَا تَأْخُذْهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ } [Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep]. How beautiful is the Book of Allah!

Allah then describes the state of those who commit such deeds as { أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ } { اشْتَرَوْا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ } [Those are the ones who have bought the life of this world [in exchange] for the Hereafter]. These actions characterize those who prioritize this worldly life over the Hereafter, those who "buy" this world at the expense of the Hereafter, as if they are paying the price of the eternal Hereafter to gain the fleeting pleasures of this temporary world. What greater loss could there be than this, especially when committed by someone who is aware of the consequences, and who finds no real beauty in such a transaction? The noble verse stirs the intellect of those with understanding, urging them not to commit such acts.

This requires believers to reflect wisely when faced with sins, recognizing that they are essentially paying the price of the Hereafter for the sake of this world. What a terrible loss that is, especially since the context is framed as a transaction, a trade-off between the Hereafter and this world. It's a trade where one is either a gainer or a loser. Allah concludes the fate of those who engage in such deeds with the words { فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ } { يُنصَرُونَ } [So the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be aided]. This is a severe warning; their punishment will not be reduced, and no one will help or save them from this humiliating torment.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ (٨٧) وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٨٨) وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَّا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ (٨٩) بِنَسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَعِثْنَا أَنْ يُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ (٩٠) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا نُوْمِنُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (٩١) وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ (٩٢) وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ قُلْ بِنَسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيْمَانُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (٩٣)

[And We certainly gave Moses the Scripture and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the Pure Spirit. But is it [not] that every time a messenger came to you, [O Children of Israel], with what your souls did not desire, you were arrogant? And a party [of messengers] you denied and another party you killed. And they said, "Our hearts are wrapped." But, [in fact], Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is it that they believe. And when there came to them a Book from Allah confirming that which was with them - although before they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved - but [then] when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it; so the curse of Allah will be upon the disbelievers. How wretched is that for which they sold themselves - that they would disbelieve in what Allah has revealed through [their] outrage that Allah would send down His favor upon whom He wills from among His servants. So they returned having [earned] wrath upon wrath. And for the disbelievers is a humiliating punishment. And when it is said to them, "Believe in what Allah has revealed," they say, "We believe [only] in what was revealed to us." And they disbelieve in what came after it, while it is the truth confirming that which is with them. Say, "Then why did you kill the prophets of Allah before, if you are [indeed] believers?" And Moses had certainly brought you clear proofs. Then you took the calf after him,

while you were wrongdoers. And [recall] when We took your covenant and raised over you the mount, [saying], "Take what We have given you with determination and listen." They said [instead], "We hear and disobey." And their hearts absorbed [the worship of] the calf because of their disbelief. Say, "How wretched is that which your faith enjoins upon you, if you should be believers." [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:87-93]

Allah Almighty reminds the Children of Israel of His favor upon them by sending Moses (peace be upon him) as His chosen messenger, and following him with a succession of prophets, culminating in Jesus (peace be upon him), whom He strengthened and supported with the Holy Spirit, which is Gabriel (peace be upon him) (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/75). { وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَفَقَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ { بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ } [And We certainly gave Moses the Scripture and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the Pure Spirit] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:87).

This verse highlights Allah's grace upon the Children of Israel by sending them Moses as a prophet, followed by other messengers, with Jesus being the last of them. The verse also indicates that Allah supports whomever He wills with His aid and care, as He supported Jesus with the angel Gabriel (peace be upon them both).

Allah then describes the attitude of the Children of Israel towards the noble messengers: { أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ } [But is it [not] that every time a messenger came to you, [O Children of Israel], with what your souls did not desire, you were arrogant? And a party [of messengers] you denied and another party you killed]. (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:87)

This indicates that among the Children of Israel, there were those who denied the messengers, and some even killed the prophets due to the arrogance of their souls and their disdain for the guidance brought by these

messengers, which did not align with their desires. This highlights how desire leads to arrogance and pride, preventing the acceptance of truth. It serves as a warning to people about the dangers of following their desires, which can hinder them from following the final messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ), the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers.

The justification for disobedience, disbelief, and deviation is reiterated, as in Allah's saying: {وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ} [And they said, "Our hearts are wrapped"] (Al-Jalalayn, 13; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/128), meaning that their hearts are covered, and thus, they do not understand or comprehend. This highlights the dangers of false justification when a person indulges in the whims of their soul. Allah then states their punishment: {بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ} [Rather, Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is it that they believe]. This means that Allah has expelled them and distanced them from goodness and His mercy due to their disbelief, so only a few of them believe (Al-Jalalayn, 13). Some scholars have interpreted this to mean that their faith is very minimal.

This Quranic explanation of the condition of the Children of Israel serves as a warning, instilling fear in the soul about following this path, which leads to being expelled from Allah's mercy, leaving no refuge after Allah. After explaining the condition of the Children of Israel with their prophets, Allah describes their attitude towards the book He revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He says: {وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ} [And when there came to them a Book from Allah confirming that which was with them] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/129). This verse emphasizes that the Quran, which Allah revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), confirms what they have in the Torah and does not contradict it, thereby affirming the truthfulness of the Prophet's (ﷺ) prophethood and the truthfulness of the book he brought from his Lord. It explains to them the truths they recognize from the Torah, especially since they used to seek victory over their enemies by the coming of this Prophet before his mission.

They would say to those who fought them: "A Prophet will be sent at the end of time, and we will kill you with him as the people of 'Ad and Iram were killed" (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/129). This is the meaning of Allah's saying: {وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا} [and they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved]. But when the Prophet (ﷺ) appeared, they disbelieved in him: {فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ} [But when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it]. Consequently, their punishment was as Allah said: {فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ} [so the curse of Allah will be upon the disbelievers], meaning they are expelled from His mercy as a recompense for their disbelief.

Allah then evaluates their stance with the word {بِئْسَمَا} [How wretched] (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/20), which fully conveys condemnation, just as "Ni'ma" fully conveys praise. Allah says: {بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ} [How wretched is that for which they sold themselves—that they would disbelieve in what Allah has revealed] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/129). In this description, every possible condemnation for their behavior is captured. How wretched it is that they exchanged their souls for disbelief in what Allah revealed to Muhammad (ﷺ), rather than believing in and supporting it.

Their refusal to believe in the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was due to their envy that Allah chose to reveal the Quran and this religion to someone other than themselves: {بَغْيًا أَنْ يَنْزِلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ} [Out of envy that Allah would bestow His grace upon whom He wills from among His servants]. This teaches the general lesson of the importance of contentment when Allah appoints someone else to a position, whether in a profession, management, council, or any other aspect of life. The wise person should not see such rights and entitlements as confined to themselves alone, as if they were an exclusive privilege, but rather accept Allah's decision in placing these responsibilities where He wills. Otherwise, the soul may fall into the darkness of contempt, disdain, and arrogance toward others, leading to division, conflict, and chaos within the community and society.

This trait is despicable, for if it influences obedience to Allah, how could it not affect other aspects of life? Therefore, one must be cautious of this trait, which prevents goodness and spreads discord in both religious and worldly matters.

Thus, those who disbelieved in Muhammad (ﷺ) lost the Hereafter due to their envy and arrogance that the message was not sent to them, disregarding Allah's will in choosing whom He pleases for His message. Allah describes their loss: {فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَىٰ غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ} [So they returned having [earned] wrath upon wrath. And for the disbelievers is a humiliating punishment] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/129). They incurred Allah's wrath for neglecting the Torah and additional wrath for disbelieving in what Allah revealed to His Prophet and Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ). (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/129).

They will also face humiliating punishment, filled with disgrace and shame. This affirms that Allah, in His wisdom, chooses whom He wills, advances whom He wills, and delays whom He wills. This requires humility before Allah in all aspects of life, so one should not look down upon a preacher, an imam, a leader, or a rightful president. Instead, one should be an ally and advocate for good, opposing evil with humility before Allah, defending the truth by clarifying it to others, and being content with Allah's wisdom in His choices and appointments.

Allah then explains their attitude towards divine revelations: {وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا تِلْكَ بَيِّنَاتُ اللَّهِ فَتًى كَمَا فَلَا نُبُوءَ بِمَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَيِّنَاتِهِ وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا أَنْزَالُ الْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ} [And when it is said to them, "Believe in what Allah has revealed," they say, "We believe [only] in what was revealed to us," and they disbelieve in what came after it, while it is the truth confirming that which is with them] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/129).

Their stubbornness leads them to evade and resort to tricks. When the Jews and others like them are asked to believe in what Allah has revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), they respond by saying, "We suffice with what

was revealed to us in the Torah and the Gospel, and we acknowledge only that" {وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ} [and they disbelieve in what came after it], meaning they disbelieve in anything else, even though it confirms what is in their scripture, which contains news of the prophethood of this noble, unlettered prophet. Here lies the critical point where they cannot escape: {قُلْ فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ} [Say, "Then why did you kill the prophets of Allah before, if you are [indeed] believers?"]. If they were truthful in their claim of believing in what was revealed to them, then why did they kill the prophets who came to confirm the Torah?

This emphasizes the importance of establishing proof against the denier, and the significance of knowledge that enables a caller to engage with the denier and correct them. It also highlights the importance of understanding the condition of the person being addressed, knowing their misconceptions, so that one can respond effectively and refute the falsehoods they hold.

Then Allah reminds them again of what happened with Moses (peace be upon him) when he brought them clear proofs, yet they took the calf and worshipped it besides Allah: {وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِهِ وَأَنتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ} [And Moses had certainly brought you clear proofs. Then you took the calf after him, while you were wrongdoers]. Repeatedly mentioning these incidents serves as an undeniable proof against the deniers, making them realize that the evidence is piling up against them, leaving no escape, until all avenues of deceit are closed, prompting them either to refrain or persist in their obstinance.

The reminder of their previous punishment is repeated to them, where they were threatened with the raising of Mount Sinai over them, yet they still disobeyed and loved the worship of the calf. Allah says: {وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ { وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ قُلْ } [And [recall] when We took your covenant and raised over you the mount, [saying], "Take what We have given you

with determination and listen." They said [instead], "We hear and disobey." And their hearts absorbed [the worship of] the calf because of their disbelief. Say, "How wretched is that which your faith enjoins upon you, if you should be believers"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:93). The verse ends with a rebuke of their false claim to faith, questioning the validity of such faith that commands them to lie and deceive.

This highlights that there are those who falsely claim faith and build upon these claims lies, presenting them as truths. It also underscores the importance of obedience and the grave consequences of disobedience and trivializing Allah's commands. This suggests that some people are not swayed by signs and warnings; no matter how much effort the caller to Allah exerts, their desired outcome of guiding people to goodness may not be achieved. Therefore, it is necessary for the caller and advisor to prepare themselves for all possible outcomes when inviting others to Allah. They must fulfill the obligation of conveying the message, regardless of the response, as there will always be those who accept, like the Companions who embraced Islam, and those who reject, like those who were obstinate and arrogant.

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٩٤) وَلَنْ يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ (٩٥) وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاةٍ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحِّزِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ (٩٦)

[Say, "If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is for you alone and not the [other] people, then wish for death, if you should be truthful." But they will never wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth. And Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers. And you will surely find them the most greedy of people for life - [even] more than those who associate others with Allah. One of them wishes that he could be granted life a thousand years, but it would not remove him in the least from the [coming] punishment. And Allah is Seeing of what they do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:94-96)

The context of the noble verses continues concerning the Jews, establishing the proof against them so that others may take a lesson and learn from this in faith and in the correct methodology of dealing with the religion of Allah and His Prophet (ﷺ). This is so that one may realize the mercy of Allah in what He has revealed, and His great forbearance towards the disobedient, leaving them the opportunity to repent. Perhaps they might awaken from their desires and return to the truth, holding firmly to the Book and the Sunnah. In the verse, there is a challenge and a refutation, clearly demonstrating the falsehood of their claim to faith: { قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ { [Say, "If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is for you alone and not the [other] people, then wish for death, if you should be truthful"] (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/78).

If Paradise is exclusively for you, as you claim, that only those who are Jews or Christians will enter Paradise, and that the Fire will only touch you for a few numbered days, then wish for death if you are truthful. This is a type of mutual prayer (Mubahala) between them and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). After this challenge, there are only two options: either they believe in Allah and His Messenger, or they wish for death, which will lead

them to Paradise as they claim. Their refusal to wish for death is evidence of their lying, for if they were truthful, they would wish for it to prove their truthfulness. However, they refrained from doing so, and consequently, it became clear to everyone that they were in extreme opposition and enmity towards Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

Allah made it clear that they knew they were upon falsehood because of the evil deeds and false beliefs they had committed. Thus, they would not wish for death, as Allah Almighty said: { وَلَنْ يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ } [بِالظَّالِمِينَ] [But they will never wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth. And Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers].

This indicates that there are those who stubbornly oppose matters of religion, knowing full well that they are not in the right. If this is true for matters of religion, how much more so for matters of the worldly life, which are of lesser significance than religious matters. This happens often. Therefore, the scholar and the preacher must be precise and effective in dealing with opponents, by presenting irrefutable evidence that leaves no room for escape, so that others may understand the reality of the obstinate in matters of religion or worldly affairs, and so that no one else is deceived by their falsehood. It is also important to recognize that there are those who deny the truth out of arrogance and pride.

Allah makes it clear that they do not just avoid wishing for death; they are extremely eager to cling to life: { وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْزَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاةٍ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا يَوَدُّ } {أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعْمَرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ} [And you will surely find them the most greedy of people for life—even more than those who associate others with Allah. One of them wishes that he could be granted life a thousand years]. The verse clearly illustrates their intense aversion to death, wishing to live in this world as long as possible, similar to or even more than the polytheists. Each of them wishes to live for a thousand years, due to the evil deeds they have committed and the knowledge of what awaits them after death. This is why they will never wish for death, as Allah said: { وَلَنْ يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ }

أَيَّدِيهِمْ} [But they will never wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth]. They do not wish for death because of the evil deeds they have prepared for the Hereafter. Therefore, a long life will not prevent punishment. Allah also clarified: { وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحِّزٍ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا } يَعْمَلُونَ} [But it would not remove him in the least from the [coming] punishment if he should be granted life. And Allah is Seeing of what they do].

This shows that the criminal fears death and clings to life out of fear of punishment. The verse also indicates that no matter how long a life is, it will eventually end, and the judgment and recompense will not be delayed by the length of life. This reinforces the understanding for the believer that their love for life should be for the purpose of doing more good deeds and preparing to meet Allah with abundant obedience and seeking forgiveness.

This also confirms the truthfulness of the Quran, which reveals the realities of what their hearts conceal—lies, arrogance, knowing the truth but abandoning and rejecting it—with clear and practical evidence. This, in turn, confirms the truth of the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) through this miraculous book.

﴿قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٩٧)
مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ (٩٨)﴾

[Say, "Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel—it is [none but] he who has brought it [i.e., the Quran] down upon your heart, by permission of Allah, confirming that which was before it and as guidance and good tidings for the believers." Whoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and His messengers and Gabriel and Michael—then indeed, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:97-98)

The context continues to address the Jews, where the noble verse reveals that some among them harbor enmity towards certain angels. In the interpretation, Imam Abu Ja'far ibn Jarir al-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) said: All scholars of interpretation unanimously agree that this verse was revealed in response to the Jews of Bani Israel, who claimed that Gabriel was their enemy, while Michael was their ally (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/133).

It is also said that the reason behind this claim was that they asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) certain questions, and the Prophet (ﷺ) requested that they accept Islam if he answered them. They agreed. However, when he answered their questions, they were left with no option but to believe in him. They asked, "Who is your ally among the angels?" The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, "My ally is Gabriel, and no prophet has ever been sent except that Gabriel was his ally." They said, "In that case, we will oppose you. If your ally had been someone else from among the angels, we would have followed and believed in you" (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/134).

They said, "That is the one who brings down war and fighting; he is our enemy" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/26). Even the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) was not spared from their hatred. This indicates the extent of their audacity, the depth of their disbelief, and stubbornness that reached its peak despite their certainty of the truth. This

noble verse also reveals the character of these Jews, exposing their true nature and their vile and corrupt morals. This highlights the importance of understanding what Allah has revealed about their character so that Muslims are not deceived by them or place undue trust in them.

Allah then clarifies a great matter regarding the revelation of the Quran, saying: {فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [For it is he (Gabriel) who has brought it down upon your heart by the permission of Allah]. This affirms and clarifies that Gabriel brought down the Quran upon the heart of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This is evidence of the honor of Gabriel (peace be upon him) and his high status, as he is the one who brought down the Quran upon the heart of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The fact that the heart was singled out in this regard is a sign of the heart's honor among the body's organs. It is the exalted place in a person, and if it is sound, the whole body will be sound, as mentioned in the hadith. This is because, as Imam Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said, it is the place of intellect, knowledge, and understanding (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/26).

The fact that the Quran was revealed directly to the heart of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is a testament to the Quran's lofty status and high rank. It also signifies the elevated position of the one upon whom the Quran was revealed, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). When Allah says, {نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [He brought it down upon your heart by the permission of Allah], it indicates that nothing occurs without Allah's permission. Nothing in the universe happens except by His will, for He is the sole Sovereign, with no partner in His dominion, command, power, or control. This underscores the creature's dependence on the Creator in all matters, as He is the source of all blessings.

The verse then highlights some of the unique characteristics of the Quran. Firstly, it is described as {مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ} [confirming that which was before it], meaning it affirms the Torah and does not contradict it.

Secondly, it is described as {هُدًى} [guidance], as it is a book of guidance that leads those who follow it to happiness in both worlds, ultimately bringing them to the Gardens of Bliss. Thirdly, it is {بُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ} [good tidings for the believers], as it brings the glad news of Paradise. What book could be greater than the Quran, which guides to goodness and righteousness, fills the hearts of believers with joy by promising them Paradise by Allah's permission?

Allah says: {مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ} [Whoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and His messengers and Gabriel and Michael – then indeed, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers]. In this verse, Allah mentions the angels in general and then specifically names Gabriel and Michael. This is an example of mentioning the specific after the general, which emphasizes the importance of these two angels, particularly in the context of defending them. The Jews had claimed that Gabriel was their enemy because he brought down war and destruction, while Michael was their ally because he was responsible for vegetation and rain.

In reality, Gabriel (peace be upon him) also descends with guidance, as he is the one who brings down the scriptures to the prophets, including the Quran. Allah responded to their claims with this verse, clarifying that anyone who is an enemy to Allah, His angels, His messengers, Gabriel, or Michael, is indeed an enemy of Allah. The verse further confirms their disbelief: {فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ} [Then indeed, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers]. This applies to anyone who follows their path.

This verse highlights the honor of the angels in general, and the special status of Gabriel and Michael, as well as the prophets (peace be upon them all). It emphasizes that enmity towards them is an act of disbelief, and belief in them is obligatory. Additionally, it underscores the dangers of following one's desires, speaking about Allah without knowledge, and the severe consequences of arrogance.

وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا الْفَاسِقُونَ (٩٩) أَوْكَلَمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٠٠) وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (١٠١) وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ (١٠٢) وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ (١٠٣)

[And We have certainly revealed to you clear verses, and none deny them except the defiantly disobedient. Is it not [true] that every time they took a covenant, a party of them threw it away? But, in fact, most of them do not believe. And when a messenger from Allah came to them confirming that which was with them, a party of those who had been given the Scripture threw the Scripture of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know [what it contained]. And they followed instead what the devils had recited during the reign of Solomon. It was not Solomon who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic and that which was revealed to the two angels at Babylon, Harut and Marut. But the two angels do not teach anyone unless they say, "We are a trial, so do not disbelieve [by practicing magic]." And [yet] they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife. But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah. And they learn what harms them and does not benefit them. But they certainly knew that whoever purchased it [i.e., magic] would not have in the Hereafter any share. And wretched is that for which they sold themselves, if they only knew. And if they had believed and feared Allah, then the reward from Allah would have been [far] better, if they only knew.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:99-103).

Allah says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): { وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا } [الْفَاسِقُونَ] [And We have certainly revealed to you clear verses, and none deny them except the defiantly disobedient]. This is a testimony from Allah to His noble Book, affirming that it contains clear and manifest verses,

which establish proof against anyone who hears, reads, or is informed of them. The truth is evident in them—be it in matters of command, prophecy, legislation, wisdom, reward, punishment, or the signs that indicate this Book is from Allah. It includes clear and elucidating stories of previous nations, their conditions with their prophets, what they did, and what befell them, among other clear and evident matters. It confirms what came before it of the scriptures and does not contradict them. Therefore, the implication of these clear signs is that the one who brought this Book is indeed the Prophet and Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), making it obligatory to obey, support, follow, and love him. Consequently, anyone who disbelieves in this clear and manifest truth is a disbeliever, due to their defiance in straying from what they should uphold.

Allah also says: {أَوَكَلَّمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ} [Is it not [true] that every time they took a covenant, a party of them threw it away?]. This highlights the repeated breaking of covenants by the Jews. The word "كلما" [every time] indicates that this was a recurring pattern, where multiple covenants were made and then broken by them. Allah describes them truthfully as being mostly unbelievers: {بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ} [But, in fact, most of them do not believe]. This suggests that true faith obliges the believer to uphold their covenants out of fear of Allah, the Exalted, and fear of His punishment. On the other hand, the absence of faith makes a person prone to breaking every covenant whenever the opportunity arises. In contrast, faith serves as a barrier against breaking covenants and a deterrent from committing sins.

Allah then describes another characteristic of the Jews: their rejection of the truth they recognize and their abandonment of the Book of Allah and its teachings, as if they were completely ignorant of it. Allah says: {وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ} [And when a messenger from Allah came to them confirming that which was with them, a party of those who had been given the Scripture threw the Scripture of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know].

One of the implications of this noble verse is that the Quran does not contradict the scripture they possess; rather, it confirms it. Despite this, they cast it aside because it contains the glad tidings of the coming of the unlettered Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), behaving as if they are unaware of the truth it contains. Instead, they followed sorcery, as will be explained in the following verse.

This indicates that the Jews not only break covenants but also conceal the truth they know. This context also highlights the danger of selectively adhering to what one desires from the scripture while ignoring or hiding what one does not want, believing in part and disbelieving in part. Allah reveals that they abandoned what they had and followed sorcery and magicians. This reflects the nature of humankind: when they abandon the truth, they follow falsehood; when they forsake the Sunnah, they embrace innovation; and when they leave honesty, they resort to lies. Allah says: {وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ} [And they followed what the devils had recited during the reign of Solomon].

The devils brought forth magic to the people and falsely claimed that Solomon (peace be upon him) used it, attributing his great kingdom to it. But they were lying, as our Lord, Blessed and Exalted, absolved Solomon of such things. Allah says: {وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَٰكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ} [And Solomon did not disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic] (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/81).

This shows that disbelievers are eager to teach others disbelief, its methods, and traps, just as the devils do. It also highlights the devils' dedication to leading people astray and their fondness for lies. Furthermore, it illustrates that no one is safe from being slandered, even the Prophet of Allah, Solomon, against whom a falsehood was fabricated, claiming that his great kingdom was due to his use of magic. This demonstrates that those who

possess blessings are often envied by malicious individuals who attribute their blessings and virtues to false causes.

One of the lessons derived is the absolution of Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) from disbelief and the use of magic. In Allah's statement, { وَمَا كَفَرَ } [And Solomon did not disbelieve], there is evidence that practicing magic is an act of disbelief. This is a profound praise of Prophet Solomon, as it categorically denies any form of disbelief from him, making it clear that he was far from being a disbeliever; rather, he was a true and sent prophet. Even Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was not spared from being falsely accused of magic, poetry, and soothsaying—may Allah protect us from such falsehood. If such accusations were directed at the Prophet, then how much more might they be directed at those below him, such as scholars, worshippers, and the righteous.

The verse also reveals that the devils teach magic, as Allah says: { وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ } [But the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic]. Imam Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) mentions in his commentary on the verse { وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكِينَ بَبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ } [and what was revealed to the two angels at Babylon, Harut and Marut] that the word "ما" is a negation, and the conjunction "وَ" links it to { وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ } [And Solomon did not disbelieve]. The verse has a structure involving a degree of transposition, and its meaning is: "And Solomon did not disbelieve, nor was anything revealed to the two angels, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic at Babylon, Harut and Marut." Harut and Marut are mentioned as a substitute for the devils. This is the most appropriate interpretation of the verse and the soundest explanation given (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/35).

It has also been narrated from Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) that the verse could mean: "By the One who revealed it to the two angels." The angels would teach people as a warning against magic, not as an encouragement to practice it. As Az-Zajaj explained, this interpretation is

supported by most linguists and scholars of theology. The meaning is that the angels would teach people by forbidding them, saying: "Do not do this or that, and do not use such methods to cause separation between a man and his wife" (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 2/37).

This indicates that trials surround a person to test whether they will remain steadfast in the face of these challenges or deviate from the truth. Allah tests whom He wills with what He wills, just as He tested those who were with Talut (Saul) by the river, and like the prohibition of consuming pork – He is the Creator and the One who forbids, as He says about Himself in Surah Al-Anbiya: { لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ } [He is not questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned] (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:23).

Reflecting on the statement of the two angels, as mentioned, indicates that magic is a great evil, and they warned against learning it. Despite their warnings, there are those who still choose to learn and engage in it, persisting in disbelief. Allah says about the two angels: { وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ } { يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ } [But the two angels do not teach anyone unless they say, "We are a trial, so do not disbelieve"].

This highlights several important points: magic is an act of disbelief, and both sorcerers and magic itself are trials. Those who learn it have fallen into a severe trial in their faith. This underscores the dangers of trials and the necessity of caution, even avoiding them altogether. Trials are a test and an examination – may Allah protect us and all Muslims from them.

Some scholars of tafsir mentioned that the Jews followed the magic that was sent down upon the two angels in the land of Babylon, in Iraq. Magic was sent down as a test and trial from Allah to His servants, and the angels would teach it to them as a form of examination (Ibn Sa'di, *Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan*, 1/81).

The Muslim believes in whatever Allah has revealed, regardless of the manner in which it was revealed. As mentioned earlier, some scholars

explain that the verse implies: "وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ السِّحْرُ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَيْنِ الَّذِينَ هُمَا جِبْرِيلُ وَمِيكَائِيلُ، وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا، يُعَلِّمُونَ السِّحْرَ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ" [And Solomon did not disbelieve, nor was magic revealed to the two angels who are Gabriel and Michael, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic in Babylon, Harut and Marut] (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/35; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/141).

They learn from it, meaning from magic, to cause harm, as Allah says: {فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ} [And they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife]. This indicates that magic can have an effect, but it only harms by Allah's permission, as the noble verse states: {وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah]. This necessitates reliance and trust in Allah, recognizing that nothing will happen to a person except by Allah's decree. Therefore, the believer seeks protection and assistance from Allah, the Most High, the Mighty, for He is the Protector and the Almighty. Ibn Sa'di (may Allah have mercy on him) explains that no matter how powerful the causes of harm may seem, they are all subject to divine decree and predestination, and they do not independently exert their influence (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/82).

Allah further clarifies that the magic they learn harms them in their religion and brings no benefit that could outweigh its harm: {وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ} [And they learn what harms them and does not benefit them]. They knew that those who chose magic over following the Prophet (ﷺ) would have no share in the Hereafter: {وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ} [And they certainly knew that whoever purchased it would not have in the Hereafter any share] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/148).

Their desire for magic was like the eagerness of a buyer willing to pay a high price, and that price was their choice to reject following the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). They were aware that those who chose magic over the

Prophet would have no share of goodness or reward in the Hereafter. This shows their boldness in knowingly pursuing what is harmful, even when they clearly understood the consequences, and in turning away from what is right and beneficial.

Allah then describes their actions and choices with severe condemnation, saying: {وَلَيْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ} [And wretched is that for which they sold themselves, if they only knew]. The term "بئس" in Arabic is used to convey the utmost condemnation, as previously explained. This is a strong rebuke from Allah for their actions, highlighting how disgraceful it is for them to have traded their souls for something so worthless "لو كانوا يعلمون" [if they only knew]. This indicates that, in making such a choice, they are in the position of ignorant people, even though they know that their choice of magic over faith leaves them with no share in the Hereafter.

This is akin to saying to someone who knowingly chooses the wrong path: "If they were truly wise, they would not have done this." It implies that their actions are like those of a person lacking wisdom, even though it is not literally true that they are without intellect. If they truly lacked intellect, they would not be held accountable. Thus, their actions are like those of the ignorant, even though they know better.

Allah then points out the better choice they should have made: {وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا { وَأَتَّقُوا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ} [And if they had believed and feared Allah, then the reward from Allah would have been far better, if they only knew]. This highlights what they should have chosen – faith and the fear of Allah. Had they made this choice, they would have received a great reward from Allah, emphasizing the value of faith and piety. Faith leads to piety, and piety protects a person from what Allah has forbidden by instilling fear and reverence for Him. Whoever fears Allah is driven by this fear to avoid sin "لو كانوا يعلمون" [if they only knew]. However, they acted as if they were ignorant, behaving contrary to what they knew was the truth. As Allah mentioned in the previous verse, { وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ

{خَلَقَ} [And they certainly knew that whoever purchased it would not have in the Hereafter any share]. This was due to their arrogance and stubbornness, as made clear in previous verses, such as {بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ {يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَعِثْنَا أَنْ يُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ} [How wretched is that for which they sold themselves: that they would disbelieve in what Allah has revealed, through their outrage that Allah would send down His favor upon whom He wills] and {وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا نُؤْمِنُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ {بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ} [And when it is said to them, "Believe in what Allah has revealed," they say, "We believe [only] in what was revealed to us," and they disbelieve in what came after it, while it is the truth confirming that which is with them].

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١٠٤) مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ (١٠٥)}

[O you who have believed, do not say [to Allah's Messenger], "Ra'ina" but say, "Unzurna" and listen. And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment. Neither those who disbelieve from the People of the Scripture nor the polytheists wish that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord. But Allah selects for His mercy whom He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:104-105).

The Muslims used to say to the Prophet (PBUH) "Ra'ina" meaning "consider our circumstances," intending a positive and respectful meaning. However, the Jews seized this opportunity to address the Prophet (ﷺ) with the same word, but they intended a corrupt meaning. So, Allah forbade the believers from using this expression to close the door to such misuse. He said: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا} [O you who have believed, do not say [to Allah's Messenger], "Ra'ina" but say, "Unzurna" and listen] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:104). This teaches the importance of avoiding permissible expressions if they can be used as a means to something forbidden. It also emphasizes the importance of using language that can only convey good and avoiding offensive or ambiguous expressions that could be misinterpreted or used inappropriately. Allah commanded them to use the word "Unzurna," which is sufficient to achieve the intended meaning without any negative connotations. He also commanded them to listen attentively, without specifying what to listen to, making it more general to include listening to the Quran, the Sunnah, and obeying the teachings conveyed. This shows the importance of manners and obedience (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/83).

This passage teaches the importance of being cautious about interpreting words in a way that could harm or mock others, as good manners are a religious obligation. It also illustrates the principle that some permissible actions may be restricted by scholars because of the harm they may cause.

This means that a method or tool might be forbidden not for its essence but for the consequences it leads to and the corruption it may bring about. This is why scholars say that "the means take the ruling of the objectives.

Allah then warns the disbelievers of a painful punishment: { وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ } [And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment]. He also highlights the intense enmity and jealousy of the Jews and polytheists towards the Muslims: { مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِمَّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ } [Neither those who disbelieve from the People of the Scripture nor the polytheists wish that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord]. This enmity is rooted in their hatred for the goodness of Islam being bestowed upon the Muslims and the accompanying favors from Allah.

The phrase "مِنْ خَيْرٍ" [any good] is comprehensive, encompassing all the blessings Allah bestows upon the Muslims, including the Quran, the Sunnah, manners, acts of worship, the transformation from division to unity and cooperation, victory, empowerment, elevation in status, and all other blessings from Allah. This indicates that the goodness that comes to the Muslims angers the disbelievers. Knowing this, Muslims should be thankful and vigilant, understanding that their enemies do not wish them well.

This divine guidance teaches Muslims to be cautious in dealing with their enemies, recognizing their hostility, and understanding that they do not wish to see the goodness of Islam flourish among the believers.

Allah then highlights a profound truth: that He alone bestows His mercy and grace upon whom He wills. The Most Merciful says: { وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ } [And Allah selects for His mercy whom He wills]. This indicates that Allah is the Sovereign, the One who grants His mercy and chooses to bestow it upon whom He wills. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Muslim to ask their Lord for His mercy and favor, seeking to be granted more of His grace and generous blessings.

This also teaches that a Muslim should attribute the blessings they receive to Allah's favor. When a person is blessed with something, they should say: "By Allah's grace, I was provided with this," or "By His grace, I achieved and succeeded in this." One should not attribute these blessings solely to their own intellect, thoughts, or understanding, for it is Allah who grants understanding, facilitates the paths of knowledge, and makes it easy to write, comprehend, and memorize. It is He who eases the way to successful transactions, profits, and other bounties. Thus, every blessing should be attributed to Him.

Allah then emphasizes the vastness of His bounty: {وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ} [And Allah is the possessor of great bounty]. This signifies that Allah's favor is immense and without limit, and therefore, a Muslim should seek goodness from the One whose bounty is vast and boundless.

{مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (١٠٦) أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ (١٠٧) أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ وَمَن يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ (١٠٨)}

[We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth one better than it or similar to it. Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent? Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and [that] you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper? Or do you intend to ask your Messenger as Moses was asked before? And whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has certainly strayed from the soundness of the way.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:106-108).

Allah, in His wisdom, shows how He gradually guides His servants towards greater and successive good. He says: { مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا } [We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth one better than it or similar to it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:106). This verse illustrates that Allah may erase and replace, abrogating one ruling with another. He may transition from one command to another, or He may cause it to be forgotten, removing it from the heart. Ibn Kathir mentions various narrations regarding what Allah caused His Prophet (ﷺ) to forget (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/154-155).

This is due to a wisdom known to Allah, showing His abundant grace in both cases—whether through abrogation or forgetfulness. He brings forth something better or similar in benefit, carrying wisdom or other virtues that serve the interest of the believer. Thus, abrogation occurs for a benefit known to Allah. The initial ruling was the most suitable at the outset, and the subsequent ruling (the abrogating one) is better suited for the ummah's current circumstances. This reflects Allah's mercy and wisdom, taking into account the state of His creation, for He is the All-Knowing, All-Wise, and Most Merciful. This is one of the privileges of the Sovereign in His

dominion. Despite the changes, He brings forth something better or equivalent in goodness — Glory be to Allah, the Magnificent.

This teaches that a scholar cannot issue a fatwa or provide a well-founded opinion in matters of knowledge without understanding the abrogated and abrogating rulings in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ). Anyone who dares to speak without this knowledge risks venturing into ignorance.

Then Allah, the Exalted, emphasizes a profound matter: { أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } [Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:106). This rhetorical question serves as an affirmation: "Do you not acknowledge that Allah has power over all things?" It is a reminder to those who may question or object to abrogation. This statement is directed as a refutation to the Jews who denied the change of the Qibla to the Kaaba or objected to other matters. { أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } [Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?].

O the doubter, the denier, or the hypocrite! Know the power of Allah. What could possibly stand in the way of Allah's ability to abrogate what He wills? The verses are from Him, the abrogation is from Him, and the establishment of rulings is from Him. The believer, upon hearing Allah's words { أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } [Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?], responds in their heart: "Yes, indeed, O Lord, I know."

The rhetorical question is repeated again with another profound statement: { أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ } [Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth?]. Whoever has the dominion of the heavens and the earth has the authority to decree as He wills and to bestow His grace upon whomever He wills. He, Glorified and Exalted, holds all authority. Therefore, anyone who acknowledges that Allah has power over all things and that He possesses the dominion of the heavens and the earth should respond with, "I hear, I know, and I obey, O Lord," and should never object to Allah's management and rulings.

One of the benefits of this verse is the importance of the rhetorical style and its psychological and intellectual impact in guiding, inviting, and educating, to establish the intended message in a way that suits the situation.

Allah then says: {وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ} [And you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper]. This verse serves as both a clarification and a warning to anyone who objects to Allah's wisdom and laws in His dominion. They must be aware that they have no protector other than Allah, nor any helper except Him. There is no true protector or helper who has the right of guardianship and assistance except Allah. Therefore, we beseech Allah, saying: "O Allah, You are our protector, You are our helper, and there is no victory except through You. Indeed, those whom You protect will never be humiliated, and those whom You oppose will never be honored."

Allah then teaches the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) a delicate manner in their interactions with the Prophet (ﷺ). He forbids them from asking the Prophet (ﷺ) about things before they come to pass: {أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ} [Or do you intend to ask your Messenger as Moses was asked before?]. This is a rebuking question meant to teach them that this was the method of the Jews with Moses. The Prophet (ﷺ) warned against such behavior, saying: "Leave me as I have left you, for those before you were destroyed by their excessive questioning and their disagreement with their prophets. So, if I command you to do something, do it as much as you are able, and if I forbid you from something, then avoid it."

This hadith highlights the reason for prohibiting excessive questioning. It shows that human reasoning is limited unless guided by divine legislation, which directs people towards what is beneficial. The hadith explains that excessive questioning can lead to disagreement; one person asks a question, another raises a possibility, and a third might expand on the

issue, leading to conflict. Allah, the All-Knowing, understands what His servants need. He sent them messengers and scriptures with the intention of guiding them towards what is good. Allah would not leave any door of goodness unindicated or any door of evil unmarked. Therefore, there is no need to rush with questions, as sometimes it is better to leave certain matters unasked.

For example, when a companion asked the Prophet (ﷺ) if Hajj was obligatory every year, the Prophet remained silent until the companion asked three times. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, "If I had said 'yes,' it would have become obligatory, and you would not have been able to do it" (Muslim, 975/2, Hadith 1337).

This shows that in Allah's commands and prohibitions there is great wisdom, often beyond human comprehension. As a result, a believer should respond to Allah's commands with "I hear and I obey." If the wisdom behind the command is understood, that is a blessing; if not, the believer should still trust that it is for the best and speak only what is good.

The verse also confirms that the people of Moses asked many questions, as previously mentioned in this blessed Surah, to the point where they even asked Moses to show them Allah openly.

Ibn Sa'di (may Allah have mercy on him) explained that the prohibition is specifically against questions rooted in obstinacy and defiance. However, questions asked for the sake of guidance and learning are praiseworthy (Ibn Sa'di, *Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan*, 1/84-85).

Some scholars of tafsir have cited evidence from the Quran, such as the verses {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ} [They ask you about wine and gambling] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:219), {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ} [They ask you about the new moons] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:189), and {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ} [They ask you about orphans] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:220). Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "I have never seen a people better than the

companions of Muhammad (ﷺ); they only asked him about thirteen matters, all of which are mentioned in the Quran.... They only asked about what would benefit them" (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 3/28).

This demonstrates that the companions adhered to Allah's prohibition against unnecessary questioning, focusing their inquiries on what would deepen their understanding of their religion. Ibn Abbas praised them for their limited and beneficial questions, which did not extend to obstinate or argumentative inquiries. This also highlights the importance of proper etiquette in questioning, where one should ask only about matters that are beneficial or that help avoid harm, without delving into what is unnecessary.

Allah then issues a stern warning: {وَمَنْ يَتَّبِدْ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ} [And whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has certainly strayed from the soundness of the way]. This verse underscores the value and status of faith, depicting it as a strong fortress and the straight path. Whoever replaces faith with disbelief has indeed gone astray from the straight path, as disbelief leads to misguidance and deviation, while faith is the straight path that secures Allah's pleasure and leads to Paradise, whose width is as vast as the heavens and the earth.

This also teaches that when Allah grants someone a blessing, they should not exchange it for sin. For example, one should not misuse their provision by being wasteful or spending it in disobedience to Allah, or replace a blessing with arrogance and pride, or divert it in any way that negates its intended purpose.

وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِندِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (١٠٩) وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ (١١٠) وَقَالُوا لَن يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَن كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (١١١) بَلَى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (١١٢) وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصَارَى عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ (١١٣)

[Many of the People of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves even after the truth has become clear to them. So pardon and overlook until Allah delivers His command. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent. And establish prayer and give zakah, and whatever good you put forward for yourselves - you will find it with Allah. Indeed, Allah, of what you do, is Seeing. And they say, "None will enter Paradise except one who is a Jew or a Christian." That is their [false] wishful thinking. Say, "Produce your proof, if you should be truthful." Yes [on the contrary], whoever submits his face in Islam to Allah while being a doer of good will have his reward with his Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve. The Jews say "The Christians have nothing [true] to stand on," and the Christians say "The Jews have nothing [true] to stand on," although they [both] recite the Scripture. Thus the polytheists speak the same as their words. But Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that over which they used to differ.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:109-113)

Allah informs and clarifies to the Muslims what was hidden from them about the intentions of the People of the Scripture: { وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِندِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ } [Many of the People of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves even after the truth has become clear to them]. Allah reveals the true state of the People of the Scripture,

exposing their envy towards the Muslims—an envy that would have remained unknown to the Muslims without Allah’s revelation. This verse uncovers their reality because envy only arises from someone who recognizes the blessing upon the one they envy. Allah affirms this by saying {مَنْ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ} [even after the truth has become clear to them]. This implies that they knew the truth of what the Muslims possess, that their Prophet is true, and that the Book of Allah is true. If it were not so, they would not envy the Muslims for the blessing of faith, as envy is only directed at a blessing.

The verse also clarifies that they attempt to lead the Muslims back to disbelief. This shows that the People of the Scripture will not cease in their efforts to divert Muslims from their religion, whether by raising doubts, stirring desires and temptations, or through any means that could weaken a Muslim’s faith and lead them away from Islam. This emphasizes the importance of being cautious, as Allah has made clear their intentions towards the Muslims.

Allah then instructs the believers on how to deal with them: {فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا} [So pardon and overlook until Allah delivers His command]. Imam Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned that this command was later abrogated by the command to fight (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/158).

This passage highlights the wisdom in dealing with adversaries. Allah commanded forgiveness and overlooking their wrongs until the time came to fight them, after their plotting against the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Muslims in Medina. This approach ensured that the case against them was clear and just, with the hope that they might repent during the period of patience and forgiveness. However, they continued to plot against the Prophet and the believers.

Allah then reminds the believers of what is firmly established in their hearts: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ} [Indeed, Allah is over all things competent].

He is fully capable of granting them victory, but Allah's ways dictate that certain conditions and times must be met, such as the reasons for victory and its timing and manner, which are part of His divine wisdom { حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ } [until Allah delivers His command].

Reflecting on the phrase { حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ } [until Allah delivers His command], one finds a source of strength for the believer. It encourages patience " حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ " [until Allah delivers His command], perseverance without despair " حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ " [until Allah delivers His command], seeking treatment when sick " حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ " [until Allah delivers His command], and taking all necessary steps in every matter " حَتَّى " [until Allah delivers His command]. This phrase strengthens the believer in all aspects of life. { إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } [Indeed, Allah is over all things competent].

Allah then commands the believers to establish prayer and give zakah: { وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ } [And establish prayer and give zakah, and whatever good you put forward for yourselves - you will find it with Allah]. This is a divine order to fulfill these obligations, emphasizing that whatever good a Muslim does, it is for their own benefit and will be preserved by the Almighty and Wise.

This verse assures that any good deed a Muslim performs will not be lost with Allah but will be found as lasting bliss with the Lord of all worlds. Allah concludes the verse with: { إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ } [Indeed, Allah, of what you do, is Seeing]. He is aware of every person and their actions, no matter how small, down to the weight of an atom or even smaller. This Quranic context encourages the believer by assuring them that none of their good deeds will be lost in this world; they will find it fully rewarded in the Hereafter. The word " خَيْرٍ " [good] here is comprehensive, encompassing all types and forms of goodness. The word " مِنْ " [of] indicates that even the smallest parts and types of goodness will be found with Allah.

Allah then exposes the lies of the People of the Scripture and their distortion of the truth: {وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ} [And they say, "None will enter Paradise except one who is a Jew or a Christian."]. They claimed that Paradise was exclusively for them. The Jews believed that only Jews would enter Paradise, and the Christians believed the same for Christians. This indicates that those who are misguided in their beliefs often see themselves as possessing the sole truth, believing their path alone leads to Paradise. They may ignore the truth even when they know it, as they are overwhelmed by falsehood or fear the consequences from their people and followers. This reveals the condition of those who deceive themselves.

Allah then clarifies that the condition of those Jews and Christians is merely one of wishful thinking: {تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ} [That is their wishful thinking]. This illustrates that wishes without substance or truth hold no value unless supported by evidence and proof. Allah says: {اقْلُ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ} [Say, "Produce your proof, if you should be truthful"]. Proof is something that the liar, the stubborn, the arrogant, and the false interpreter cannot provide. The evidence found in their own scriptures requires them to follow the unlettered Prophet upon his emergence, as the Quran confirms what is in the Torah.

This demonstrates that Paradise is not attained through mere claims, labels, or affiliations but by following the truth as commanded by Allah. This argument underscores that this religion is built on proof and evidence in every matter. Those who deviate from the true path do not possess any valid evidence to support their falsehoods. Thus, they respond to people of truth with insults and accusations rather than with proof, because they lack the evidence.

Allah then responds to them with "بَلَىٰ" [Indeed, not as you claim]. It is not as they assert with their wishful thinking and claims. Instead, {مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ} [Whoever submits his face in Islam to Allah while being a doer
{وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ} [Whoever submits his face in Islam to Allah while being a doer

of good]. Those who are promised Paradise are those who surrender themselves completely to Allah, sincerely directing their deeds and hearts toward their Lord (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/52).

Imam Al-Qurtubi mentioned that the face is specified because it is the most honorable part visible of a person. These are the ones who are destined for Paradise: {إِبْلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} [Yes, whoever submits his face in Islam to Allah while being a doer of good will have his reward with his Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:112). Their reward is Paradise, and they will be safe from anything they fear, and they will never experience sadness. What usually disturbs a person is fear of what is to come and sorrow over lost opportunities that can never be regained. All such worries will vanish in Paradise, where there will be no fear or sorrow for its inhabitants. Instead, there will be everlasting joy. So, we ask Allah to grant us Paradise and guide us to what brings us closer to it in word and deed.

It is understood that those who do not meet these criteria will be among the inhabitants of Hellfire. Salvation is only through sincerity to Allah and following the Messenger (ﷺ).

Allah then speaks about the Jews and Christians: {وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ} [The Jews say, "The Christians have nothing [true] to stand on," and the Christians say, "The Jews have nothing [true] to stand on," although they [both] recite the Scripture] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:113). Allah describes the condition of the People of the Scripture, where there was mutual hatred, contradiction, and hostility between the Jews and the Christians, despite their knowledge of the Torah and the Gospel. Each scripture was valid in its time, but they opposed each other out of stubbornness and disbelief, confronting falsehood with falsehood (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/160).

They recite the Torah and the Gospel, yet this is their state even though they all belong to the Children of Israel. If this is their situation among themselves, how would they react to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), who is from the descendants of Ishmael (peace be upon him)? This also shows that the path of stubbornness and enmity is contrary to what they should have followed, given their knowledge of the Torah and the Gospel, which Allah confirms they recite. This reveals that if a person does not fear Allah concerning the verses they possess, they may conceal the truth and defend their own errors, driven by a desire for self-vindication and pride in their position.

This highlights the condition of certain souls, which one must be cautious of, lest they fall into the same trap. Desire and the devil can lead a person away from the truth into misguidance, and then further into stubbornness and the love of false victory over truth. The individual may then strive to interpret evidence to fit their false intentions. The only refuge from falsehood is through supplication, piety, and holding fast to Allah, His Book, and the Sunnah of His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

In addition to these two groups, the Jews and the Christians, Allah also mentions another group: {كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ} [Likewise, those who do not know said similar words]. This refers to a third group as well. Imam Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) explained, according to the majority opinion, that this group refers to the pagan Arabs, as they had no scripture (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 1/52).

Thus, the People of the Scripture were equated in this regard with the ignorant, who were the pagan Arabs. This implies that if knowledge and understanding do not lead to the fear of Allah and obedience to Him as commanded, they will be overtaken by desires, rendering the knowledgeable person no different from the ignorant. Such a person gains no benefit from their knowledge and instead opposes and antagonizes the truth and its followers due to the whims and desires that have taken hold

of them. Allah will judge between them on the Day of Judgment regarding the matters over which they used to differ.

This divine statement serves as a warning to Muslims to avoid the dangerous path of partisanship, hatred, and takfir (declaring others as disbelievers), which can lead to the shedding of the blood of Muslims and the innocent. This occurs due to a lack of knowledge, leading to ignorance about the religion, and subsequently interpreting and understanding it in ways that do not align with Allah's intent and guidance.

This issue also extends to interactions between people, where one might justify wronging others, corrupting dealings and relationships, and violating the rights and interests of others based on desires and the devil's embellishment of evil deeds. Or one might defend oneself through oppression and overreach, which leads to corruption and enmity among people—all of which are contrary to the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.

In tracing the verses of the Quran, one observes a method of captivating presentation that stimulates the mind and elevates it from self-centeredness to a broader perspective—toward the collective interest and the unity of the ummah as one body. The verses also caution against the dangers of ignorance and desire, as well as the perils of challenging the truth. Desire and arrogance lead to both religious and societal dangers, inciting haughtiness and superiority, which in turn breed enmity, conflict, and division. This underscores that the well-being of the ummah is rooted in its unity, and this unity is contingent upon transcending selfishness and egotism.

Achieving this requires fostering an education that instills the rejection of desires and arrogance, and the cultivation of faith and piety. This is accomplished by truly understanding the will of Allah, acting upon it with sincerity, and following the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ ۚ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (١١٤) وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُولَّوْا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ (١١٥)

[And who are more unjust than those who prevent the name of Allah from being mentioned in His mosques and strive toward their destruction. It is not for them to enter them except in fear. For them in this world is disgrace, and they will have in the Hereafter a great punishment. And to Allah belongs the east and the west. So wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah. Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:114-115).

Allah Almighty highlights the greatness and sanctity of the mosque, its status, and its esteemed position. He says: { وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا } [And who are more unjust than those who prevent the name of Allah from being mentioned in His mosques and strive toward their destruction]. There is no greater injustice than preventing the servants of Allah from mentioning Him in the mosques, whether by preventing the establishment of prayer, seclusion (i'tikaf), or other acts of worship. Additionally, striving toward their destruction, whether through physical demolition or desecrating them with inappropriate actions, signifies the utmost injustice. This indicates the need to be cautious of placing obstacles that would empty the mosques of those who remember Allah.

This warning reflects the significant status of the mosque, the high regard for those who remember Allah in them, and the importance of the remembrance of Allah, especially in the mosques. Allah labels those who prevent such activities as oppressors who commit an injustice that warrants severe punishment.

The use of a questioning tone filled with astonishment—"And who are more unjust than those..."—implies that there is no greater oppression than

encroaching upon the house of Allah by preventing people from remembering Him or by desecrating and damaging the mosques. This formulation serves as both a warning and a deterrent, encouraging the remembrance of Allah in the mosques, and promising a high rank and great status to those who care for, maintain, and build the mosques. In contrast, Allah's severe denunciation of those who obstruct the mosques implies that such actions are the height of injustice and wickedness.

Imam Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) commented, after explaining the reasons for the revelation and the different opinions on this matter, that the verse's intent applies to every mosque until the Day of Judgment, as the wording is general and came in the plural form (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 2/53).

Allah then clarifies the consequence of this grave injustice: { أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ } [It is not for them to enter them except in fear. For them in this world is disgrace, and they will have in the Hereafter a great punishment]. It is fitting that such individuals be barred from entering the mosques or be allowed only with fear, as they have caused harm and prevented others from worshipping. The worldly punishment for those who engage in such acts of obstruction and destruction is fear and disgrace. When Muslims take control of these mosques, and they fall under their authority, disbelievers will not be able to enter them unless they do so in fear of being expelled or punished by the Muslims (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 2/54).

This passage emphasizes the severe consequences and gravity of the actions of those who seek to destroy or desecrate mosques. Allah seizes these sacred places from such people, just as He took the Sacred House (the Kaaba) from the polytheists who desecrated it with idols. When Allah granted victory to His Prophet (ﷺ) in the conquest of Makkah, the polytheists were left in fear. Similarly, the conquest of Jerusalem by the Commander of the Faithful, Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased

with him), was a divine act of justice against those who sought to harm it. Allah punished those who attempted to demolish the Kaaba, such as Abraha, by destroying them. As for the recompense in the Hereafter, Allah says: {لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ} [For them in this world is disgrace, and they will have in the Hereafter a great punishment]. This indicates the severity of tampering with or attempting to obstruct or disgrace the mosques and serves as a warning to those who do so, reminding them of Allah's wrath.

On the other hand, it underscores the importance of caring for mosques, maintaining them in all aspects, such as construction, repair, and renovation, as well as the performance of prayers, seclusion (i'tikaf), the remembrance of Allah, the recitation and memorization of the Quran, and all forms of worship that fall under the general remembrance of Allah.

Regarding the Qiblah (direction of prayer) and its designation, Allah says: {وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ} [And to Allah belong the east and the west]. The Quranic verses begin by establishing who owns the directions, making it clear to the listener that this is a matter solely under Allah's authority. The initial statement regarding the ownership of the east and the west emphasizes that all directions are Allah's, and it is a gradual, instructive process that beautifully conveys knowledge. The mention of the east and the west being attributed to Allah serves to honor and dignify these directions, as He chooses to honor whomever He wills. It was Allah who first commanded His Messenger (ﷺ) to face Jerusalem in prayer, and then abrogated that command, directing them to face the Kaaba as the Qiblah for the Muslims. Since the entire universe belongs to Him, He has the right to direct worship as He wills, whenever and however He wills, and none can overturn His judgment.

Allah then says: {فَإَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ} [So wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah]. Wherever you are directed by Allah, you are facing His noble direction, whether in prayer, sacrificing animals in the direction of

the Qiblah, or avoiding facing the Qiblah while relieving oneself. { إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ } [Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing]. He is vast in His knowledge and provides ample space for His servants in their religion and in whatever they need. He has not made anything burdensome for them where they have a legitimate need.

This verse has opened the minds of scholars and jurists, expanding their understanding and interpretations when it comes to offering prayer in a direction other than the Qiblah, whether due to uncertainty, darkness, or being obscured by clouds. This applies whether the prayer is voluntary (Nafl) or obligatory (Fard). If a person realizes after completing the prayer that they faced the wrong direction, and there is still time left for the prayer, the question arises: should they repeat the prayer or not? The verse { فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ } [So wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah] has inspired deep jurisprudential thought, leading to a breadth of discussions and the gathering of evidence.

This verse and others like it have contributed significantly to the development of the intellect and knowledge in the field of Islamic jurisprudence. For those seeking to delve deeper into these issues, they should refer to the books of Tafsir (Quranic exegesis) and Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), where these matters are thoroughly explored and debated.

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَانَهُ ۚ بَلْ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ كُلُّ لَّهُ قَانِتُونَ (١١٦) بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ (١١٧) وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةً ۚ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۚ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ (١١٨)

[And they say, "Allah has taken a son." Exalted is He; rather, to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are devoutly obedient to Him. Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, "Be," and it is. And those who do not know say, "Why does Allah not speak to us or there come to us a sign?" Thus spoke those before them like their words. Their hearts resemble each other. We have shown clearly the signs to a people who are certain [in faith].] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:116-118)

The Quranic discourse returns to address the state of the Christians and those who resemble them among the Jews in their lies and audacity regarding the attributes of their Creator, exalted is He. {وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا} [And they say, "Allah has taken a son"], where the Christians claimed that the Messiah is the son of Allah, the Jews said that Uzair is the son of Allah, and the polytheists claimed that the angels are the daughters of Allah. What greater falsehood could there be than for a servant to attribute offspring to Allah? How could one fabricate such a lie against Allah, who says: {لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ} [He neither begets nor is born]? This highlights that if a person does not regulate their behavior, knowledge, and thoughts, they could fall into grave errors. It underscores the need for one to regularly supplicate to Allah, as our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) used to do: "O Turner of the hearts, make my heart firm upon Your religion" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 5/503, Hadith 3522).

Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that she asked the Prophet (ﷺ): "Why do you often supplicate, 'O Turner of the hearts, make my heart firm upon Your religion'?" He replied: "O Umm Salama, there is no human except that his heart is between two of the fingers of Allah. Whoever He wills, He keeps firm, and whoever He wills, He lets go astray" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 5/503).

Then Allah, exalted is He, declares His transcendence and purity from such false claims: {سُبْحَانَهُ} [Glory be to Him]. This expression denotes His absolute purity and freedom from their false statements that {اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا} [Allah has taken a son]. He then clarifies His immense dominion, which renders their fabrications baseless: {بَلْ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ} [Rather, to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth]. For the One who possesses this vast kingdom, having brought it into existence from nothingness, has no need for a son to assist Him. Everything is fully submissive under His power and will: {كُلُّ لَهُ قَانِثُونَ} [All are devoutly obedient to Him]. The One who owns everything, and to whom everything is subject and under His command, is free from all deficiency, and therefore, He possesses all perfection.

This passage illustrates the profound methodology of reasoning found in the Quran. First, the Quran presents the false statements of the disbelievers, then it exalts Allah above what they claim {سُبْحَانَهُ} [Glory be to Him]. It goes on to illustrate the greatness of His creation and dominion, and finally His immense authority and power {كُلُّ لَهُ قَانِثُونَ} [All are devoutly obedient to Him]. This structure enables the reader or listener to fully grasp the intended meaning, leaving no room for doubt. Truly, exalted is Allah, the Almighty.

The following verse further elaborates on His dominion and power: {بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ} [Originator of the heavens and the earth]. He is the One who created the heavens and the earth without any prior example; all His creation is original and unique. Moreover, His omnipotence is underscored by the statement: {إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ} [When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, "Be," and it is]. What power could be greater than this astounding ability? This obliges believers to glorify and sanctify Allah continuously, to ask Him for goodness, and to seek His protection from harm, for nothing is beyond His power, and everything is brought into existence by His command "Be."

The verse then addresses the obstinate demands of the ignorant among the People of the Book or the Arab polytheists: { وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةٌ } [And those who do not know say, "Why does Allah not speak to us or there come to us a sign?"]. They say, "Why doesn't Allah speak to us directly to confirm Muhammad's prophethood so that we may believe in him, or why doesn't He bring us a sign as proof of his prophethood?" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/64).

This kind of demand is rooted in obstinance, not a genuine pursuit of truth. Allah responds to such demands by saying, { كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ } [Thus spoke those before them like their words]. This is the behavior of the stubborn deniers, similar to those before them who rejected clear and evident truth, like the people of Moses who said, { إِن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً } [We will never believe in you until we see Allah outright]. This indicates that history repeats itself, and similar events recur. Allah says, { تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ } [Their hearts resemble each other]. This suggests that hearts can resemble one another in falsehood, repeating the same patterns of disbelief throughout history. Similarly, there are hearts that resemble each other in piety and adherence to the truth. What was valid for guidance in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) remains valid in every era. Those who seek the truth will always be guided by it, while those who are obstinate and defiant will remain so across generations. As Imam Malik famously said, "Nothing will rectify the latter part of this Ummah except what rectified its first part."

Allah then clarifies that the signs required for faith have already been made clear: { قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ } [We have made the signs clear for a people who are certain in faith]. Sheikh Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, explained that anyone who is certain knows from the clear signs of Allah what leads to certainty and eliminates all doubt and confusion (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/90).

Every prophet came with clear signs and proofs demonstrating their prophethood, and our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was the final messenger, who came with the clearest of signs. Otherwise, how could so many people have embraced Islam and how could it have spread so widely? Yet, those who are stubborn and defiant seek to question and object in ways that only lead to their own loss. This highlights the importance of avoiding obstinacy in matters that keep a person away from good in both worldly and spiritual matters. Moreover, this shows that such attitudes of stubbornness distance a person from the truth and lead them toward division and estrangement from those they interact with, potentially resulting in their exclusion and being viewed with suspicion and caution. Thus, being obstinate in demands and questions does not bring any benefit, even in social interactions with others.

{إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ (١١٩) وَلَنْ تَرْضَى عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَى حَتَّى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَى وَلَنْ اتَّبِعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ (١٢٠) الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ (١٢١) يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ (١٢٢) وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ}

[Indeed, We have sent you, [O Muhammad], with the truth as a bringer of good tidings and a warner, and you will not be asked about the companions of the Hellfire. And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, "Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance." If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper. Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They [are the ones who] believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it - it is they who are the losers. O Children of Israel, remember My favor which I have bestowed upon you and that I preferred you over the worlds. And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all, nor will compensation be accepted from it, nor will any intercession benefit it, nor will they be aided.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:119-123)

Then Allah, the Exalted, clarifies significant truths about the message of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) through addressing him in this verse: {إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ} [Indeed, We have sent you with the truth as a bringer of good tidings and a warner, and you will not be asked about the companions of the Hellfire.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:119). This verse elucidates the profound realities of the prophetic mission for all of humanity.

The first truth is that he is indeed the Messenger of Allah: {إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ} [Indeed, We have sent you]. This is an elevation of the Prophet's rank, as a messenger is chosen and honored by the One who sends him. It implies that he bears the weighty responsibility of delivering this message and that

he is supported by Allah. The benefits and noble attributes implied by this are countless.

The second truth is that the content of his message is the truth: **{بِالْحَقِّ}** [with the truth]. What the Prophet (ﷺ) brought forth is the undeniable truth from Allah, with no doubt or uncertainty. The Quran is the truth, and his Sunnah is the truth. The term **{بِالْحَقِّ}** signifies complete perfection, free from any flaw or deficiency. A careful reflection on what the Prophet (ﷺ) brought through the Quran and Sunnah reveals a Shariah that is entirely truthful—its objectives, methodology, and approach are all founded on truth. It is a guidance of truth that only commands good and prohibits evil, outlining a path to achieve well-being and avoid harm. Mankind cannot produce such a firm and clear guidance that is applicable at all times and in all places. In contrast, human-made laws often change from generation to generation due to their inherent flaws, shortcomings, and inability to achieve true security, prosperity, and harmony.

The third truth is that his message is one of glad tidings: **{بَشِيرًا}** [a bringer of good tidings]. He (ﷺ) is the bearer of the glad news of eternal bliss in Paradise.

The fourth truth is that his message is a warning: **{وَنَذِيرًا}** [and a warner]. He (ﷺ) is the one who warns sinners of the punishment of Hellfire.

The fifth truth is that the Prophet (ﷺ) is not accountable for those who disbelieve: **{وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ}** [and you will not be asked about the companions of the Hellfire]. This indicates that he does not possess the power to grant guiding success (tawfiq) but rather is tasked with conveying guidance (irshad). As for those who persist in their disbelief, he is not responsible for their deeds or their fate in Hellfire. Ibn al-Jawzi, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned: “You will not be asked about them, for they are in a grave matter,” emphasizing the severity of their condition. The term **{الجحيم}** refers to the fire, and it is said that it is the fire when its

flames are most intense. (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm at-Tafsir* 1/121-122).

The verse encapsulates profound content with minimal words, presenting its explanatory sequence. It summarizes the entire message brought by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in a single phrase: {إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۖ} [We have sent you with the truth]. The truth encompasses two aspects: the glad tidings for those who obey, as captured in the word {بَشِيرًا} [as a bringer of good news], and the warning of Hellfire for those who disobey, as highlighted by {نَذِيرًا} [and a warner]. The verse also defines the Prophet's (ﷺ) responsibility, emphasizing that he is not accountable for the disbelief of others or their deeds, as indicated in {وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ} [and you are not responsible for the companions of Hellfire]. Before this, the verse had already outlined the Prophet's mission and responsibility in just two words: {إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ ۖ} [Indeed, We have sent you], confirming his role as Allah's Messenger. What a remarkable rhetorical expression this is!

Allah then clarifies to His Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers the stance of the Jews and Christians, stating {وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ} [And the Jews and Christians will never be satisfied with you until you follow their religion]. This reveals that their suggestions and demands are not meant to lead them to faith but are merely acts of obstinacy. The verse also provides a miraculous insight into their hearts, showing that they have no desire to believe in the Prophet (ﷺ) and instead wish for him to follow their religion. While it is true that some individuals from among them did embrace Islam, such as the noble Companion Abdullah ibn Salam, the verse addresses the general attitude of the community. As mentioned in the Hadith: "If ten Jews had believed in me, the Jews would have believed." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3/80, Hadith 3941). The reference here is to the leaders among them, given their significant influence. However, Allah has wisdom in every matter.

The verse highlights the impossibility of their belief {حَتَّى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ} [until you follow their religion]. Many scholars have inferred from this phrase that all disbelief constitutes one religion, as "their religion" is mentioned in the singular form (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim 1/168). This indicates that, in Allah's sight, all forms of disbelief are united under one false creed, with no legitimate religion remaining after the Prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) except the Islam he brought.

Then Allah, the Exalted, clarifies what the Prophet (ﷺ) is to say to them and others in this verse: {قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ} [Say, indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [true] guidance] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:120). This verse serves as a definitive, comprehensive, and exclusive statement that guidance is confined to the guidance of Allah, and that the guidance of Allah is the true guidance. Consequently, anything else is falsehood, for what the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent with abrogated what came before it from what Allah, Blessed and Exalted, had revealed. Likewise, anything invented by humans is misguidance, for guidance is limited to what came from Allah to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). As Allah said in Surah Al-Imran: {وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ} [And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him] (Surah Al-Imran, 3:85).

Anyone who contemplates the phrase {قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ} [Say, indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [true] guidance] will find it to be a source of strength for the believer. It causes one:

- To pause at every misguidance and say, {قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ} [Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [true] guidance]
- To pause and avoid every innovation and say, {قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ} [Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [true] guidance]
- To pause at every behavioral deviation and say, {قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ} [Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [true] guidance]
- To stand firm against every desire and say, {قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ} [Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [true] guidance].

This phrase becomes a principle, a light, and a weapon with which the believer reminds himself whenever Satan tempts him, asking Allah for guidance and steadfastness. Then, he should remind others of it and use it as evidence for the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) against every misguidance.

Then Allah, the Exalted, clarifies that the Jews and Christians are people of desires: {وَلَّيْنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِّن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۚ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ} [And if you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:120). This verse confirms that they are people of desires, and it includes a great prohibition against following the desires of the Jews and Christians and imitating them in their specific ways. Even though the address is to the Prophet (ﷺ), his Ummah is included in this prohibition because the principle is based on the general meaning, not the specificity of the one addressed. Similarly, the lesson is taken from the general wording, not the specific reason. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Kalam al-Mannan, 1/91)

Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, says: "This contains a severe warning and threat to the Ummah against following the ways of the Jews and Christians after they have known the Book and the Sunnah, for the address is with the Messenger (ﷺ), but the command is for his Ummah". (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/168)

That the address is directed to the Prophet (ﷺ) indicates the seriousness of the prohibition. When a person of high responsibility, such as a Prophet, is addressed with a command, it underscores the gravity of the matter, even if it is unlikely for him (ﷺ) to fall into such actions. As the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "By Him in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, I would cut off her hand". (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3/153, Hadith 4304)

This statement indicates and affirms the Prophet's (ﷺ) commitment to upholding the implementation of Allah's religion, even if the legislative punishment were to touch those closest to him, and far be it from her to commit theft (may Allah be pleased with her).

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, says: {الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ} [Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They are the ones who believe in it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:121). Thus, those who fulfill the rights of the Book that Allah has revealed, with true fulfillment, will believe in Muhammad (ﷺ) because they have attained faith in what it contains and because they find in their scriptures the mention of his mission, his description, and the command to follow, support, and assist him. This truth leads them to believe in him. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/169)

This implies that following the truth guides its adherent to more truth, while those led by desires are drawn further into desires. This highlights the importance of striving to know the truth and adhering to it, while avoiding desires and their followers, as desires lead to innovations, and innovations lead to further innovations, until misguidance proliferates, taking one away from the path of truth into error. We seek refuge in Allah from that. Similarly, moral deviation leads to further deviation, little by little, until deviation becomes the dominant behavior.

Adhering to virtue also leads to more virtues, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "A man continues to speak the truth and strive to speak the truth until he is recorded with Allah as a truthful person" (Sahih Muslim, 4/2013, Hadith 2607).

Then Allah, Blessed and Exalted, explained the fate of those who disbelieve in Him, saying: {وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ} [And whoever disbelieves in Him - it is they who are the losers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:121). Therefore, there is no true religion today except the religion of Allah, which He revealed to His servant and messenger Muhammad (ﷺ). Then, the

reminder from Allah to the Children of Israel is repeated: { يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا { نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ } [O Children of Israel, remember My favor that I have bestowed upon you and that I preferred you over the worlds. And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all, nor will intercession be accepted from it, nor will any compensation be taken from it, nor will they be aided] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:122-123).

This reminder had already been given to the Children of Israel earlier in this Surah, emphasizing Allah's favors upon them. It is repeated here to stress the importance of following the unlettered Prophet (ﷺ) whose description they find in their scriptures, along with his name, his commands, and his Ummah. They are warned not to conceal this truth, nor to hide the worldly and religious blessings that Allah bestowed upon them. They should not envy their cousins, the Arabs, for the favor Allah granted them by sending the final Messenger from among them. Envy should not lead them to oppose him, deny him, or deviate from following him. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him until the Day of Judgment (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/169).

This repetition in the Quran underscores the importance of reminders and the benefits that come with it. One of the key benefits is that it re-establishes proof, as the human soul often requires repeated reminders to accept advice. For the obedient, reminders serve as a safeguard and a remedy against potential lapses, weaknesses, and forgetfulness. No matter how advanced a person becomes, the need for reminders remains constant.

Repetition in the Quran often comes in the form of repeating certain directives, as seen in this verse, and also in providing additional explanations not previously mentioned, as in the stories of the Quran. This helps the reader connect the events and enhances their knowledge, stimulating the mind in a way that keeps the reciter and listener engaged without becoming weary.

{وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ (١٢٤) وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا ۖ وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى ۖ وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ (١٢٥) وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۖ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُم بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۖ قَالَ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ (١٢٦)}

[And [mention] when Abraham was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them. [Allah] said, "Indeed, I will make you a leader for the people." [Abraham] said, "And of my descendants?" [Allah] said, "My covenant does not include the wrongdoers." And [mention] when We made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security. And take, [O believers], from the standing place of Abraham a place of prayer. And We charged Abraham and Ishmael, [saying], "Purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who are staying [there] for worship and those who bow and prostrate [in prayer]." And [mention] when Abraham said, "My Lord, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits - whoever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day." [Allah] said, "And whoever disbelieves - I will grant him enjoyment for a little; then I will force him to the punishment of the Fire, and wretched is the destination."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124-126)

Allah, the Exalted, informs us about His Prophet and close friend, Ibrahim (peace be upon him): {وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا} [And [mention] when Abraham was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them. [Allah] said, "Indeed, I will make you a leader for the people."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124). The verse begins by indicating that the message is a trial with the responsibility of carrying it out, and this was Allah's test for Ibrahim. He tested and tried him with the commands and prohibitions that Allah had ordained. Allah says: {وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ} [And when Abraham was tested by his Lord with words (commands)] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124), which refer to the laws, commands, and prohibitions, and the scholars have various interpretations regarding its significance (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/170).

From this, it is understood that if the Prophet was tested with delivering the message, then those to whom he was sent are tested with their obligations to believe, worship, and follow the Shariah. Thus, everyone charged with this Shariah is tested and tried with it—whether they will adhere to it or deviate from it—until they are recompensed and rewarded according to what they deserve. Every person is tested, and at the forefront of these trials is whether they will take hold of the religion of Allah and cling to it, or abandon and deviate from it. For example, the responsibility of a father is a test from Allah regarding those under his care—his children, wife, and servants, among others. Similarly, a mother is tested, and a ruler is tested with governance—whether they will be truthful and trustworthy or betray and neglect their duties. If the ruler is just, he will be among the seven whom Allah will shade under His Throne on the Day when there will be no shade but His, as mentioned in the Hadith. (Sahih al-Bukhari, 1/219, Hadith 660)

Every person is responsible, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Each of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 2/222, Hadith 2558). Even an individual is responsible for applying Allah's commands and prohibitions to themselves. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) fulfilled and completed what he was charged with, as Allah says: {فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ} [He fulfilled them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124). The significance of fulfillment is highlighted before detailing the responsibility, which is: {إِنِّي} {جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا} [I will make you a leader for the people]. (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124)

This teaches us that Allah's commands are a test to distinguish those who obey from those who disobey, with the evidence being established against them. People vary in their levels of obedience and disobedience, and thus the reward and punishment will also vary, even in crossing the Sirat (bridge over Hellfire). This underscores the importance of striving to complete Allah's obligations and seeking His help and steadfastness in doing so.

In the verse {إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا} [Indeed, I will make you a leader for the people] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124), it means that people will follow and take you as a model in the religion, which is the guidance, i.e., the guidance of Allah, the Exalted. This is a noble and great position. The more a person is a leader for others in goodness, the greater their reward, as they will receive the reward of those who follow them without diminishing their own rewards, as mentioned in the Hadith: "Whoever introduces a good practice in Islam will have its reward and the reward of those who act upon it after him without anything being diminished from their rewards" (Sahih Muslim, 2/704-705, Hadith 1017).

Due to the importance of being a good example, Allah has guided us to this, as He says regarding the qualities of the servants of the Most Merciful in Surah Al-Furqan: {وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فُرَّةً أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا} [And those who say, "Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous"] (Surah Al-Furqan, 25:74). This requires a believer to be diligent in their religion and morals in practice and not to be deceived by those who are lenient in some commands and prohibitions, especially in imitating non-Muslims in matters where imitation is not permissible.

Due to the noble status of this position and the goodness it entails, Ibrahim (peace be upon him) asked his Lord for it for his descendants: {قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي} [And of my descendants?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124), which shows Ibrahim's keen concern for the well-being of the religion and his descendants, that obedience to Allah continues, His religion persists, and leadership and exemplary conduct continue in his lineage. This emphasizes the importance of emulating him (peace be upon him), by being mindful of one's religion and ensuring the continuation of Allah's path, so it remains elevated and dominant. It also highlights the importance of guiding one's offspring so that they become a model and example for others in the religion. This necessitates that a Muslim, at the very least, does not follow non-Muslims in matters where imitation is not permissible, so that they do

not become a negative example in spreading evil. Allah has taught us this in Surah Al-Furqan: { وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ } [And those who say, "Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous"] (Surah Al-Furqan, 25:74).

Allah, the Exalted, answered His close friend and Prophet Ibrahim's request by saying: { قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ } [My covenant does not include the wrongdoers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:124), which clarifies the only hindrance to achieving this noble position. The statement is both eloquent and merciful, indicating Allah's intended purpose. Therefore, anyone who adheres to the religion becomes a model and example for others, except for those who wrong themselves with evil and deviation from Allah's path; such a person is excluded from attaining this high status, as they cannot be a leader for others in goodness. This is the condition.

From this, it is understood that the importance of raising children with proper guidance is to ensure they become leaders for the righteous, so they can be followed in religion, goodness, manners, and the correct path, by Allah's will.

Allah, the Exalted, says about some of the characteristics of the Sacred House: { وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا } [And [mention] when We made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:125). Allah has placed in this Sacred House certain religious objectives and characteristics for His servants. The first of these is that it is a "place of return" (مَثَابَة), meaning that people continually return to it, seeking it repeatedly to obtain their religious and worldly benefits. They return to it time and again to acquire these benefits that never cease. It is a place for Hajj, Umrah, Tawaf, and a center for trade, such as the winter and summer trade journeys.

The second characteristic is that it is a place of security (وَأَمْنًا), where everyone feels safe regarding their religious and worldly affairs. For this

reason, people venerated it even during their state of polytheism. The people of Mecca respected and honored it so much that a man would encounter the killer of his father but would not harm him in its vicinity. Its veneration increased with the advent of the Prophet (ﷺ), which highlights the importance of revering this House by intending to visit it for worship, respecting its sanctity, and ensuring its security from anything that may disturb it. It should be honored such that no one disobeys Allah within it, no matter how minor the sin may seem to the sinner, because of its great sanctity.

The third characteristic is that Allah made the standing place of Ibrahim (Maqam Ibrahim) a place of prayer, as He says: {وَاتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى} [And take, [O believers], from the standing place of Abraham a place of prayer] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:125). The standing place refers to the spot where the feet of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) stood, as Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned, and it is the place where those performing Tawaf offer two units of prayer (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/77).

This characteristic highlights the esteemed status of the father of the prophets and the leader of the monotheists, Ibrahim (peace be upon him). Then Allah, the Exalted, explains that He revealed and commanded Ibrahim and his son Ismail to perform a great task, as He says: {وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ { إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنْ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ } [And [mention] when We made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security. And take, [O believers], from the standing place of Abraham a place of prayer. And We charged Abraham and Ishmael, [saying], "Purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who are staying [there] for worship and those who bow and prostrate [in prayer]]" (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:125)

The command to purify the House was general, which indicates the need to cleanse it from both physical impurities, such as idols, filth, and impurities,

and from spiritual impurities, such as shirk, disbelief, and sins, so that it may be pure for those who perform Tawaf, those who stay for worship, and those who bow and prostrate in prayer. This emphasizes the great status of the Sacred House, those who perform Tawaf around it, those who stay for worship, and those who wish to pray there. It also highlights the importance of these acts of worship for which Allah commanded that the House be maintained. Shaykh Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, stated that Tawaf was mentioned first because it is specific to the Sacred Mosque. (Ibn Sa'di, *Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan*, 1/94)

The command to purify the Sacred Mosque for acts of worship also implies the necessity to purify all mosques for worshippers and those who engage in i'tikaf (spiritual retreat), from anything that harms, distracts, or prevents them from praying or engaging in i'tikaf. The reason for purification exists in all mosques of Muslims. Among the benefits of this command is the reward for those who take care of this duty, as it is an act in accordance with what Allah commanded Ibrahim (peace be upon him) to do. Additionally, there are hadiths that command the purification and scenting of mosques, and the Prophet (ﷺ) himself took care of this matter.

In the verse {أَنْ طَهَّرَا بَيْتِي} [that you purify My House] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:125), it is noted that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, has added the House to Himself ("My House"), which is a great honor and distinction. This implies that one of the ways to honor Allah is for the believer to honor what Allah has honored. Thus, the believer should revere and respect this House in a manner befitting its lofty status. Shaykh Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, mentions the benefits of this: it implies the intense concern of Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) for purifying it, since it is the House of Allah. They would exert all their efforts and energies in this task. Additionally, this association (of the House with Allah) implies honor and dignity, and within it lies the command for believers to revere and respect

it. Moreover, this association is the reason for hearts being drawn towards it (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/94).

This verse also illustrates the concern of our father Ibrahim (peace be upon him): {وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ} [And [mention] when Abraham said, "My Lord, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits - whoever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:126). This request from Ibrahim (peace be upon him) indicates his far-reaching concern and care. He did not only think of himself, but his concern extended to the people of this House and all who come to it, that they be safe from anything they fear so that tranquility may be established for those in it and for those who visit it. He also asked that its people be provided with fruits, and he specified this prayer for the believers. As for those who disbelieve, Allah said regarding them: {قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ} [And whoever disbelieves - I will grant him enjoyment for a little; then I will force him to the punishment of the Fire, and wretched is the destination] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:126).

Thus, Allah's provision encompasses the believer, the disbeliever, the sinner, and the obedient. Allah grants temporary enjoyment to the disbeliever, as He said: {وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا} [And whoever disbelieves - I will grant him enjoyment for a little]. The Muslim uses the blessing to obey Allah and enter Paradise, while the disbeliever enjoys it for a short while before Allah drives him into the punishment of the Fire. Wretched indeed is the destination that the disbeliever will reach. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/94)

{وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (١٢٧) رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (١٢٨) رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (١٢٩) وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مِنْ سَفَهٍ نَفْسَهُ ۖ وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (١٣٠) إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (١٣١) وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ ۖ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ (١٣٢) أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتَ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي ۖ قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ (١٣٣) تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۖ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ ۖ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٣٤)}

[And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing. Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and [raise] from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You. And show us our rites and accept our repentance. Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful. Our Lord, and send among them a messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise." And who would be averse to the religion of Abraham except one who makes a fool of himself. And We had chosen him in this world, and indeed he, in the Hereafter, will be among the righteous. When his Lord said to him, "Submit," he said, "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds." And Abraham instructed his sons [to do the same] and [so did] Jacob, [saying], "O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims." Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." That was a nation which has passed on. It will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:127-134)

The Quranic context then transitions to the process of building the House, accompanied by the supplication and seeking refuge in Allah by Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them): { وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ } [And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:127). This verse describes the state of Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) as they were raising the foundations of the Ka'bah, while they continuously supplicated for Allah to accept this act of obedience from them. This illustrates that a believer should constantly supplicate to Allah to accept their worship and all acts of obedience, rather than assuming that they have completed them perfectly and that they have been accepted. One cannot be certain about the outcome of their actions. The scholar Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "They were engaged in a righteous act, and yet they were asking Allah to accept it from them." It is narrated that Wahb ibn Munabbih read this verse, then wept, saying: "O friend of Allah, you are raising the foundations of the House of the Most Merciful, yet you fear that it may not be accepted from you." This is similar to what Allah describes about the sincere believers in Surah Al-Mu'minun: { وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجَلَةٌ } [And they who give what they give while their hearts are fearful] (Surah Al-Mu'minun, 23:60), meaning that they give in charity and fulfill obligations while their hearts fear that it may not be accepted from them (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/181).

Then Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) said: { رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ } [Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:128), meaning: make us submissive, obedient, and compliant to You. They were asking Allah for steadfastness and continuity in faith and righteous deeds. One of the benefits of this is that a believer should ask Allah for steadfastness and should not be complacent with their acts of obedience. Instead, they should pray for acceptance during their acts of obedience and ask Allah to keep them firm on the truth and not to deviate

from it, as Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) used to pray, saying: "O Controller of hearts, make my heart steadfast upon Your religion" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 5/503, Hadith 3522). This sentiment is summarized by Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, in his work "Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an". (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/87)

The supplication of Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) extends to their descendants as well: {رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمَنْ ذُرِّيَّتَنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ} [Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and [raise] from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:128). This provides us with a model for praying for our offspring and emphasizes the importance of children participating with their parents in good deeds, just as Ismail participated with his father. He learns from him, follows his example, and continues the legacy. The supplication continues: {وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ} [And show us our rites and accept our repentance. Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:128), asking Allah to teach them the rites of Hajj and its rituals, or as some say, all the required acts of worship. The term "manasik" refers to acts of worship, and "nasik" is the worshiper (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/87).

They then seek Allah's forgiveness and mercy, invoking His names and attributes: {إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ} [Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:128), highlighting the importance of invoking Allah by His names and attributes and not seeking intercession through others. Even while engaged in an act of worship and obedience, they ask Allah for repentance because, no matter what a person does, their actions are inevitably flawed. If this was the concern of Allah's chosen friend and his son, who were asking for repentance, how much more should it be for others? This teaches us not to be complacent with our worship but to pray for its acceptance and forgiveness for any shortcomings.

The supplication continues: { رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ } [Our Lord, and send among them a messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:129). This supplication demonstrates Ibrahim's deep concern for his descendants, asking Allah to send a messenger from among them. Allah answered Ibrahim's prayer by sending Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) among them, from the lineage of Ismail, son of Ibrahim, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "I am the answer to the prayer of my father Ibrahim, and the glad tidings of 'Isa (Jesus), son of Mary." (Musnad Ahmad, 3/5959-596, Hadith 22261; Al-Silsilah Al-Sahihah by Albani, 1546).

The supplication highlights the mission of the Messenger: { يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ } [to recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:129). He recites the verses verbally, memorizes them, and teaches them to others. { وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ } [and teach them the Book and wisdom], meaning understanding and applying them, for education involves both comprehension and practice. The "Book" refers to the Quran, and "wisdom" refers to the Sunnah. { وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ } [and purify them], meaning guiding them to good deeds and distancing them from bad ones (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/95).

This underscores the role of scholars, who are the inheritors of the prophets, in teaching the religion, which includes learning the Quran in terms of recitation, understanding, and application, as well as learning the Sunnah by understanding it, applying it, and living by it. It also includes the necessary spiritual purification through obedience and sincerity to Allah, which involves training and nurturing oneself in everything Allah loves and is pleased with, and purifying the soul from anything that contradicts the path of Allah and His will.

The foundational principles of education can be derived as being based on practice, explanation, and verbal clarification in the learning process, as well as what education necessitates in terms of understanding, developing the ability to deduce and infer, and striving to reach the correct rulings after learning all the necessary tools. It also involves strengthening and motivating the will to act and apply, thus purifying the mind, actions, and behavior from any impurities or obstacles.

Allah then says: {وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ} [And who would be averse to the religion of Abraham except one who makes a fool of himself?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:130). Only a fool, who undervalues and disgraces his own soul, would turn away from the religion of Ibrahim. The phrase "rāghiba ' an" (رغب عن) means to abandon or leave something, and thus, whoever turns away from the religion and law of Allah after knowing it and seeks something else instead, is akin to a foolish, ignorant person who sees the light and goodness but abandons it for something lesser. This is among the most disgraceful traits associated with a mind that deliberately chooses a path contrary to the clear and undeniable truth.

The phrase {إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ} [except one who makes a fool of himself] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:130) indicates that a person can harm themselves through their own actions, becoming the cause of their own degradation, humiliation, and waste. They may weaken themselves and distance themselves from truth and goodness because foolishness entails not avoiding evil by indulging in it, and abandoning good by shunning it. This also highlights the individual's responsibility for themselves, as they are accountable for their own actions. Conversely, a person can elevate themselves, by Allah's grace, towards goodness and righteousness. It requires harnessing their abilities, enduring patience against sin, persevering in obedience, and striving through difficulties to overcome obstacles in the path of goodness and righteousness.

Allah then explains the status of this noble prophet in both this world and the Hereafter, saying: {وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ} [And We had chosen him in this world, and indeed he, in the Hereafter, will be among the righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:130). Allah selected him from among His creation and guided him to what He loves and is pleased with. As for the Hereafter, he is among the righteous, and the righteous are those who attain the great reward of Allah. The term "istifa" (اصطفاء) denotes selection from among others, signifying Allah's love for the one He chooses, and His special care for them. It also obliges the rest of the servants to respect, love, and believe in the one whom Allah has chosen over them. It includes the purification of His close friend Ibrahim (peace be upon him) in all matters – his intellect, character, morals, prophethood, and everything related to it.

In the phrase {وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ} [and indeed he, in the Hereafter, will be among the righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:130), Allah affirms the rank and status of His close friend Ibrahim (peace be upon him), that he is among those who will achieve great rewards and a lofty position from Allah in the Hereafter.

Allah then explains the swift response of Ibrahim to His commands: {إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ} [When his Lord said to him, "Submit," he said, "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:131). He immediately complied with the command of Allah. This verse's context indicates that Allah's command with the single word "Submit" (أسلم) encompasses many meanings and implications: submission to Allah through obedience, compliance, application, repentance, monotheism, and worship. This single word encapsulates a multitude of meanings intended for Ibrahim (peace be upon him), showcasing the miraculous and eloquent nature of the Quran.

The verse also highlights Ibrahim's immediate response to his Lord with the single word "I have submitted" (أسلمت), without hesitation. This word

conveys all the meanings of acceptance, obedience, and compliance without any delay. Even when commanded to sacrifice his son, Ibrahim did not hesitate, interpret, or contemplate; he proceeded to carry out the act of sacrifice. However, Allah, the Most Merciful, ransomed his son with a great sacrifice. This provides an exemplary model for the obedient servant of Allah, showing that a Muslim should similarly respond to Allah's commands and prohibitions without hesitation or subjecting them to personal whims.

In his statement {أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ} [I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:131), the pure monotheism is exemplified. Ibrahim did not submit to anyone else or associate anyone with Allah; rather, he submitted to the Lord of all worlds. This affirms both the oneness of lordship (Tawhid al-Rububiyyah) and the oneness of worship (Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah). The phrase "to the Lord of the worlds" (لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ) confirms the oneness of lordship, acknowledging that Allah is the Lord and Master of everything, while the phrase "I have submitted" (أَسْلَمْتُ) affirms the oneness of worship. This specific submission "to the Lord of the worlds" indicates that all of Ibrahim's fear, awe, love, hope, obedience, life, death, faith, and servitude were devoted solely to Allah. He did not direct any act of worship to anyone other than Allah, as his submission was for Allah alone, as clearly stated in the verse.

Thus, the word "I have submitted" (أَسْلَمْتُ) encapsulates all that a servant must offer to their Lord. It leaves nothing out, which also demonstrates the miraculous eloquence of the Quran in its words and meanings, encompassing Allah's will as He intends and requires. No verse, sermon, or exhortation is insufficient for conveying His message.

Ibrahim's concern for his descendants and the continuity of Allah's religion is evident as Allah describes Ibrahim's (peace be upon him) guidance to his progeny: {وَوَصَّي بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بَنِيهِ} [And Abraham instructed his sons [to do the same]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:132). Allah answered his supplication, and his

sons followed this path of guidance, including his grandson Yaqub (Jacob), the son of Ishaq, the son of Ibrahim (peace be upon them). Yaqub instructed his sons with the same guidance that Ibrahim had given: { يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ } [O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:132). This directive emphasizes the blessing of Allah's selection and choice of the true religion for them, reminding them of death, which stirs the heart toward holding firmly to this faith. His reminder focuses on the ending that death brings, making the impact more profound and ensuring that their death and final moments are upon Islam. As Shaykh Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, notes: "Whoever lives upon something, by the permission of Allah, will die upon it, and whoever dies upon something will be resurrected upon it" (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/97).

Allah continues: { أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُكَ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ إِلَهُهَ إِلَهُ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهُهَا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ } [Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac—one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:133). Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, explains that this address is directed toward the Jews and Christians, who falsely attributed to Ibrahim something he did not instruct his sons, claiming that they followed Judaism or Christianity. Allah refutes their claim, saying in a tone of reprimand, "Were you present at Jacob's deathbed?" Do you know what he instructed, or do you claim this based on knowledge? Of course, they were not present, but they are fabricating lies. The word "Am" here means "Rather," and "shuhada" means witnesses or present. The phrase "حضر يعقوب الموت" refers to the onset of death or its precursors (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/93).

Jacob's sons responded in a way that pleased him greatly, affirming their commitment to pure monotheism without any association with others. They said: {وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ} [And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:133). They combined monotheism with submission to everything that comes from Allah: in faith, worship, and character. Their answer was comprehensive, encompassing all good and excluding any contrary possibility. This emphasizes the importance of diligently preserving this religion and ensuring the righteousness of one's descendants by their adherence to Allah's religion, even in their final moments. Our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was similarly concerned, advising at the end of his life to "uphold the prayer and [be kind to] those under your care," and observing his companions praying behind Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with them all.

This emphasizes and highlights the importance of a parent, scholar, and preacher taking care of the matters of Islam, especially concerning their descendants who are under their responsibility. They should carry the burden of their well-being and the well-being of this religion. Among the benefits is also the exposure of the falsehoods fabricated by the Jews and Christians, even against the prophets who preceded them. Another benefit is the assertive style in the verse that exposes their lies, clarifying that they were not present at Jacob's deathbed to claim that he instructed his sons with Judaism or Christianity. Allah then clarifies that Jacob's sons responded to him in agreement with what all the prophets upheld: the monotheism of Allah and Islam. Allah concludes with: {تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۖ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ ۖ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ} [That was a nation which has passed on. It will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:134).

Allah clarifies that everyone is accountable for their deeds, and you will not be questioned about their actions. Therefore, you must focus on your own state, what you are doing, and what you are earning.

This also indicates that when dealing with the obstinate, it is important to present them with the truth, the correct path, and refute their false claims. If they accept, then that is well and good; if not, then they are responsible for what they have earned. No one has the power to grant them success in guidance; it suffices to guide them to what is good and correct.

وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا ۚ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (١٣٥) قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ (١٣٦) فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ ۖ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (١٣٧) صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً ۚ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ (١٣٨) قُلْ أَتَحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ (١٣٩) أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى ۚ قُلْ أَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمْ اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (١٤٠) تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۖ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٤١)

[And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, you will be guided." Say, "Rather, [we follow] the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth, and he was not of the polytheists." Say, "We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." So if they believe in the same as you believe in, then they have been [rightly] guided; but if they turn away, they are only in dissension. But Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing. [And say, "Ours is] the religion of Allah. And who is better than Allah in [ordaining] religion? And we are worshippers of Him." Say, "Do you argue with us about Allah while He is our Lord and your Lord? For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. And we are sincere [in deed and intention] to Him." Or do you say that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants were Jews or Christians? Say, "Are you more knowing, or is Allah?" And who is more unjust than one who conceals a testimony he has from Allah? And Allah is not unaware of what you do. That is a nation which has passed on. It will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:135-141).

The context in this noble verse returns to addressing the People of the Book, where it highlights the arrogance of the Jews and Christians and

their rejection of the truth after it had become clear to them. They even go so far as to invite the Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers with him to Judaism, urged by the Jews, or to Christianity, urged by the Christians. This indicates that the people of falsehood may not respond to the clear truth and might even invite the people of truth to follow them in their falsehood, knowing it to be false, yet claiming it as guidance: { وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ } [And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, you will be guided."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:135). Here, the importance of proclaiming the truth becomes evident, as Allah commands His Prophet (ﷺ) to tell them: { بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا } [Say, "Rather, [we follow] the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth, and he was not of the polytheists."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:135). This indicates that this religion is a continuation of the religion of the father of the prophets, Ibrahim (peace be upon him), and that the religion of Allah is uprightness and pure monotheism (حنيفاً), not associating others with Him or practicing innovations. This implies that innovation and polytheism deviate the religion from the true path, and that a polytheist leaves Islam by associating partners with Allah, which contradicts the essence of monotheism.

In the phrase { بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا } [Rather, [we follow] the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:135), there is an indication of steadfastness in the face of falsehood. The verse affirms the true religion while rejecting polytheism: { بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ } [Rather, [we follow] the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth, and he was not of the polytheists.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:135). It also suggests that polytheism is a deficiency and a disgrace for the polytheist because it contradicts Allah's intended purpose.

Allah then further clarifies this truth to them and others: { قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ } [لَيْنَا وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ] [Say, "We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants and what was given to

Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:136). The foundation of this religion is faith in Allah and what was revealed to our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), which includes the Quran and the Sunnah, as stated by Allah: {وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ} [And Allah has revealed to you the Book and wisdom.] (Surah An-Nisa, 4:113). It also entails faith in the messengers and what was revealed to them—the scriptures—without making distinctions among them, and submission to Allah in everything He has revealed.

This also implies that this religion is a continuation of what the previous messengers brought, as a Muslim believes in Allah, in what was revealed to our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and in what was revealed to the prophets from their Lord. This underscores the clarity of Islam and that it encompasses what Allah had previously revealed, extending the message brought by the prophets of Allah. Islam honors and respects all the messengers without diminishing any of them, as such respect is integral to faith. Anyone who denigrates any of them has negated their faith.

The condition that determines their guidance is then clarified: {فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا { (أَمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا} [So if they believe in the same as you believe in, then they have been [rightly] guided] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:137). This indicates that true guidance is confined to this upright Islamic religion. It also implies that there is no guidance apart from what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the believers with him followed. This signifies the invalidity of any religion other than what our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) brought. Consequently, if they do not believe in what you believe, they remain in their disputes, arguments, and enmity: {وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ} [But if they turn away, they are only in dissension] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:137). This means that their turning away results in and establishes discord, as their turning away from

this religion is driven by argumentation, stubbornness, and hostility. However, Allah assures the Messenger (ﷺ) and the believers that He will suffice them against these adversaries, for He hears and knows everything: {فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ} [But Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:137). If they turn away from the truth you have been sent with, they are in a state of opposition and conflict with you. But Allah will suffice you against their opposition, their disputes, and their enmity towards you. Indeed, Allah hears and knows your situation and theirs. Allah fulfilled His promise to His Messenger (ﷺ), as some of them were killed, and Banu Nadir were expelled.

This emphasizes the importance of knowing Allah's names and attributes, including {السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ} [the Hearing, the Knowing], which should instill fear and modesty in the Muslim, knowing that Allah hears and knows the condition of every one of His creation. This teaches the Muslim that they should place their hope, seek help, and rely on none other than Allah, who hears and knows their state at all times: {وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ} [And He is the Hearing, the Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:137).

Allah then describes His religion as the best, stating that there is no religion better than it: {صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً} [The religion of Allah, and who is better than Allah in [ordaining] religion?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:138). The beginning of this verse, {صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ} [The religion of Allah], is a declaration and affirmation that this is the religion ordained by Allah, Blessed and Exalted. The rhetorical question that follows, {وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً} [And who is better than Allah in [ordaining] religion?], serves as a challenge, compelling belief and faith. Is there any religion better than this one in terms of monotheism, worship, ease, and morals? Through its application, social, familial, and professional happiness is achieved, as well as individual happiness, by instilling qualities that can only be cultivated through this religion. Upon reflection, one realizes that this is indeed the religion of Allah, which must be believed in and accepted, guiding one to

the happiness of the Hereafter, which is the ultimate aspiration of every believer.

The Quranic expression comes in the form of a rhetorical question, { وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ } [And who is better than Allah in [ordaining] religion?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:138), challenging them to acknowledge that there is no religion better than this one. If there is, let them present it, compare it, and prove that any other religion is better. Since the reality is otherwise – which is the truth – there is no option but to follow what has been revealed to the Messenger (ﷺ).

The conclusion of the verse affirms that the Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers with him are devoted worshippers of Allah through this religion: { وَنَحْنُ لَهُ } [And we are worshippers of Him.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:138). This reinforces the outcome of the rhetorical question { وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً } [And who is better than Allah in [ordaining] religion?] by emphasizing that there is no religion better than this one. It is understood from this that we are committed to this religion, and as for you, it is your choice. Whoever desires this religion can follow it, and whoever refuses has had the proof established against them.

Allah then instructs His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to say to the Jews and Christians: { أَقُلْ أَتُحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۖ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ } [Say, "Do you argue with us about Allah while He is our Lord and your Lord? For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. And we are sincere [in deed and intention] to Him."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:139). Reflecting on the context of many verses in the Quran, one finds that they confront the disbeliever with the truth in a manner that leaves no room for doubt or suspicion for the discerning mind, except for those who are obstinate and arrogant in their hearts.

In this noble verse, Allah directs His Prophet (ﷺ) to tell the People of the Book: { أَقُلْ أَتُحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۖ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ } [Say, "Do you argue with us about Allah while He is our Lord and your Lord?

For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. And we are sincere [in deed and intention] to Him."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:139). This statement refutes their claim that they are closer to Allah due to their lineage and ancient scriptures, or their claim to be "the children of Allah and His beloved ones." The Prophet (ﷺ) is instructed to question them: "Do you argue with us about Allah?" This implies that any argument regarding who is closer to Allah is irrelevant since He is the Lord of both us and you, and everyone is rewarded according to their deeds. Thus, their ancestral claims hold no weight. We are devoted to Him alone in worship, and no one can draw closer to Allah through any of His creation except through obedience and sincerity to Him. This underscores the importance of sincerity to Allah, ensuring that all acts of worship are free from anything that deviates from pure devotion to Him, such as associating partners with Him or showing off. It also indicates that when arguing with the people of falsehood, one should do so in the best manner, without violence or force: {لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ } [أَعْمَالُكُمْ] [For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:139).

Allah then refutes their claim that the prophets were Jews or Christians: { أَمْ } { تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى } [Or do you say that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants were Jews or Christians?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:140). Such a claim can only be made based on knowledge, and true knowledge in this matter can only come from Allah: { قُلْ أَلَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمِ اللَّهُ } [Say, "Are you more knowing, or is Allah?"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:140). This rhetorical and critical question challenges them, as it exposes their claim on two fronts: either they must admit that Allah knows best, thus contradicting themselves and requiring them to retract their claim, or they must claim to know better than Allah, which is impossible. Therefore, they have no choice but to follow what Allah has revealed. Allah has already negated any association between Ibrahim and the religions of Judaism and Christianity in Surah Al-Imran: { مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا } [Abraham was neither a Jew nor

a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a Muslim [submitting to Allah].] (Surah Al-Imran, 3:67). This highlights the importance of understanding the condition of those being invited to Islam, recognizing the doubts they hold, and knowing how to establish the proof against them.

The next stage emphasizes the methodology for establishing the truth and refuting the falsehood of the people of falsehood: { وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ } [And who is more unjust than one who conceals a testimony he has from Allah?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:140). Is there anyone more unjust than the one who conceals the testimony they have from Allah? This rhetorical question is directed at them, pointing out their awareness of their own concealment of the knowledge in their scriptures. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: "They used to recite in the Book of Allah that the religion is Islam, that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and that Ibrahim, Ismail, Ishaq, Yaqub, and the Descendants were free from Judaism and Christianity. They bore witness to this before Allah, acknowledging it for themselves, but then concealed the testimony they had from Allah". (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/194)

This provides clarity on the behavior of the People of the Book in their religion, allowing the Muslim to be fully aware of their nature and conduct. It also serves to establish proof against them and to teach scholars the methodology of establishing proof against the obstinate and those with doubts. After this divine explanation from Allah, the verse concludes with a warning and a threat: { وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ } [And Allah is not unaware of what you do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:140). This expression praises Allah's station by negating any deficiency, affirming His complete knowledge of the deeds and actions of His creation. It implies that the One who is not heedless of the actions of His creation should be feared by them due to His encompassing knowledge. They should also hope in Him and supplicate to Him, knowing His knowledge and power encompass all their needs and desires.

Allah then reaffirms the true relationship with those who have passed from previous nations: {تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ} [That was a nation which has passed on. It will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:141). This verse, which has been mentioned earlier, reinforces the idea that mere claims of affiliation are insufficient; rather, it is one's deeds that establish their true nature and condition, and it is by these deeds that they will be recompensed. Everyone will receive what they have earned, whether good or evil, in obedience or disobedience.

{سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا ۚ قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۚ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (١٤٢) وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ إِيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ}

[The foolish among the people will say, "What has turned them away from their qiblah, which they used to face?" Say, "To Allah belongs the east and the west. He guides whom He wills to a straight path." And thus We have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you. And We did not make the qiblah which you used to face except that We might make evident who would follow the Messenger from who would turn back on his heels. And indeed, it is difficult except for those whom Allah has guided. And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith. Indeed, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:142-143)

The Quranic context transitions to addressing what the foolish will say about the change in the direction of the Qiblah and how Allah responded to them. The Qiblah was initially toward Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), then it was changed by Allah's command to the Ka'bah in Makkah, the sacred city of Allah. Allah says about them: {سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا} [The foolish among the people will say, "What has turned them away from their Qiblah, which they used to face?"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:142). Allah describes those who object to the change of the Qiblah as foolish, a trait of those with weak and deficient minds. These are the Jews of Madinah and anyone else who questions the change. The "foolish" are those whose thinking is weak, superficial, and dominated by their desires, over both rational and transmitted knowledge. They include anyone who rejected the change in Qiblah, whether from the People of the Book, the Arabs, the hypocrites, or the polytheists. Despite having the ability to comprehend, their thinking was dominated by desires, arrogance, and

obstinacy, reducing their intellect to the level of those who lack sound judgment, making their thinking akin to that of the foolish.

This indicates that there are people who exploit events to incite discord, whether at the level of the Ummah or within its various social circles. They address people as those whom Allah referred to, saying: { مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي { [What has turned them away from their Qiblah, which they used to face?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:142), stirring doubt and attempting to shake certainty, creating discord among the Muslims. This demonstrates the danger of questions that carry discord and evil, and that causing harm can stem from asking questions that provoke discord. It emphasizes the need to be aware of the consequences of questions and the potential good or harm they might cause. However, Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, responds decisively, commanding His Prophet (ﷺ) to say to them: { قُلْ لِلَّهِ { [Say, "To Allah belongs the east and the west."]} (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:142). The rational person knows and understands that the One who owns the east and the west has the authority to change and direct His creation as He wills. So where is the problem in that? He controls His dominion and His servants as He pleases.

This highlights the danger of raising questions that cause discord and doubt, especially during significant events, by casting doubt on established truths. This can distort the natural course of events, making what is natural appear unnatural and unacceptable, leading the foolish to be misled and the enemies to exploit the situation for divisiveness. One of the lessons is that Allah teaches the believers the methodology of responding with sound knowledge that silences the foolish, corrects the heedless, and increases the faith of the believer. It also emphasizes the importance of responding to discord with wisdom and a just, decisive answer that brings people back to their senses and silences the instigator of the discord.

Imam Al-Qurtubi remarked on this: "This provides clear evidence that in the rulings of Allah, there is abrogation and that the Ummah is

unanimously agreed on this, except for those who deviate. It also indicates that those who have not received knowledge of the abrogating ruling are still bound by the original ruling until the abrogation reaches them. It further serves as evidence that the Quran was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gradually, piece by piece" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/102).

Moreover, it shows that the Quran addresses the affairs of the Ummah, descending as a mercy and compassion to ward off evil and bring about goodness and benefit: {إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ} [Indeed, this Quran guides to that which is most suitable] (Surah Al-Isra, 17:9).

Allah then turns attention to the matter of guidance and rectitude: {يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ} [He guides whom He wills to a straight path] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:142). This indicates that Allah is the one who has guided this Ummah to this Qiblah. It also implies that the Shari'ah of Allah is the true and straight path, free of deviation, and that guidance is in the hands of Allah alone. Therefore, one should seek it from Him through supplication, adherence to His pleasure, and submission to it.

Allah then highlights some of the distinguishing features of this religion that sets this Ummah apart from other nations: {وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا} [And thus We have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143). This indicates that through this upright religion, this Ummah has been characterized by moderation. This can be understood as praise and commendation for this Ummah, for through this religion, they have attained this description from Allah as being just, the best, and most excellent. The description of this Ummah as "وسط" (just and balanced) is a form of praise and honor, as the Quraysh were the most balanced in lineage among the Arabs, and the Prophet (ﷺ) was of the most balanced status among his people. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/196)

The Ka'bah is at the center of the earth, and in the Hadith, it is mentioned: "The best of matters is the middle one." (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm at-Tafsir*, 1/138). Similarly, in the verse: {قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ} [The most just of them said] (Surah Al-Qalam, 68:28), the word "أَوْسَطُهُمْ" refers to the most just and best among them (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm at-Tafsir*, 1/138).

This indicates that a believer should praise their Creator, Blessed and Exalted, for making them part of this Ummah, which is described with this commendable characteristic, and they should adhere to this Shariah without deviating from it. By doing so, they embody the moderation of this Ummah and do not stray from this noble description. This religion is the most complete in every aspect, free from hardship, aligned with human nature, and characterized by its leniency in its essence, objectives, and goals. It encourages noble morals and forbids their opposites. It emphasizes gradual development as a feature of its methodology, establishes justice as a pillar, prohibits oppression, and commands gentleness.

With this excellence, the people of Islam are witnesses over others. A funeral procession once passed by, and the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) praised the deceased. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "It has been affirmed." Then another passed by, and some of them spoke ill of the deceased. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "It has been affirmed." (Sahih Muslim, 2/655, Hadith 949; Jami' al-Tirmidhi, 5/503, Hadith 3522).

The scholar Ibn al-Jawzi mentioned that its meaning is: "So that you may bear witness for the prophets against their nations." Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "On the Day of Resurrection, a prophet will come with a man, and another prophet with two men, and another prophet with more than that. They will be asked, 'Did this prophet convey the message to you?' They will say, 'No.' The prophet will be asked, 'Did you convey the message?' He will say, 'Yes.' He will be asked, 'Who will testify for you?' He will say, 'Muhammad and his Ummah.' They will

testify that the messengers conveyed the message. They will be asked, 'How do you know?' They will say, 'Our Prophet informed us that the messengers had conveyed the message, and we believed him.' This is the meaning of the verse: {لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ} [So that you may be witnesses over the people.] (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm at-Tafsir*, 1/138).

And the Messenger (ﷺ) will be a witness over you with regard to your deeds. This underscores the importance of testimony and the significance of embodying righteousness and conveying the message. One of the benefits is that a witness is praised, and the acceptance of their testimony indicates their uprightness and trustworthiness. How great, then, is the honor that Allah has made this Ummah a witness over other nations, with the testimony of its Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)? It is indeed a magnificent and honorable distinction.

Allah then explains the wisdom behind changing the Qiblah: {وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۚ} [And We did not make the Qiblah which you used to face except that We might make evident who would follow the Messenger from who would turn back on his heels. And indeed, it is difficult except for those whom Allah has guided] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143). Allah clarifies that the change of the Qiblah served as a test and trial, to distinguish between those who obey, accept, and submit to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and those who turn back and abandon their faith. This was a significant purification through the change of the Qiblah, except for a specific group of people – those whom Allah has guided, who are certain of the truthfulness of the Prophet (ﷺ) and are content with whatever he commands or forbids, or whatever is abrogated and replaced by something else.

This implies that trials are the true test of faith, revealing who remains steadfast and who turns back. The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were tested in various situations, and those who came after them are also tested, as Allah says in this blessed Surah: {وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ ۚ}

وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۚ [And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:155). This demonstrates the believer's need and dependence on Allah to grant them steadfastness, as Allah says in the verse concerning the Qiblah: {إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ} [except for those whom Allah has guided] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143). The Prophet (ﷺ) used to supplicate: "O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart firm upon Your religion." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 4487; Sahih Ibn Majah, Hadith 3476).

One of the benefits is that distinguishing these individuals is not difficult for Allah, the All-Knowing of the hearts of His servants and what they will do before they do it, but this is done so that the proof may be established against them. Allah operates and governs this universe according to the laws and systems He has set in His perfect and wondrous order.

Another benefit is that the change of the Qiblah is evidence of the Prophet's (ﷺ) prophethood. If he were not a prophet, he would have avoided changing the Qiblah to prevent objections and the potential backlash. However, the Prophet (ﷺ) was a servant of Allah who carried out His commands, even if they were difficult for some people to accept.

Additionally, there is no place for what is considered "rational" or "irrational" in the face of a divine command. The verse {وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ} [And indeed, it is difficult] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143) indicates that it is burdensome for those who want to approach matters with their deficient intellects rather than the complete divine rulings. However, those who prioritize the divine command over their desires and limited reasoning are not in the same category, as Allah has excluded them from this burden: {إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ} [except for those whom Allah has guided] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143). These individuals complied without feeling any discomfort because they recognized that the ruling is from Allah, and no one can object to Him, as He says in Surah Al-Anbiya: {لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ} [And they are not asked about what they do]

{يُسْأَلُونَ} [He is not questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned] (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:23).

Thus, no one who submits to Allah questions why He did this, why He prioritized that, why this happened in this way, why He gave something to one person and elevated their status, or why He took it away from another, who seemed more deserving. Such questions lead to evil and contradict submission to Allah. Therefore, reason should never be placed above revelation, and no one should question Allah's commands, actions, judgments, or decrees.

Allah then explains His justice towards His servants, saying in His wisdom and mercy: {وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ} [And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143). This means that Allah will not let the reward of those who prayed towards Bayt al-Maqdis go to waste, even if they died before the Qiblah was changed to the Ka'bah in Makkah. Al-Bara' (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Some people died while they were praying towards Bayt al-Maqdis. The people then asked about their state regarding this matter. So, Allah revealed: {وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ} [And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143)." The question from the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) about this issue demonstrates their deep concern, meticulous adherence to their religion, and love for their fellow Muslim brothers who preceded them. This serves as an example for those who follow them of the importance of loving one's fellow Muslims, even if they have not met them or lived with them, and to pray for them with mercy. Allah teaches us this in Surah Al-Hashr, where He says: {وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا { [And [there is a share for] those who came after them, saying, "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts [any] resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed You are Kind and Merciful."}] (Surah Al-Hashr, 59:10).

Allah concludes this noble verse by highlighting His mercy and kindness, saying: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَّءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ} [Indeed, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143). This is one of the attributes of Allah: that He is Kind and Merciful. The attribute "رَّءُوف" (Kind) carries profound meanings, as mentioned by Ibn al-Jawzi (may Allah have mercy on him): "رَّءُوف" means merciful, and kindness is the most intense and delicate form of mercy. Kindness is more specific, while mercy is more general (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm at-Tafsir*, 1/140).

How profound it is that these two attributes are mentioned together: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَّءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ} [Indeed, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143). Out of His mercy and kindness towards people, He sent messengers and revealed books, spread the earth for them, provided them with every good, and did not hasten to punish them for their sins, so they might repent, be guided, and turn back to Him. If not for this mercy, no one would remain on earth due to the abundance of sins and the deficiency in worship and remembrance of Him, Blessed and Exalted. This mercy is general for all people, so how much more is it for the believers? Truly, He is Kind and Merciful.

How could He be disobeyed when He is Kind and Merciful to people? How could anyone associate others with Him when He is the Kind and Merciful? How could He not be thanked when He is the Kind and Merciful? How could He not be remembered and obeyed when He is the Kind and Merciful? How could a servant not humble himself before Him when He is the Kind and Merciful? How could He not be invoked when He is the Kind and Merciful? How could He not be hoped for when He is the Kind and Merciful? How could one not feel shame before Him when He is the Kind and Merciful? If one servant shows kindness to another, the latter would be ashamed before the former. So how about when the mercy of Allah is the reason behind the mercy among His servants?

These attributes of Allah demand that a servant show gratitude to Allah, as He is the Kind and Merciful to people. It is mentioned in a Hadith from Sahih al-Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saw a woman among the captives who had milk flowing from her breast, and whenever she found a child among the captives, she would take him, press him to her chest, and nurse him. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, "Do you think this woman would throw her child into the fire?" We said, "No, as long as she has the power not to throw him into it." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Allah is more merciful to His servants than this woman is to her child." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 4/91, Hadith 5999)

قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا ۖ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٤٤)
وَلَيْنُ اثْبِتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

[We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a Qiblah with which you will be pleased. So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it. Indeed, those who were given the Scripture well know that it is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do. And if you brought to those who were given the Scripture every sign, they would not follow your Qiblah. Nor will you be a follower of their Qiblah. Nor would they be followers of one another's Qiblah. So if you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, indeed, you would then be among the wrongdoers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144-145)

Then Allah says, { قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا ۖ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ } [We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a Qiblah with which you will be pleased. So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144). The Prophet (ﷺ) would look up to the sky, anticipating a command from Allah to change the Qiblah direction, which had been toward Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) for sixteen or seventeen months (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/107).

He was eager to distinguish the Qiblah from that of the Jews, so that it would be directed towards Makkah, the city to which Ibrahim (Abraham) (peace be upon him) had directed his prayers. This highlights the importance of taking pride in the distinctiveness of this religion and avoiding imitation of disbelievers in their religious practices, customs, and traditions, especially those that have no benefit or that might strengthen their influence and morale, while bringing no advantage to the Muslims.

Allah's vision, knowledge, and awareness encompass His servant, knowing his movements, thoughts, wishes, and desires. This includes the special mention of the Prophet's (ﷺ) turning his face toward the sky, with Allah noting this in a way that honors and responds to what was in his heart: {قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ} [We have certainly seen the turning of your face toward the heaven] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144). Allah sees all of His creation, but this specific mention serves to honor and fulfill the Prophet's (ﷺ) request: {فَلَنُؤَيِّنَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا} [We will surely turn you to a Qiblah with which you will be pleased] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144). This is a lofty and significant position, as the Prophet's (ﷺ) status with his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, deepens his place in the hearts of Muslims. This unique Qiblah is a divine honor for the believers and for this religion, underscoring the importance of the Sacred House, which Allah has made the Qiblah for Muslims, uniquely assigned to this Ummah: {قَوْلَ وَجْهِكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا} {كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ} [So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144).

Wherever a Muslim is located, they turn their face and acts of worship toward al-Masjid al-Haram, and if they are inside the mosque, they direct their face towards the Ka'bah. This is a great and noble blessing from Allah. As for facing the Qiblah during voluntary prayers while traveling, or for those who are unaware or unable to determine its direction, these situations have been discussed in detail in books of jurisprudence and Tafsir, and should be referred to in those contexts.

Allah then explains the condition of the People of the Book regarding the change in the direction of the Qiblah: {وَأِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ} [Indeed, those who were given the Scripture well know that it is the truth from their Lord.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144). This is a definitive statement from Allah, who knows what they conceal of the knowledge that they are aware of Muhammad (ﷺ) being a Prophet and Messenger from Allah. Therefore, they know that he does not command anything or change anything except by the command of Allah. Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The Jews who denied your turning towards the Ka'bah and your turning away from Bayt al-Maqdis know that Allah has directed you towards it, as is mentioned in what they conceal in their books about the description and attributes of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)" (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/199).

Allah then clarifies a truth about His noble essence, which is a pillar in the belief of the believers. He says: {وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ} [And Allah is not unaware of what they do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144). Allah is not unaware of the actions of the People of the Book and what they do. Therefore, He will recompense them for their deeds, as well as for their stubbornness and arrogance. The negation here affirms the opposite; Allah denies for Himself any attribute of heedlessness or forgetfulness, thus removing all deficiencies and affirming His complete and precise knowledge and encompassing awareness of everything, as He says in Surah Yunus: {وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ} [And not absent from your Lord is any part of an atom's weight within the earth or within the heaven or anything smaller than that or greater, but that it is in a clear register.] (Surah Yunus, 10:61).

Allah then highlights the entrenched stubbornness of the People of the Book: {وَلَئِنْ أَنْتَبَتْ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ} [And if you brought to those who were given the Scripture every sign, they would not follow your Qiblah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:145). Even if you were to bring them every clear proof, they would not believe you. Some tribes of the People of the

Book lived in Madinah and Najran. This is an extraordinary proof of the Quran's miraculous nature, as they indeed fulfilled this reality as described by the Quran. Allah then says to His Messenger (ﷺ): {وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتِهِمْ} [Nor will you be a follower of their Qiblah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:145). He clarifies the reality that the Prophet (ﷺ) will never follow their Qiblah, and likewise, they will never follow his Qiblah. The matter between him and them is concluded, and there is no point in attempting to reconcile this difference. Even among the Jews and Christians, they do not follow each other's Qiblah: {وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ} [Nor would they be followers of one another's Qiblah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:145). The Jews' Qiblah is toward Bayt al-Maqdis, while the Christians' Qiblah is toward the east, in opposition to their Prophet, 'Isa (Jesus) (peace be upon him), whose Qiblah was also toward Bayt al-Maqdis. Therefore, if they do not submit to one another's Qiblah, they will certainly not submit to the Qiblah of a Prophet from the Arabs.

Allah then clarifies that they are people of desires and that whoever follows their desires after knowledge has come to them has indeed wronged themselves: {وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ} [And if you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, then you would indeed be among the wrongdoers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:145). This serves as a warning against opposing the truth that Allah has made clear. Whoever opposes it is indeed a wrongdoer among the wrongdoers. This highlights the caution required in not disobeying Allah, and the severity of the warning is amplified by the fact that it is addressed to the Prophet (ﷺ). Although the Prophet (ﷺ) would never do anything that would make him a wrongdoer, this warning is directed to his Ummah through him.

This warning follows the statement {مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ} [after what has come to you of knowledge], indicating that the prohibition and warning come after the knowledge has been given. It also signifies that this religion is one of great knowledge and truth, encompassing legislation, acts of

worship, faith, ethics, healing from all ailments, a stronghold of protection, and a firm rope. It is through this religion that Allah has revealed the innermost secrets of souls, the unseen realities of nations, and the clear, miraculous exposition of the path of truth and goodness. These attributes and melodies are so vast that thoughts cannot encompass them, nor can pens fully record them. All praise is due to Him, Blessed and Exalted.

The phrase {الَّذِينَ الظَّالِمِينَ} [among the wrongdoers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:145) indicates that what they are following is falsehood and a great injustice, contrasted with the guidance, truth, knowledge, and the great religion upon which the Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers stand. It shows that they are in a state of profound misguidance and injustice, and whoever joins them becomes part of their group. This serves as a preventative directive for every Muslim to avoid the religions of Judaism, Christianity, and any religion other than what our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) brought, as Allah does not accept any other after his mission {مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ} [after what has come to you of knowledge].

{الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (١٤٦) الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ (١٤٧) وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٍ هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ؕ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ }

[Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceals the truth while they know [it]. The truth is from your Lord, so never be among the doubters. For each [religious following] is a direction toward which it faces. So race to [all that is] good. Wherever you may be, Allah will bring you forth [for judgment] all together. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:146-148).

Allah then clarifies truths that can only be known through revelation: {الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ} [Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceals the truth while they know [it].] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:146). The People of the Book know that Muhammad (ﷺ) is a prophet, due to the descriptions they have, which remove all ignorance from them completely. Their knowledge of the Prophet (ﷺ) is so precise that it is likened to their knowledge of their own sons. This is a precise Qur'anic description of something that no human could know without revelation. Therefore, their knowledge of the correctness of the Qiblah as a divine revelation from Allah is complete and undeniable, because the Prophet (ﷺ) only speaks by revelation from Allah.

However, a group among them conceals this truth that they know with certainty. This implies that envy and arrogance can drive a person to stubbornness and obstinacy, leading them to hide truths they are fully aware of. This should make the Muslim aware of the danger of this grave disease. If its effects in religion are so abhorrent, how much worse could it be in other aspects of social interaction and fulfilling rights? A person might be driven to silence about the truth or even concealing it because

they feel it does not align with what they desire or puts them in an undesirable position. Therefore, one must beware of this dangerous disease by two means: by asking Allah for protection from a soul that is arrogant and resistant to the truth, and by ensuring that one does not follow their whims into transgression. The combined arrogance and envy pushed the People of the Book to conceal the truth that they knew from Allah: { الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ } [The truth is from your Lord] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:147), whether it refers to the prophethood of the Prophet (ﷺ) or the correctness of facing the Ka'bah.

Allah then reassures His Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers of the truth they are upon by forbidding doubt: { فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ } [So never be among the doubters.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:147). Be certain, and let the Ummah have absolute knowledge of the truth they hold, rejecting any satanic doubts that may arise in the hearts of Muslims due to the whispers of the devils among humans and jinn, who are enemies of the religion. The prohibition against doubting the truth is a command to adhere to it and continue on its path. This highlights the importance of precaution by warning against dangers, which strengthens one's resolve against the risks of mingling and interaction. The People of the Book in Madinah would interact with people in their daily lives, such as in the markets.

Allah then clarifies the separation of matters concerning the People of the Book and what Muslims should focus on: { وَلِكُلِّ وَجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيَهَا } [For each [religious following] is a direction toward which it faces.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:148). Each of you has a Qiblah to which you are directed, implying that you should not be preoccupied with them, as they are obstinate toward you. Instead, you should focus on hastening and competing in doing good deeds: { فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ } [So race to [all that is] good.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:148). The use of the plural "خيرات" (good deeds) indicates the variety of good deeds that Islam has brought, which are to be eagerly pursued by those who understand their true value and reward. Referring to the actions, words, and beliefs of this religion as "good deeds"

emphasizes that all the laws of this religion are beneficial, and Muslims should strive to acquire them.

The phrase { فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ } [So race to [all that is] good.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:148) serves as a source of strength for the believer in every situation. If greed or avarice strikes, the believer strengthens themselves by saying { فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ }. If they become lazy in worship, they are encouraged by the words { فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ }. If they hesitate to speak the truth, they say { فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ }. If envy towards their fellow Muslim arises, it is dispelled by { فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ }. If they waver between doing good and falling short, they remember { فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ }. This phrase serves as a strong principle that repels every evil and propels one toward all that is good.

Allah then completes this noble verse by highlighting His power: { أَيِنَّمَا تَكُونُوا } [Wherever you may be, Allah will bring you forth [for judgment] all together.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:148). Allah reminds everyone of the Last Day when He will gather all people, both Muslims and disbelievers. This divine guidance acts as a warning to the deniers and a motivation for the believers to work for the Hereafter, where Allah will gather all His creation.

One of the lessons here is that the phrase { أَيَأْتِ بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا } [Allah will bring you forth [for judgment] all together] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:148) is a testament to Allah's divine power, negating any choice for humans in the matter of being brought forth. It underscores the inevitability of the resurrection and the judgment after death, reminding every person that they will return to their Lord. This serves both as a deterrent against sin and an encouragement for obedience, encapsulating both warning and motivation in the statement { أَيَأْتِ بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا }.

Allah then says: { إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } [Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:148). This reaffirms and reminds of Allah's ability to gather, recreate, resurrect, and judge, emphasizing His complete control over all things

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لِلْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (١٤٩) وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلَئِمَّ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ {

[And from wherever you go out [for prayer], turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram, and indeed, it is the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. And from wherever you go out [for prayer], turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram, and wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it in order that the people will have no argument against you, except for those of them who commit wrong; so fear them not but fear Me. And it is so I may complete My favor upon you and that you may be guided.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:149-150).

The context of the Qiblah continues as Allah, the Exalted, says: { وَمِنْ حَيْثُ ۖ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ } [And from wherever you go out [for prayer], turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:150). This is the third command to face al-Masjid al-Haram. The first was in His statement: { قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۚ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا ۚ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ ۚ } [We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a Qiblah with which you will be pleased. So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:144), which relates to fulfilling the Prophet's (ﷺ) desire. The second is in His statement: { وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لِلْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۚ } [And from wherever you go out [for prayer], turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram, and indeed, it is the truth from your Lord.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:149), confirming and clarifying that this Qiblah is the truth, and that the Prophet's (ﷺ) desire is aligned with the truth that Allah wills and is pleased with.

The third is in His statement: { وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ ۖ } [And from wherever you go out [for prayer], turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram, and wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it in order that the people will have no argument against you.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:150), which provides a

general directive to the Muslims: wherever you are, face al-Masjid al-Haram, your Qiblah. The verse then explains the significant outcome: {لِّنَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ} [so that people will have no argument against you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:150). Allah, the Exalted, thereby removed the argument of the dissenters among the Jews, who used to claim that the Prophet (ﷺ) was following their Qiblah by facing Jerusalem, implying that he followed them. They were aware, as indicated in their scriptures, that he would eventually turn to the Qiblah of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), which is the Ka'bah.

Similarly, the argument of the Arab polytheists was also nullified when the Prophet (ﷺ) turned away from Jerusalem toward the Ka'bah, which is the Qiblah of Ibrahim (peace be upon him). They held the Ka'bah in high regard, and they were pleased when the Prophet (ﷺ) began to face the Ka'bah in prayer. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/201)

This change brought about great benefits: it nullified the arguments of the Arabs and established proof against the Jews, who knew that the Qiblah of this Prophet (ﷺ) was the Qiblah of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), toward Makkah, and that he was not following their Qiblah. This served as a religious strength for the believers and a test for those with sickness in their hearts. Allah's wisdom in commanding, forbidding, and abrogating after a command is profound. Thus, the arguments of the Jews and the Arab polytheists were nullified, except for those with a disease in their hearts, who wronged themselves by turning away from the truth. {لِّنَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ} [so that people will have no argument against you, except for those who commit wrong among them.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:150). But these wrongdoers should not be feared: {فَلَا تَخْشَوهُمْ وَاحْشَوْنِي} [So fear them not, but fear Me.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:150).

This directive emphasizes that no fear should be directed toward anyone but Allah. It provides reassurance and comfort to the believers, dispelling any fear or alarm regarding the petty actions and stubbornness of these

wrongdoers. Their efforts will not reach their desired outcomes, so believers are to direct their fear solely to the Creator, Blessed and Exalted. Limiting the fear of the believers to only Allah melts away any fear of an unjust person who lacks legitimate grounds for their argument. Fear of people is justified when they are rightful, for Allah supports those who have been wronged, causing the oppressor to fear Allah for their oppression. But when the truth is with the believers, they should fear none but Allah.

This serves to strengthen and empower the believers and hints at their victory over the Jews, for when one does not fear an opponent, it indicates that they will be victorious over them.

Among the benefits is the gradual approach in instruction and addressing psychological aspects through affirmation and repetition, each carrying its own advantage. Imam Al-Qurtubi (رحمه الله) mentioned: "This is an emphasis on the command to face the Ka'bah and a demonstration of its importance, as the change in direction was indeed very difficult for them to accept." (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/113)

Furthermore, scholars have derived numerous other benefits from this, as noted by Ibn Kathir and others. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/200). The first verse addresses those who can directly see the Ka'bah. The second applies to those in Makkah who cannot see the Ka'bah directly. The third pertains to those in other regions. Thus, those who can see the Ka'bah should face it directly. Those in Makkah, outside the mosque, should face the direction of al-Masjid al-Haram, while those in other regions should face toward Makkah, may Allah protect it.

Through this Qiblah, a great and noble blessing was realized, as Allah says: {وَلَا أُنْصِتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَلْعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ} [so that I may complete My favor upon you and that you may be guided.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:150). The designation of the Qiblah for Muslims was a tremendous blessing that Allah completed through His mercy and guidance, enabling believers to achieve greater

guidance and success through this magnificent legislation, which has brought forth numerous blessings. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds.

This also calls for an appreciation of the blessing of having the Qiblah directed toward the Sacred House, the first house established for people, and recognizing the special qualities Allah has endowed it with, including the multiplication of rewards for prayers offered there and the healing properties of drinking Zamzam water, among other unique attributes of this great House.

{كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ (١٥١) فَادْكُرُونِي أذكُرْكُمْ واشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ (١٥٢)}

[Just as We have sent among you a messenger from yourselves reciting to you Our verses and purifying you and teaching you the Book and wisdom and teaching you that which you did not know. So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:151-152).

Allah, the Exalted, graciously reminds His believing servants of the profound blessing of sending the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) among them. He says: {كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ} [Just as We have sent among you a messenger from yourselves reciting to you Our verses and purifying you and teaching you the Book and wisdom and teaching you that which you did not know.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:151). {فَادْكُرُونِي أذكُرْكُمْ واشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ} [So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:152).

In this passage, Allah draws our attention to the immense gift of Islam, delivered through the Prophet (ﷺ), who brought divine guidance, purification, and knowledge that transcended what was previously known. As He bestowed upon us this noble religion, beautifying our lives with its teachings, He urges us to remember Him through sincere worship, as He has prescribed for us. Gratitude becomes the key to preserving these blessings, while ingratitude—symbolized by the concealment of these gifts—invites loss and despair.

Gratitude, when practiced, ignites within the believer a deep sense of appreciation for Allah's favors, leading to peace, contentment, and happiness. Each blessing, when acknowledged, lightens the burdens of life's trials. Remembering the gift of Islam, for instance, brings solace amidst the harshness of the world. Reflecting on the blessing of children

may ease the longing for material wealth. Conversely, forgetting these blessings leads to misery and the piling up of unmet desires. The only remedy lies in recognizing and appreciating these divine favors, for it is through gratitude that multiplies and eternalize the blessings.

Among the insights is that Allah loves those who are grateful and desires to see the effect of His blessings on His servant—not out of arrogance, pride, or vanity, but as a form of acknowledgment of the blessing. Imam Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, states: "Allah, Exalted be He, reminds His believing servants of the blessing He bestowed upon them by sending the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to them. He recites to them the clear verses of Allah, purifies them from the evils of character, the impurities of the soul, and the practices of ignorance. He brings them out of darkness into light, teaches them the Book, which is the Quran, and wisdom, which is the Sunnah, and imparts knowledge that they did not possess."

Through the blessing of this message, they transitioned to the state of the righteous and the qualities of the scholars, becoming the most profound in knowledge, the purest in heart, the least pretentious, and the most truthful in speech. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/201).

This also implies that whoever remembers Allah, Allah remembers him. In the Qudsi Hadith, Allah says: "I am with My servant when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me within himself, I remember him within Myself, and if he remembers Me in a gathering, I remember him in a gathering better than it." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 4/384, Hadith 7405).

The benefits and virtues of remembering Allah with the heart, tongue, and actions are immense, numerous, and significant. These have been addressed extensively in the books of Hadith, and some scholars have even dedicated specific chapters and books to this topic.

Among the benefits is the affirmation of monotheism (Tawhid) in the soul, heart, tongue, and actions. Allah, the Exalted, says: { فَادْكُرُونِي وَأَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي }

{وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ} [So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:152). The remembrance of Allah leads to the recognition of His blessings, and recognizing these blessings leads to remembering Allah. This cycle prompts the believer to express gratitude. On the other hand, forgetting Allah's blessings leads to heedlessness regarding gratitude.

Linking remembrance to Allah {فَاذْكُرُونِي} [So remember Me] reaffirms the oneness of Allah. The servant remembers his Lord, acknowledging that the apparent causes of blessings should not distract from the ultimate Cause, which is Allah. The servant might say, "I have succeeded by the grace of Allah, and Allah facilitated this for me," attributing all means to Allah's favor. In doing so, the servant acknowledges the causes as being from Allah, and this constitutes gratitude to the Bestower. Additionally, this recognition praises those whom Allah made the means to these blessings.

Furthermore, the affirmation of monotheism is evident in the command to give thanks {وَاشْكُرُوا لِي} [And be grateful to Me]. In the verse {وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ} [And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me], there is a strength that fortifies the believer's awareness of the blessings he enjoys, which may go unnoticed by those who deny them. When a believer recalls the blessing of Islam, he magnifies this favor, recognizing that he is not among the disbelievers. In doing so, all other needs and shortcomings pale in comparison to this immense and noble blessing, bringing happiness from every direction.

Similarly, when a believer contemplates the blessings of health and well-being, he magnifies them, realizing that he is not among the sick. In this way, all other needs, wants, or hardships seem insignificant, and tranquility, peace, and happiness envelop him from all sides. This is the state of the believer with every blessing he receives.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ (١٥٣) وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أحيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ (١٥٤) وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ (١٥٥) الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ (١٥٦) أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

[O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient. And do not say about those who are killed in the way of Allah, "They are dead." Rather, they are alive, but you perceive [it] not. And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient, who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return." Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:153-157)

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, guides His believing servants to the strength they need to face the various difficulties of life. He says: { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ } [O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:153). Allah directs the believers to what benefits them by addressing them with faith: { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا } [O you who have believed]. In calling them by their faith, there is a great rank bestowed by Allah upon them, affirming their belief in Him. What greater blessing could there be than this noble favor? All of this is to draw their attention and to teach them what is beneficial.

From an educational perspective, this emphasizes the importance of addressing the learner or the one being called with the best possible titles. If this is how Allah addresses His servants with this great rank, then how should a servant address another servant? Another benefit is the use of the calling style { يَا } [O], which captures their attention and appeals to their ears, as it indicates that something important is being addressed, requiring

their full attention. This is a powerful method of instructional and educational guidance that effectively grabs the attention of the listener.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, calls upon the believers to teach them what benefits them by advising them to seek help with two essential things in all matters they face: {اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ} [Seek help through patience and prayer]. Allah did not specify the field or the occasion to seek help, leaving it open to apply in every situation. This allows the believer to understand that he should seek help with these two things in repelling all harm and acquiring all good. Human needs revolve around bringing good and repelling harm in various degrees.

Seeking help through {الصَّبْرِ} [patience] applies to performing acts of obedience, seeking good, or repelling evil, restraining oneself from sin, compelling oneself to act or speak in a righteous manner, enduring what one dislikes, and much more that requires patience. Patience strengthens willpower and endurance, motivates all activities, and provides tranquility to the soul. It also distances a person from despair, which is followed by laziness and helplessness that can ruin a person's life. Moreover, patience is closely linked to immense rewards and blessings, as will be further explained with Allah's permission in the forthcoming benefits. One of the nearest benefits is Allah's companionship for the patient, as mentioned in this noble verse: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ} [Indeed, Allah is with the patient]. If patience offered no other blessing than that Allah is with the patient, it would suffice as a status, honor, strength, support, and victory.

The second form of seeking help is through {الصَّلَاةِ} [prayer]. Whenever the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was troubled or faced with a serious matter, he would seek help through prayer. Hudhayfah (RA) said: "When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was troubled by something, he would pray." (Musnad Ahmad, 3/330, Hadith 23299).

In prayer, there is a profound connection between the servant and his Lord. It involves intimate communication, humility through bowing, submission

through prostration, recitation of the Fatiha and other verses from the words of the Lord of all worlds. It also includes glorifying, praising, and magnifying Allah, standing in His presence, sending blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and upon the father of the Prophets, Ibrahim (peace be upon him). Additionally, prayer is a time for supplication, and the closest a servant is to his Lord is when he is in prostration. Indeed, it is truly a means by which a believer seeks help in all his affairs, performing prayers on time, striving in the voluntary acts, and hastening to pray whenever a matter distresses him.

The verses then transition to describe the state of the martyr who is slain in the path of Allah, as Allah says: { وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُفْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمُوتَ بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ } [And do not say about those who are killed in the way of Allah, "They are dead." Rather, they are alive, but you perceive [it] not.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:154). This divine statement honors the martyr who is killed in the cause of Allah. It also signifies that the martyr in the path of Allah enjoys a life that we do not perceive, highlighting the virtue of striving in the cause of Allah and the high status of the martyrs who have offered their lives solely for His sake. They did not offer their lives for worldly gains, defending falsehood, or out of ostentation, but purely for the sake of Allah, which is a condition to be recognized as a martyr. Therefore, we do not believe that they are dead; rather, we are certain that whoever dies as a martyr in the path of Allah is alive.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said: "The souls of the martyrs are in green birds that perch on the fruits or trees of Paradise." (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 4/151, Hadith 1641).

This also serves as evidence of the bliss in the grave, and consequently, the punishment of the grave. However, in this world, we do not perceive the state they are in. Glory be to Allah, the Exalted, the All-Wise, to whom all matters belong. The remarkable transitions in the Quran's contexts—between guidance, commands, prohibitions, clarifications, and rebuttals—

are astonishing. The noble Quran exhibits a profound, magnificent, and beautiful variety in its transitions, which the ears find pleasing, the heart reveres, and the mind contemplates and understands. The reader finds sweetness in the flow, words, and structures of the verses, enlightening the mind, stirring the heart, and moving the emotions. Glory be to Him who has amazed the intellects with the Quran and has made its eloquence and depth beyond the reach of humankind and jinn, challenging every challenger among them, even if they were to assist one another.

In the previous verse, the focus was on the state of those killed in the path of Allah. Before that, it was about what the Muslim should seek help with—patience and prayer. The context then transitions here to the trials that one should seek help with through patience and prayer, revealing a beautiful and captivating flow. Glory be to Him who has rendered His servants incapable with His Book.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, informs His servants of what they will face in this world: {وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ} [And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:155). This state of trial faced by the believer highlights the connection between the verse about seeking help through patience and prayer and this verse, as well as the verse about striving in His cause. The connection lies in the fact that the one who strives in the path of Allah requires patience in the face of trials both during and before the struggle.

In this revelation of trials, there is a profound message for His believing servants, indicating that trials are intentional from Allah, Exalted be He, to help them recognize that whatever may befall them in this world is a means of purification and testing. This makes them realize that this world is a place of trial for what comes after, for no test occurs without a purpose and no result after purification except to elevate the successful to the highest ranks. The believer thus confronts these trials with the knowledge

and understanding that the Almighty, Blessed and Exalted, has explained, so that he may deal with the trials he faces in a manner befitting one who knows his Lord, Blessed and Exalted.

The essence of trials is that they can be in both good and bad, as Allah says in another verse from Surah Al-Anbiya: {وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً} [And We test you with evil and with good as trial.] (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:35). This noble verse clarifies that trials vary in degree and type, whether apparent to others or hidden. Among these types is fear, as Allah says: {إِشْيَاءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ} [With something of fear], meaning it is something of fear, not all of it, so praise be to Allah for that. Fear is what afflicts a person with unease, causing disturbance and anxiety, as happens in wars with terror and fear due to killing, looting, and displacement. Fear can also occur in times of peace from an enemy or from worldly matters, such as the fear of losing something beloved or the arrival of something disliked, or other causes that undermine the sense of security.

This serves as a reminder of the blessing of security, which is the opposite of fear, or which diminishes fear according to its degree, necessitating gratitude and praise to Allah, Exalted be He. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said: "Whoever among you wakes up secure in his property, healthy in his body, and has his food for the day, it is as if the whole world has been gathered for him." (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 4/496, Hadith 2346).

Among the types of trials mentioned in the noble verse is {الجوع} [hunger], which deprives a person of the food needed to satisfy his hunger, whether due to its scarcity, his inability to procure it, a calamity that has affected crops, or the disruption of its transportation, or for any other reason. The previous prophetic hadith refers to this when it says, "has his food for the day." Another type is {وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ} [and a loss of wealth], which weakens the ability to fulfill needs or luxuries. Another type is the loss of lives, as in {وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ} [and a loss of wealth and lives], through the death of a loved one or relative, causing the soul to suffer from this

loss. Another type is the loss of {الثمرات} [fruits], which some interpret as referring to children, as they are the fruits of the heart, and others interpret as the scarcity of vegetation and the cessation of blessings. In either case, it is a trial.

When a believer understands this divine explanation from Allah, he is more accepting of it than others, better equipped to handle it with wisdom, and more at peace compared to those who lack such understanding. Knowledge of this divine guidance instills a sense of tranquility during trials. And how much more so if one follows the guidance of Allah during the trial, leading to an even better state both in this world and the Hereafter. Allah says: {وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ} [And give good tidings to the patient, who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:155-156).

This is a glad tiding from Allah to the Muslim who faces trials (مُصِيبَةٍ) with two things: the first is patience, and the second is saying, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return." Patience is restraining oneself from despair during affliction, and it is the calmness of the heart when facing what has befallen the soul. This glad tiding is not limited, indicating its immense rewards. The phrase "Indeed we belong to Allah" is a refuge and shelter for anyone afflicted by a trial, as it acknowledges that one is the possession of Allah, thereby affirming His Lordship, Divinity, and pure monotheism, recognizing that the servant belongs to Allah, the Owner, without objecting to His decree and destiny. As in the hadith: "Your judgment is just." And the phrase "and indeed to Him we will return" is an acknowledgment of returning to Allah, affirming the resurrection after death, the reward, and the reckoning, and thus affirming Paradise and Hellfire. It is a great support, and Allah has guided His believing servants to this tremendous strength to help them endure every affliction that befalls them.

Allah, Exalted be He, then explains the great reward for those who follow this divine path: {أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ} [Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:157). These patient individuals who seek refuge in Allah during calamities are granted three distinct blessings from Allah:

1. {عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ} [Upon them are blessings from their Lord]: This refers to Allah's forgiveness, blessings, and honor bestowed upon them both in this world and the Hereafter.
2. {وَرَحْمَةٌ} [And mercy]: Mercy here signifies Allah's favor by providing them with what brings ease and repelling what harms them, ultimately leading them to Paradise.
3. {وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ} [And it is those who are the [rightly] guided]: These are the ones who walk in the light of Allah's guidance, achieving happiness and perfection through their belief in trials and their patience in facing them.

This highlights the importance of patience and seeking refuge in Allah during times of calamity, understanding that Allah may test the believer. Trials may serve to elevate the believer's rank, or they may be a means of punishment and forgiveness of sins. Ultimately, everything is in Allah's hands, whether in trial or in ease, and His command and wisdom prevail in all circumstances.

{إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ}

[Indeed, as-Safa and al-Marwah are among the symbols of Allah. So whoever makes Hajj to the House or performs Umrah - there is no blame upon him for walking between them. And whoever volunteers good - then indeed, Allah is Appreciative and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:158)

The context transitions to explaining the ritual of walking between Safa and Marwah to dispel any misunderstanding among Muslims who might have feared this act due to its association with pre-Islamic practices, where idols were worshipped at these locations. Allah, Exalted be He, says: {إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ} [Indeed, as-Safa and al-Marwah are among the symbols of Allah. So whoever makes Hajj to the House or performs Umrah - there is no blame upon him for walking between them. And whoever volunteers good - then indeed, Allah is Appreciative and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:158).

This noble verse addresses and clarifies the ritual of walking between the two hills of Safa and Marwah, which are well-known landmarks. The Quranic context highlights two key points: first, that Safa and Marwah are among the clear symbols of Allah's religion {إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ}, and second, that any fear related to the pre-Islamic practices is unfounded. The verse then establishes the connection between this ritual and the acts of Hajj and Umrah, teaching us an important educational principle: the necessity of removing compounded ignorance before imparting correct knowledge. Compounded ignorance occurs when a person holds an incorrect understanding of something.

After dispelling the remnants of pre-Islamic practices from the minds of some, Allah clarifies that walking between Safa and Marwah is inherently linked to the rituals of Hajj and Umrah: { فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا } [So whoever makes Hajj to the House or performs Umrah - there is no blame upon him for walking between them.] The ruling here emphasizes that there is no sin or blame on the person who performs this ritual, which was previously associated with idolatry during the pre-Islamic era.

For those interested in further details, the books of Tafsir have extensively covered the reasons for revelation related to this verse and others, such as "Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an" by Al-Qurtubi and "Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim" by Ibn Kathir, which can be referred to for additional insights.

The act of walking between Safa and Marwah is one of the obligations of Hajj and Umrah. This highlights the importance of understanding the reasons for revelation to grasp the intended meaning, especially when related to commands and prohibitions that have a specific cause. It also emphasizes that Allah, Exalted be He, has the sole authority to decide and decree for His servants. The deviations introduced by those who follow desires, innovations, and disbelief in religious rituals do not necessitate abandoning those rituals due to the corruption caused by such deviations. Rather, they must be performed as commanded by Allah, the Glorious, so that people may understand the truths of this religion.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, then says regarding those who voluntarily perform Hajj and Umrah: { وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ } [And whoever volunteers good - then indeed, Allah is Appreciative and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:158). This indicates that volunteering for Hajj and Umrah, as well as any other good deed beyond what is obligatory, brings immense benefit to the person. Voluntary acts, which exceed the obligations, hold great value, and the believer will find this reward with Allah, who appreciates the servant's efforts with a magnificent reward. For Allah's gratitude toward His servant manifests in rewarding him for his obedience.

This verse also encourages not to limit oneself to obligatory acts alone but to engage abundantly in voluntary acts of worship, as they bring great benefit to the one who performs them. Allah, the Exalted, beautifully emphasizes this reward: {فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ} [Then indeed, Allah is Appreciative and Knowing]. He knows what you add in obedience, and it will not go unnoticed; rather, you will receive a tremendous reward.

Moreover, this verse teaches that if Allah, the Most Merciful, appreciates the voluntary deeds of His servant, then it is a supreme mark of good character for a servant to express gratitude to others who do him favors that are not obligatory. Reflect on the kindness of Allah towards His servants and how He addresses them with the most gentle words and promises the best rewards. Allah's kindness toward His servants is greater than any kindness people show to one another, even greater than the kindness of a mother to her child, as mentioned in the Hadith.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ
 اللَّعْنُونَ (١٥٩) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُّوا فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (١٦٠) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
 كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ (١٦١) خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ
 الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ (١٦٢) وَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ}

[Indeed, those who conceal what We sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear for the people in the Scripture - those are cursed by Allah and cursed by those who curse, except for those who repent and correct themselves and make evident [what they concealed]. Those - I will accept their repentance, and I am the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful. Indeed, those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers - upon them will be the curse of Allah and of the angels and the people, all together, abiding eternally therein. The punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be reprieved. And your god is one God. There is no deity except Him, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.]

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:159-163)

The noble Quranic context then transitions to further clarify the behaviors and actions of the People of the Book, so that the evidence is established against them, and perhaps they may be guided, and so that Muslims may learn from the experiences of others: {إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّعْنُونَ} [Indeed, those who conceal what We sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear for the people in the Scripture - those are cursed by Allah and cursed by those who curse.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:159).

The scholars of Tafsir explain that although the context refers to the People of the Book, its ruling is general for anyone who conceals what Allah has revealed. Allah, Exalted and Glorified, makes it clear that those who hide what He revealed in the Scripture {مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ} [of clear proofs and guidance], which are the knowledge through which religion is established

and guidance that leads a person to Allah's intended path, these concealers are cursed by Allah, meaning they are banished and distanced from His proximity and mercy. Additionally, they are cursed by the cursers—whether angels, people, or others from Allah's creation—because they hide from the people the clear proofs and guidance that benefit humanity and lead them to worship Allah and obey His commands while avoiding what He has forbidden and rebuked.

Imam Al-Qurtubi mentioned that the term "book" {فِي الْكِتَابِ} in Allah's statement refers to all the scriptures, as it is a general term (Ism Jins) that encompasses all divine books. (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 2/125).

This emphasizes the grave danger of concealing knowledge, especially when people are in need of it, and it becomes even more severe when people ask about it. This necessitates revealing knowledge and making it clear to the people, distinguishing what pleases Allah from what does not, without compromising or concealing any part of it to appease someone, twist the meaning of the text to serve someone's interest, or to gain favor with anyone besides Allah. It also serves as a reminder of the immense responsibility borne by scholars—may Allah aid them—obligating the support of the righteous among them, standing by them in truth, and honoring them for the heavy religious burden they carry.

However, Allah's mercy continues to extend to those who repent from their sins and actions. Allah, Exalted be He, says regarding them: {إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا} [Except for those who repent, correct themselves, and make evident [what they concealed].] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:160). There are three conditions mentioned here:

1. **Repentance:** This involves turning away from what they were doing, which requires stopping the sinful act and resolving not to return to it.

2. **Correction:** They must rectify what they have corrupted. This may require them to publicly acknowledge their mistakes and clarify the truth to people, doing everything within their power to remove the harm they caused and improve their current and future state.
3. **Clear Explanation:** They must provide a clear and unambiguous explanation of the truth.

Allah then promises: {فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ} [Those - I will accept their repentance], indicating that Allah is merciful to His servants, accepting the repentance of the wrongdoer who turns back, ceases to sin, seeks forgiveness, and repents. What greater blessing can there be for a sinner than for Allah to accept his repentance?

This indicates and emphasizes the importance of social acceptance for those who have abandoned their previous deviant behavior, treating them as if they had done nothing wrong. It suggests that their past should not be held against them because Allah has accepted their repentance. This teaches us, in social interactions, to accept those who apologize and not to hold their past against them. It also implies that anyone who has committed a mistake, even if no one else knows about it, should repent to Allah, correct their wrongs, and move on. The noble verse concludes with profound guidance and perfect mercy: {وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ} [And I am the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:160). This statement from Allah highlights that He is the one who constantly accepts repentance and is also merciful. His forgiveness is coupled with mercy, offering additional grace to the repentant. Blessed is Allah, the Most Generous, the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

Allah then describes the state of those who choose disbelief and die as disbelievers: {إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ (١٦١)} [Indeed, those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers - upon them will be the curse of Allah and of the angels and the people, all together, abiding eternally therein. The

punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be reprieved.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:161-162).

In this verse, Allah describes the fate of those who choose disbelief over Islam and die in that state—may Allah protect us from disbelief. The esteemed scholar Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, commented on the verse {أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ} [Upon them will be the curse of Allah and of the angels and the people, all together] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:161) by explaining that since their disbelief became a permanent characteristic, the curse upon them also became a permanent and unchanging reality, as judgments are based on the existence or absence of such conditions (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/123).

Allah further describes their punishment as eternal, with no reduction in their torment and no reprieve. This implies that this world is the place for actions, repentance, and returning to Allah, while the Hereafter is the place for reward and punishment. This serves as a clear warning and reminder from Allah to His servants that the fate of the disbeliever is Hellfire. It also warns them by describing the consequences, leaving no room for anyone to think they might be given respite or another chance on the Day of Judgment. The matter is clear and definitive: {وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ} [Nor will they be reprieved.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:162).

The context then transitions to explain the most essential knowledge a servant must have about their Creator, Blessed and Exalted be He: {وَالْهَكْمُ إِلَهُ} {وُجِدَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ} [And your god is one God. There is no deity except Him, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:163). This great verse outlines the attributes of Allah that every servant must know, believe in, and act upon with the implications of its vast and profound meanings.

Firstly, He is {إِلَهُكُمْ} [your God], the one you direct your worship to, thus excluding all other deities besides Allah. This statement negates the

existence of any other being worthy of worship alongside Allah and affirms His oneness: {إِلَهُهُ وَحْدٌ} [one God]. The phrase {لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ} [There is no deity except Him] contains both negation and affirmation, indicating that no other deity is rightfully worshiped except Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He. It denies the existence of all other gods besides Him and affirms that He alone is the one true God. This underscores the principle that a servant should direct all acts of worship exclusively to Allah, without associating any partners with Him. Consequently, He is the Lord, the Creator, the one in control, and every attribute of Allah necessitates what follows, such as fear, reverence, seeking help, and seeking refuge.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, then states that {الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ} [the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate] are attributes that define our Lord. His mercy encompasses the entire universe. It is out of His mercy that He sent the messengers, revealed the scriptures, and subjected for them what is in the heavens and the earth. His mercy is evident in His acceptance of repentance from His servants. If He were not merciful, He would not accept the repentance of the disbeliever who abandons disbelief, nor the repentance of one who claimed He had a son—exalted is He far above what they claim—and similarly, He would not accept the repentance of His servants for other sins. Praise be to Allah for His mercy, which encompasses everything.

In the statement {لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ} [There is no deity except Him, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate], there is also a negation of any other god who possesses the attributes of mercy and compassion. Everything worshiped besides Allah lacks the qualities that Allah possesses, and none can be described as having the mercy that belongs to the Most Merciful. Consequently, no one other than Him can grant what the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, grants. Furthermore, this verse affirms the oneness of Allah and establishes His names "Ar-Rahman" (the Most Merciful) and "Ar-Rahim" (the Most Compassionate). Thus, this noble verse encompasses the affirmation of the three categories of Tawhid:

Tawhid of Lordship, Tawhid of Divinity, and Tawhid of Allah's Names and Attributes.

{إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ}

[Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of the night and the day, the [great] ships which sail through the sea with that which benefits people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every [kind of] moving creature, and [His] directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth are signs for a people who use reason.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:164).

Allah, Exalted be He, draws the attention of His servants to His magnificent dominion and the wondrous signs within it that indicate His Lordship and Divinity. He is the Creator, Owner, and Controller of everything, directing it with His wisdom. Allah calls upon His servants to reflect and ponder over what surrounds them: the elevated canopy of the sky, with its delicate expanse, and the countless stars and planets scattered across it, beyond the reckoning of any counter. Who crafted this universe with such precision? Is it not the Creator of this universe? Is it not the Lord of all creation?

And this earth, with its density and depth, its towering mountains, its seas and valleys, its fertile lands, and all the benefits within it—who subjected this earth in such a manner, carved its paths, and directed its rivers? Is it not the Owner and Creator of the universe? Then, consider the alternation of the night and the day: one follows the other in precise succession, neither advancing nor delaying even a moment. Sometimes one lengthens while the other shortens, and at other times they exchange durations. Is it not He who is perfect in His creation? Is it not He who subjugates and controls? Is it not Allah, the Best of creators?

Furthermore, Allah directs the senses, intellect, and attention to the seas – how He has subjected them to carry ships, enabling transportation from one place to another, bearing goods and provisions, so that they may exchange the diverse bounties of the Most Merciful. Who connected the seas to each other? Who determined their distances? Who set them at just the right level below the land, so that the water does not overflow and drown the earth? Is it not Allah, the Most Subtle, the Most Merciful?

Allah, Exalted be He, then directs the mind to consider what the servant sees and perceives with their senses, recognizing its benefits and harms, such as the subjugation of clouds between the sky and the earth. The clouds descend with exactly the amount of rain needed by the earth and people, bringing about their good. Then, they gradually disperse, driven by the winds to other places. If the rain exceeded the amount decreed by Allah, it would destroy the people, crops, and livestock. Who has measured this so precisely? Is it not the Creator of the universe by His power?

Allah then gives life to the earth with this water after its death, causing grass to grow and the land to flourish, bringing joy to the people through this blessing. He also created, spread, and scattered creatures across the earth for riding, beauty, and sustenance.

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, further draws attention to the winds, whose effects are seen in the carrying of clouds and their movement from one place to another. The winds also lift the earth's dust, although they remain unseen due to their subtlety; the human only feels them when they blow against their face and skin, sensing their gentleness, or sees what they carry, move, or uproot. One sees the effect of the wind without seeing the wind itself. Allah, the Exalted, directs them as He wills: sometimes bringing mercy, sometimes bringing punishment, sometimes as bearers of good news before the arrival of clouds, sometimes driving the clouds,

sometimes gathering them, sometimes dispersing them, and sometimes changing their direction.

At times, the winds come from the north, known as "Shamiyah," and at other times from the south, known as "Yamaniyah," or from the east, known as "Saba," and at times from the west, known as "Dabur". (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim, 1/207)

So, who has subjected these elements? Who directs them in such precise manners and directions? Is it not the one who manages this universe and its Creator? Is it not the one who is rightfully worshiped? Is it not the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate? Indeed, everything in His creation testifies that He, Blessed and Exalted, is the Creator and the Controller of all things. The noble verse concludes with Allah's statement: { لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ } [Are signs for a people who use reason.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:164). What was mentioned in the noble verse are signs and evidences pointing to Him, Blessed and Exalted, for those who reflect, ponder, and then understand and reason.

This highlights the importance of contemplation on what surrounds a person to attain faith and obedience to Allah, Exalted be He. It also underscores the significance of incorporating reflection and contemplation into educational curricula, lessons, and methods of da'wah (calling to Islam), focusing on the marvels of Allah's creation – the entire universe and all it contains – and the signs and evidences pointing to His oneness, that He alone is the Creator, the Lord, and the Owner of everything.

{وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ (١٦٥) إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ (١٦٦) وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّا كَرَّمْنَا مَن تَبَرَّأُوا مِنَّا كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ}

[And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allah as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allah. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah. And if only they who have wronged would consider [that] when they see the punishment, [they will be certain] that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment. [They will be] when those who have been followed disassociate themselves from those who followed [them], and they [all] see the punishment, and cut off from them are the ties [of relationship]. Those who followed will say, "If only we had another turn [at worldly life] so we could disassociate ourselves from them as they have disassociated themselves from us." Thus will Allah show them their deeds as regrets upon them. And they are never to emerge from the Fire.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:165-167)

After Allah, Exalted be He, clarified in the previous section of these noble verses the signs and clear evidences within His magnificent dominion that indicate His Lordship and Divinity, and that He is the Creator, Owner, and Controller of all things with His wisdom, there are still those among people who disbelieve and associate partners with Him. {وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ } [And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allah as equals [to Him].] Despite witnessing and perceiving the signs of Allah's oneness, Lordship, and Divinity, some people take partners besides Allah. They divert their worship, such as hope, fear, reverence, supplication, and seeking aid, to these partners as if they were equal to Allah. They worship these entities instead of Allah and even love them, equating their love for these false deities with their love for Allah: {يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ} [They love them

as they [should] love Allah.] This indicates a profound error in their thinking, analysis, and reasoning.

This error may stem from blind imitation of others, the upbringing they received, or neglecting the rational faculty that Allah endowed them with—reason that would lead them to recognize Allah, Blessed and Exalted. As a result, they fear these false deities, whether they be trees, stones, shrines, or otherwise, and they begin to love them intensely, equating this love with their love for Allah. This underscores the importance of engaging with and challenging thought processes in educational and da'wah (inviting others to Islam) efforts, using reasoning to highlight the error of those who deviate from the truth.

This implies that every creature is a servant of Allah, Exalted be He. How, then, can a created being make another creature like himself a partner or a deity besides his Creator, who has drawn his attention to the universe and its wondrous signs, all indicating the oneness of Allah? Since every creature has limited willpower, how can one seek to remove harm or bring benefit from another creature with limited will, even if it is a prophet? Allah, Exalted be He, says to His Prophet (ﷺ) in Surah Al-A'raf: { قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ } [Say, "I hold not for myself [the power of] benefit or harm, except what Allah has willed. And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me."] (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:188). If the Prophet (ﷺ) does not hold power over benefit or harm for himself, how can any creature lesser than him hold such power for themselves or others?

Allah, Exalted be He, then distinguishes between the love of these people and the love of the believers for Allah: { وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ } [But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:165). The word "stronger" indicates that believers love nothing more than their love for Allah, and everything else is secondary in their affection. This highlights that love for Allah, love for His law, and love for submitting to Him are

among the most significant signs of faith. Such a person abhors disobeying Allah, dislikes performing incomplete acts of worship, and longs for worship, for whoever loves something longs for it. And whoever loves Allah loves to obey Him and feels ashamed of falling short or sinning, as they are embarrassed to be seen by Allah in a state that is displeasing to Him.

The love of the believers for Allah, Exalted be He, necessitates that they purify Him from any form of shirk (associating partners with Him) and imperfection. They revere Him, rely upon Him, and call upon Him with hope and fear. His love dominates their hearts, so they love nothing more than Him, Exalted be He. They seek help only from Him, turn only to Him for refuge, and worship Him without associating any partners with Him.

Allah's statement {وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ} [But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:165) strengthens the Muslim's will against anything that might weaken it. When faced with two choices, the believer will choose the one that aligns with this verse. When confronted with temptation, they are fortified by the verse {وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ}. If their resolve for worship weakens, they revive it with this verse. If their desires pull them toward what angers Allah, they resist by remembering {وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ}. When tested with trials, they prepare themselves with this verse. If their gaze falters, they shield it with the words of the Most Merciful, {وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ}. And if their thoughts stray, they bring them back to the correct path with {وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ}. Every force of deviation is resisted by the love of Allah, by placing His love above all inclinations, desires, and excesses. The love of Allah becomes like a mountain by which they repel and combat the trials of life.

The All-Knowing, All-Wise then clarifies that shirk (associating partners with Allah) is an injustice: {وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ} [And if only they who have wronged would consider [that] when they see the punishment...] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:165). Allah depicts shirk as a form of oppression, so

the one who commits shirk has wronged themselves by doing so. Shirk is like a deep darkness that blinds the polytheist from the light. If those who wronged themselves by entering the darkness of shirk could see the punishment, they would never have entered it.

This highlights that shirk is both an injustice and a darkness upon its perpetrator, preventing them from the light of Tawhid (monotheism) and worship, which illuminates the heart and brings peace to the soul.

Shirk (associating partners with Allah) makes a person an oppressor who deserves the punishment and retribution that Allah, Exalted be He, mentioned after describing the condition of people in their love for Him. Allah says: {وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ} [And if only they who have wronged would consider [that] when they see the punishment, [they will be certain] that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:165). This is a severe warning and a threat that causes hearts to tremble. When they see the punishment, they will know at that moment that all power belongs to Allah alone. The word {جَمِيعًا} [all] in His statement {أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا} [that all power belongs to Allah] emphasizes that all power is indeed with Allah. Human power is weak because it is incomplete and not all-encompassing. The power of their deities, who are mere humans, is also weak and feeble because it is not all-encompassing. The polytheist might be able to escape or make excuses before their false deities, but they cannot do so before the One to whom all power belongs. They will not be able to escape from this power: {وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا} [And if only they who have wronged would consider [that] when they see the punishment, [they will be certain] that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:165).

After Allah, the Mighty and Powerful, described the states of the polytheist and the believer, comparing their love and highlighting the true nature of love, He then issued a warning as a means of guidance. The warning serves

as a clear choice: either the addressee returns to the right path, or they will face the promised retribution, as stated in { وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ } [And if only they who have wronged would consider [that] when they see the punishment, [they will be certain] that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment.] They will know from this divine warning that a severe punishment, unbearable in its intensity, awaits them if they do not abandon their shirk.

The context then shifts to describe the state of the followers and those they followed: { إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا } [When those who were followed disassociate themselves from those who followed them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:166). The angels will disassociate themselves from those who worshiped them, and the messengers and righteous ones, whose graves were worshiped, will disassociate themselves as well. As Allah says regarding Jesus, son of Mary, in Surah Al-Ma'idah: { وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ } [And [beware the Day] when Allah will say, "O Jesus, Son of Mary, did you say to the people, "Take me and my mother as deities besides Allah?""] He will say, "Exalted are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right." (Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:116).

Those who were worshiped besides Allah did not ask to be taken as gods. This reflects the justice of Allah, Exalted be He, as those who were worshiped without their desire disassociate themselves from their worshipers, thereby establishing the evidence against those who committed this act. { وَرَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ } [And they see the punishment, and cut off from them are the ties (of relationship)] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:166). They will witness the punishment of Allah and find that all excuses, strategies, and means of salvation have been severed from them. They will find no escape from the Fire. Then those who followed, the polytheists, will say: { وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا مِنَّا } [Those who followed will say, "If only we had another turn [at worldly life] so we could disassociate ourselves from them as they have disassociated themselves

from us."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:167). Here, they will wish to return to worldly life to worship Allah alone, having witnessed the punishment. But regret and remorse will be their only companions for their acts of shirk and unjust worship: {كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ} [Thus will Allah show them their deeds as regrets upon them. And they are never to emerge from the Fire.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:167).

The verses conclude by clarifying the ultimate fate of the disbelievers, serving as a warning to every polytheist and a justification for the punishment of Allah upon those who die in disbelief. Undoubtedly, this represents the greatest regret that a disbeliever can experience. This is a profound Quranic admonition from the Lord, and if someone is not admonished by the Quran and its lessons, then what speech will admonish them? We ask Allah, Exalted be He, for protection, guidance, success, and steadfastness in what He loves and is pleased with.

{يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ (١٦٨) إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (١٦٩)}

[O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy. He only orders you to evil and immorality and to say about Allah what you do not know.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:168-169)

Allah, Exalted be He, reminds and clarifies to all people the blessing of what comes forth from the earth by His permission and mercy: {يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا} [O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:168). This part of the noble verse indicates that Allah's provision is for all people, both believers and disbelievers, as evidenced by the address {يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ} [O mankind]. This demonstrates His generosity, Blessed and Exalted be He, and that He is the Provider, who by His mercy, power, and wisdom, made the earth firm and caused it to produce what humanity needs in terms of various foods. The attention is drawn here through the directive to eat from what is on the earth, which corresponds in quantity and quality to human needs. This raises questions that lead to faith.

Who has determined this quantitative and qualitative harmony between human needs and Allah's provision from the earth and what it contains? Who made this barren land bring forth various trees and grasses, differing in shape and size, with diverse leaves and fruits? And who created the variety in taste, with some being sour and others sweet, each with varying degrees of flavor, despite all growing from the same soil and watered by the same water? This calls for human reflection, prompting the question: Who brought this forth and decreed it? There must be a Creator of immense power, wisdom, and mercy who has subjugated these diverse foods for them from a single earth, compelling belief in Him, worshiping Him, and affirming His oneness without partners.

Allah, Exalted be He, described the ruling on eating these provisions as lawful {حَلَالًا} [lawful], which is the opposite of forbidden. A ruling can only be issued by the one who has the right to do so, highlighting that it is the Generous Creator who established and brought forth this provision, granting it to you as lawful {حَلَالًا} and also {طَيِّبًا} [good], meaning wholesome and without harm. This undoubtedly necessitates gratitude for His benevolence and the favor of these blessings. Therefore, we praise Allah, Exalted be He, for these immense and magnificent blessings.

Since it is lawful by default, it must not be consumed through forbidden means, such as theft, usurping someone else's property, or engaging in impermissible transactions. The fact that it is {طَيِّبًا} [good] requires that it be consumed in its original state, not transformed from lawful and good to impure and forbidden. For instance, it must not be turned into an intoxicant, thereby changing it from lawful and good to impure and forbidden, nor should anything harmful be added to it in any way.

After explaining this blessing, Allah, Exalted be He, draws attention to another great blessing, which is the blessing of identifying and warning against the enemy for all people: {وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ} [and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:168). He is a clear and manifest enemy to all people, due to what he commands and embellishes of desires and doubts. He is an enemy to the believer by adorning evil and whispering, such as delaying obedience or procrastinating until the time for it passes. He is also an enemy to the disbeliever by stirring up doubts that prevent them from following the truth and by adorning desires that cause them to immerse in them, thereby distracting them from the truth with their doubts and uncertainties.

Thus, Allah forbids following the footsteps of Satan, which are his ways and methods. The term {خُطُوَاتٍ} [footsteps] indicates that Satan works in successive, gradual steps. Each time a person follows him in one step, he is

drawn into another, further away from his true interests, success, and salvation, leading him to what will harm him. {إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ} [He only orders you to evil and immorality] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:169), meaning that Satan commands you to actions that have evil consequences in both worldly life and the Hereafter, and to immorality, which encompasses all that the Shariah prohibits of sins.

In Allah's statement {إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ}, there is an example of emphasizing the specific (immorality) after the general (evil). This is because {السُّوءِ} [evil] includes everything that harms a person, whereas {الْفَحْشَاءِ} [immorality] refers to the most heinous sins, such as murder, drinking alcohol, fornication, and slander. This method of mentioning the specific after the general serves to clarify, draw attention, and negate any assumption the listener might have that the general may not include the specific. Mentioning the specific indicates care and concern.

Among the gravest of Satan's footsteps is his command and embellishment to speak falsely about Allah, Exalted be He: {وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ} [and to say about Allah what you do not know] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:169). This refers to speaking about Allah without knowledge, indicating that whoever speaks about Allah without knowledge has followed the path of Satan, opposing what Allah, Exalted be He, has forbidden and warned against. This emphasizes the need for caution in speaking about Allah without knowledge, as it leads to distorting, permitting, and innovating in acts of worship and legal rulings, all while being supported by Satan, who adorns evil for such a person. This underscores the grave danger of false scholarship, placing reason above revelation, and engaging in conjecture and boldness against Allah, Exalted be He.

As Allah, Exalted be He, clarified, Satan has vowed to mislead humanity, as mentioned in Surah Al-A'raf: {لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ} [I will sit and wait for them on Your straight path.] (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:16). What greater blessing could there be than the blessing of having our hidden enemy

identified, who, without Allah's explanation, would have remained unknown to us due to his concealed nature? Recognizing Satan's threat is a blessing that necessitates both gratitude and vigilance.

{وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ ءَابَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ (١٧٠) وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ (١٧١)}

[And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has revealed," they say, "Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing." Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided? The example of those who disbelieve is like that of one who shouts at what hears nothing but calls and cries—[they are] deaf, dumb and blind, so they do not understand.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:170-171)

After Allah, Exalted be He, explained the path of Satan and his steps, and warned against them, He then described the condition of the disbelievers who persist in their disbelief even after clear signs and warnings have come to them. Yet, they continue to use the excuse of following their ancestors as justification for their actions. Allah says: {وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ} [And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has revealed," they say, "Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:170). Here, those who make excuses elevate the ways of their ignorant and misguided ancestors above the clear proofs brought by the Prophet (ﷺ). This highlights the danger of following religious practices without knowledge. It also shows that the intellect used for understanding worldly matters (عقل الإدراك [the intellect of perception]) is not sufficient without the intellect of guidance (عقل الرشاد). The intellect used for understanding (عقل الإدراك [the intellect of perception]) distinguishes shapes, colors, and lengths and is common to all people, both Muslims and non-Muslims. However, the intellect of guidance (عقل الرشاد) discerns between good and evil, and truth and falsehood.

If a person disables the intellect of guidance (عقل الرشاد), preventing themselves from seeking and recognizing the truth, they ultimately bring destruction upon themselves, leading to their ruin. This is why we see in

the verse the expression of astonishment and condemnation: { أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ } [Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:170). This rhetorical question emphasizes the irrationality of blindly following ancestors, especially when they lacked understanding and guidance. The path of wisdom is to choose the truth, follow it, and emulate others with knowledge. On the other hand, imitating falsehood is a sign of foolishness and lack of guidance, especially when the truth has become clear and distinguishes itself from falsehood. In such a case, following falsehood is nothing but folly.

Blind imitation and following the ignorant, despite the clarity of truth, deprives a person of goodness in this life and the hereafter. We ask Allah, Exalted be He, for success and righteousness. This is why Allah revealed the Quran, addressing humanity with clear signs and evidences that lead from ignorance to knowledge, from falsehood to truth. Allah, Exalted be He, directs human attention to everything around them so that they may recognize the truth and follow it, even pointing to the growth of the earth and what it produces for their sustenance as a reminder.

The insights provided by this noble verse offer experience and knowledge for those involved in the path of da'wah (inviting others to Islam). It emphasizes the importance of awareness and the proper use of intellect by reflecting and contemplating on every religious and worldly matter, and not being a person who blindly follows others, doing good only when others do good and doing evil when others do evil, as mentioned in the Hadith. Instead, a person should firmly resolve within themselves. What prevented some disbelievers from entering Islam was their imitation of those who preceded them, using their ancestors' practices as an excuse, which hindered them from critical thinking and examination that could have led them to the truth.

Thus, imitation (تقليد [taqlid]) is either based on ignorance or on knowledge and understanding. Blind imitation, rooted in ignorance, leads to the

destruction of the one who imitates, while imitation based on awareness and knowledge in goodness, and following the people of goodness, is praiseworthy – foremost among them being the emulation of the Prophet (ﷺ). Imam Al-Qurtubi (رحمه الله) detailed the scholars' views on imitation, its types, and its rulings, which can be referred to by those seeking further information (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 2/144-142).

Imam Al-Shawkani also elaborated on this topic in his book *Adab al-Talab wa Muntaha al-Arab*. Then, Allah, Exalted be He, presented an analogy for their behavior to further clarify and educate, hoping that they may be guided and that others may take heed, serving as a sign and explanation: {وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ} [The example of those who disbelieve is like that of one who shouts at what hears nothing but calls and cries – [they are] deaf, dumb, and blind, so they do not understand.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:171). This highlights the danger of disabling the tools of learning and understanding. A person may disable their ears from hearing the truth, their tongue from inquiring and speaking the good that benefits them, and close their eyes to the clear signs and indications around them, to what they see from the Prophet (ﷺ) and hear from the Quran.

The example of the disbelievers is like that of livestock to whom the shepherd calls; they have no understanding or knowledge of what the shepherd is saying – they hear the sound but do not grasp its meaning. Similarly, the disbelievers hear the call of truth but disable their ears, tongues, and eyes from it, as if they have heard or seen nothing but a sound, which only serves as proof against them without benefiting them. These individuals do not possess عقل الرشد [the intellect of guidance], though they may have عقل الإدراك [the intellect of perception], which is why they do not use it to discern the truth.

The analogy also accurately reflects the fact that they worship idols that neither hear, see, nor speak; they call upon them and seek from them, but

these idols do not comprehend anything they say. This indicates that the use of analogies is one of the educational methods that allows the teacher or preacher to convey their message with precision, by bringing the intended meaning closer to the mind of the listener. It awakens the intellect and stimulates thought through the contents and implications of the analogy. This underscores the importance of using analogies in education and da'wah (inviting others to Islam).

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ (١٧٢) إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَمَن اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (١٧٣) إِن الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيُسْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١٧٤) أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ (١٧٥) ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ}

[O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship. He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah. But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit], there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. Indeed, those who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book and exchange it for a small price - those consume not into their bellies except the Fire. And Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them. And they will have a painful punishment. Those are the ones who have exchanged guidance for error and forgiveness for punishment. How patient they are in pursuit of the Fire! That is [deserved by them] because Allah has sent down the Book in truth. And indeed, those who differ over the Book are in extreme dissension.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:172-176).

In the previous verse, the address was to all people: {يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ} [O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:168). In this verse, the address is specifically to the believers: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ} [O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:172). In the previous verse, there was a warning to all people against following Satan, who diverts them from their Creator and Provider. In this verse, which is addressed specifically to the believers, the

command is to show gratitude. In the previous verse, there was no command to show gratitude because it was a general address to all people, both believers and non-believers. The non-believer has not done anything that would necessitate a command to show gratitude, so the instruction was in line with their condition, warning them against following their enemy, who commands evil, immorality, and speaking about Allah without knowledge.

In this verse, Allah, Exalted be He, addresses the believers in a manner that draws their attention to the blessing of eating from the good things that He has provided. This order and harmony in the guidance and its implications highlight the precision of the discourse and the miraculous eloquence of the Quran. These indications also emphasize the importance of considering the context in communication. A command, whether in da'wah (inviting others to Islam), education, or administration, should not be given unless the addressee has fulfilled what necessitates that command. It is crucial to consider the prerequisites and prioritize accordingly. For example, when the prayer is established, a disbeliever is not commanded to perform it until they fulfill its requirement, which is the testimony of faith (الشهادتين [the Shahadah]).

This showcases the importance of prioritizing in communication, ensuring that the correct foundation is in place before issuing further commands.

It is understood from the noble verse, by implication, that one should not consume the opposite of the good things, which will be explained in the following verse. This way, the guidance is connected with what follows, serving as a general rule governing the consumption of foods, with further details provided in the subsequent verse. This creates a harmony in the guidance and a beauty in the words, offering educational and instructional value: the principle of gradually providing information – first presenting it in a summarized form as a general rule, and then offering detailed

explanations—allows the mind to grasp the concept fully and then in detail.

The verse centers around affirming that provision (رزق [provision]) is from Allah, Exalted be He, as the provision is attributed to Allah: { مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا } [from the good things which We have provided for you.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:172). Allah then commands His believing servants to express gratitude in general: { وَأَشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ } [and be grateful to Allah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:172). Gratitude (شكر [gratitude]) should be expressed to Allah, who has provided these good foods, and it should be manifested through the heart in belief, through the tongue in speech, and through actions in implementation, such as by using the provision in ways that please Allah, like giving in charity. It also involves avoiding the misuse of these foods in ways that anger Allah, such as through wastefulness or ostentation.

There is also a connection and interdependence between worship and gratitude, as clarified by the noble verse: { وَأَشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ } [and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:172). The verse indicates that gratitude is an act of worship, as it can be understood that if you worship Allah, then you should be grateful to Him for these blessings. Gratitude to Allah is a demonstration and proof that the believing servant worships Allah, Exalted be He, because expressing gratitude to Allah is an acknowledgment that these good things are a provision from Allah, both in their general existence and in their specific allocation to the individual. It is not attributed to one's own effort or cultivation, as Allah says in Surah Al-Waqi'ah: { أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ * أَعَنْتُمْ تَرْزُقُونَهُ أَمْ } [Have you seen that which you sow? Is it you who makes it grow, or are We the grower?] (Surah Al-Waqi'ah, 56:63-64). As will be further explained in its context, this demonstrates that gratitude is a great act of worship that the believer must uphold and fulfill its requirements.

Then Allah, Exalted be He, explains what He has forbidden from the consumption of livestock: { إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ } [It is only forbidden to you the dead animal, blood, and the flesh of the pig, and what is dedicated to other than Allah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:173).

[He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:173). Upon reflection, one finds that the reason for the prohibition is that these items carry harm that is rejected by the pure soul. الميتة [dead animal] is an animal that has died naturally, without the spirit departing through proper slaughter. The noble verse mentions the method of death without specifying the cause, which is a significant benefit, as new causes have emerged that were not known before, such as electrocution. This is one of the miracles of divine guidance in the Quran. This type of forbidden meat retains blood within it because it was not properly slaughtered. However, there are exceptions, such as fish and locusts, as mentioned in the Hadith: "Two types of dead animals are made lawful for us: fish and locusts, and two types of blood: liver and spleen" (Ahmad, Al-Musnad 1/10-16, Hadith No. 5723; Sahih Ibn Majah, Hadith No. 2695).

The term دم [blood] refers to flowing blood, and the flesh of swine is also forbidden due to its impurity. Similarly, anything that has been sacrificed to other than Allah, such as those sacrificed to idols, is prohibited. These prohibitions have been extensively detailed in the books of Islamic jurisprudence, and all praise is due to Allah. However, in His mercy and kindness toward His servants, Allah has permitted the consumption of these forbidden items in cases of necessity to prevent harm due to need. If a person fears death from hunger, they are allowed to eat only as much as needed. This is conditioned by the phrase {غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ} [neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit]], meaning that the person eats from the forbidden only out of necessity, without seeking what Allah has forbidden or exceeding the limit. The only motivation is necessity, which is the fear of death from hunger. Indeed, Allah is {غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} [Forgiving and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:173), forgiving what has occurred and merciful in permitting what He has forbidden in times of necessity. This is from the mercy of Allah, Exalted be He.

One of the benefits of this noble verse is the care that Islamic law takes for human life, both in prohibition and permission. Allah, Exalted be He, has forbidden what harms a person and has permitted what prevents their destruction in cases of necessity. This demonstrates the importance and value of human life in Islam, the care for its preservation, and the prevention of means that could lead to its destruction.

This highlights the importance, in the realm of systems and regulations, of foresight, anticipation, and considering potential outcomes when giving guidance and when drafting general systems and regulations. It serves as definitive evidence that this legislation is divine, from Allah, Exalted be He, as it encompasses what humans cannot foresee in terms of precautions, precision in expression, and guidance – something that neither humans nor jinn could fully comprehend in all its details. It is also noteworthy that despite the few words used, the concepts, implications, and diverse insights are vast, coupled with the profound intellectual and psychological impact of the great Quran.

The Quranic context then returns to describing the condition of the People of the Book. Allah, Exalted be He, says: { إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيُسْتَرُونَ } [بِهِ تَمَنَّا قَلِيلًا] [Indeed, those who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book and exchange it for a small price] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:174). This noble Quranic statement encompasses two actions carried out by the scholars of the People of the Book: concealing and exchanging. Allah, Exalted be He, condemns in this noble verse the actions of the scholars of the People of the Book, who concealed the truth and hid the prophecy and descriptions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that Allah had clarified in their scriptures. They exchanged what they concealed for a small price, whose duration is brief, diminishing and fading with the passage of time and the depletion of the money they were paid. Moreover, this price is insignificant and contemptible compared to the eternal reward of the Hereafter, which neither diminishes nor ends.

This serves as a warning against concealing or distorting the meanings and implications of the Shariah (Islamic law) and its teachings for worldly gains or to curry favor with the powerful and leaders of falsehood by altering the truth to align with their desires, which contradict the will of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

Among the rhetorical benefits is the clear Quranic explanation through two profound words: {يَكْتُمُونَ} [conceal] and {يَسْتَرْوْنَ} [exchange]. These words convey the depth of the soul's evil, its malevolence, and the disregard for Allah's commands, as well as the audacity towards Allah, Exalted be He, along with envy and deliberate opposition to Allah's will. This indicates that some souls may harbor immense malice and audacity. Another benefit is the clarity provided by the process of substitution and replacement implied by the word {يَسْتَرْوْنَ} [exchange], which illustrates to the listener the depth of the loss perceived and felt in the act of buying and selling. This has a significant impact on understanding the intended meaning and the depth of the loss in the Hereafter that they willingly inflict upon themselves, along with the haste in pursuing a fleeting gain. This serves as a warning against following the path of those who committed such acts, encouraging the audience to learn from others' mistakes through what they have heard and learned.

Allah, Exalted in His majesty, then explains their recompense: {أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ} [Those are the ones who consume nothing in their bellies except the Fire. And Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them. And they will have a painful punishment.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:174). Their consumption of those earnings in this world will be like consuming fire in their bellies on the Day of Resurrection, which serves as a warning against Allah's severe punishment. The second punishment is that they will be deprived of Allah's speech: {وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ} [And Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection], meaning they will not find Allah's pleasure with them, but rather His anger. What greater punishment on the

Day of Resurrection than for a person to be deprived of Allah's pleasure and His speech? The third punishment is: {وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ} [nor will He purify them], meaning He will not cleanse them of their sins due to His wrath and displeasure with them. The fourth punishment is: {وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ} [And they will have a painful punishment]. The word {أَلِيمٌ} [painful] indicates the severity of the punishment.

The description of these people is that they are those who {اشْتَرَوْا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَى} [exchanged guidance for misguidance]. They have traded away clear guidance for manifest misguidance, and in doing so, they have paid a price, indicating their awareness of what they are doing. This exposes the true condition of the scholars of the People of the Book, and from another perspective, it serves as a warning against worldly greed that may lead a person to sell their Hereafter for the sake of their worldly life. This necessitates vigilance against heedlessness, from which may Allah protect us and all Muslims. As a result, it is as if they have {اشْتَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ} [purchased torment] and paid the price, selling Allah's forgiveness, which leads to Paradise, for a trivial portion of this world: {أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَالْعَذَابَ} [Those are the ones who have exchanged guidance for error and forgiveness for punishment. How patient they are in pursuit of the Fire!] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:175).

This indicates that a person's standards and measurements can become intellectually distorted, leading them to stray practically as well, especially when it comes to weighing worldly benefits against those of the Hereafter, preferring the transient and fleeting over the eternal and lasting. This necessitates deep reflection on one's actions, self-accountability, and returning to the truth. O Allah, we ask You for guidance and success.

Allah, Exalted be He, then clarifies that He revealed this Quran with truth and clear proof, stating: {ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ} [That is because Allah has sent down the Book in truth] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:176). This implies that it is necessary and obligatory not to deviate from its intended purpose,

for it is a book of truth with no crookedness. The context then shifts to the differences among the People of the Book – the Jews and the Christians – as a lesson and guidance for the believers. Allah, Exalted be He, says: { وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ { اُخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ } [And indeed, those who differ over the Book are in extreme dissension] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:176). The People of the Book – Jews and Christians – are in dissension and conflict due to their differences over the Book. Their disagreement led them to this schism.

This highlights the danger of disagreement, as the truth should not be a subject of dispute among its adherents. However, the intrusion of personal desires creates reasons for disagreement over the truth, through corrupt interpretation, limited understanding, and destructive desires, diverting parts of it from the intended meaning of Allah, Exalted be He, to what desires dictate. This illustrates that desires must be subjected to the truth, not the truth to desires. Those who subject the truth to their desires go astray and end up in conflict with others. This also indicates that the truth unites and gathers the ummah (community), while those who oppose the truth will find themselves in conflict with both the truth and its followers.

This underscores the importance of focusing on the da'wah (invitation to Islam) that leads to the truth and following it based on evidence.

{لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَءَاتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ}

[Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, and the Prophets, and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; and [who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; those who fulfill their promise when they promise; and those who are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:177)

The noble verse begins by invalidating the limited understanding of righteousness (البر [righteousness]), which some might perceive as merely turning towards the Qiblah (قِبْلَةً [direction]) for prayer. This was done to remove ignorance from the mind regarding this concept, allowing it to focus on understanding the true nature of righteousness and to sharpen the attention towards this truth: {لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ} [Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:177). It is as if the listener is prompted to ask, "Then what is righteousness?"

The answer follows: {وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَءَاتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ ۗ} [But righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, and the Prophets, and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; and [who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; those who fulfill their promise when they promise; and those who are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:177).

Righteousness, therefore, encompasses faith, worship, morals, and the striving of the soul to obey Allah, Exalted be He, while also considering the rights of others that Allah has mandated. The content of the verse provides both knowledge and legislation within a single verse, encompassing what achieves the happiness of the individual and society.

Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "البر" [righteousness] is a comprehensive term for all that is good (Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/160).

It encompasses everything that Allah, Exalted be He, loves and is pleased with. Our scholars have said that this is a significant verse among the foundational verses of rulings, as it includes sixteen fundamental principles: belief in Allah, His names and attributes, resurrection, the gathering, the scales, the path (الصراط [As-Sirat]), the basin (الحوض [Al-Hawd]), intercession (الشفاعة [Ash-Shafa'ah]), Paradise (الجنة [Jannah]), Hell (النار [Jahannam]), the angels, the revealed books, that they are indeed truth from Allah, belief in the prophets, spending wealth, preserving prayer, giving zakah, fulfilling covenants, and being patient in adversity (Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/162).

This noble and magnificent verse illustrates the comprehensive nature of righteousness (البر [Al-Birr]), showing that it is not limited to facing the Qiblah (قِبْلَة [Qiblah]) during prayer, but is broader and more encompassing. It involves the engagement of the heart and limbs in beliefs and fulfilling the duties prescribed by Allah, Exalted be He.

The verse mentions the pillars of faith (أركان الإيمان [Arkan Al-Iman]): belief in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, which refers to the scriptures, and the prophets. Imam As-Suyuti, in Tafsir Al-Jalalayn (Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, 27), and Ibn Kathir said: "The Book" (الكتاب [Al-Kitab]) is a generic term that includes all the revealed books from the heavens to the prophets, culminating in the most noble of them, the Quran, which is the guardian

over what came before it from the scriptures (Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Azim, 1/213).

As for the sixth pillar, (القضاء والقدر) [Divine Decree and Predestination], it is not explicitly mentioned, but Allah alluded to it in the verse by saying: {وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ} [those who are patient in poverty and hardship] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:177). This patience is related to (القضاء والقدر) [Divine Decree and Predestination], and Allah knows best.

The noble verse also addresses the aspect of social solidarity by encouraging the well-off to give from their wealth, which they have worked hard to earn and have grown attached to. Allah, Exalted be He, did not strip them of this attachment to wealth or demand asceticism from them. Instead, He addressed this attachment by encouraging them to overcome it through the love of what Allah loves. He says: {وَأَتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبٍ} [and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:177), thus encouraging them to prioritize what Allah loves over their strong attachment to wealth.

One of the benefits of this divine method in nurturing is not to make the learner disinterested in something that is a reality or to confuse them with something that contradicts reality in order to drive them towards another good or to leave one matter for something better. Rather, the truth is affirmed in line with natural disposition and reason, so that the mind aligns with the guidance and instruction. Then, the reality of what you want to achieve through command or prohibition, or the preference of one thing over another, is clarified.

The noble verse also includes a diversification in the principle of spending, not limiting it to close relatives, but extending its benefits to others. This promotes mutual support and solidarity throughout society, allowing cooperation and support to reach those in need from all segments of the community. This command comes from Allah, Exalted be He, who gives and commands, who has made others dependent on you, and who has

inspired and provided for you, commanding you to be kind to them, to care for them, and to seek them out.

At the same time, the One who has impoverished and made needy is the One who commanded others, who are well-off, to seek out and give to them, as a favor from Allah, Exalted be He, not as an act of generosity from the giver. This directive does not pertain to zakah (الزكاة [obligatory charity]), but rather it is beyond it, as there is a right in wealth beyond zakah. Allah, Exalted be He, specifically mentioned zakah by its name in this verse. This has been clarified by scholars such as Al-Qurtubi (Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/162).

This diversification in the principle of the deserving also includes a gradual prioritization in the order of giving: beginning with close relatives (ذوي القربى [those of kin]), as they have a more pressing right over others; then the orphan (اليتيم [Al-Yatim]), who does not know how to earn or access wealth due to their young age and weakness; then the needy (المسكين [Al-Miskeen]), who may understand how to access wealth but is incapable of doing so. Thus, the orphan is given precedence over the needy. Then comes the traveler (ابن السبيل [Ibn Al-Sabeel]), who has been cut off from resources, being a stranger or traveler. Next are those who ask (السائلين [those who ask]), extending their hands to request what they need, and finally, what relates to freeing slaves (في الرقاب [freeing slaves]).

If a person were to reflect on the gradual ordering of these categories according to their levels of incapacity and ability, they would be astounded by the magnificent arrangement from Allah, the Almighty, the Wise, and the All-Knowing.

The noble verse also mentions acts of worship: prayer (الصلاة [As-Salah]) and zakah (الزكاة [Az-Zakah]). Prayer is an act of worship between the servant and their Lord, while zakah is an act of worship between the servant and their society. The verse alludes to these two aspects of worship, considering that they represent the broader objectives of religion.

Just as fasting (الصيام [As-Sawm]) and pilgrimage (الحج [Al-Hajj]) are acts of worship between the servant and their Lord, zakah is an act of worship whose foundation and core are the interactions and giving between members of society, representing what is similar, such as charity (الصدقة [As-Sadaqah]) and expiations (الكفارات [Al-Kaffarat]).

The noble verse also includes a set of noble morals that ensure the cohesion of society and remove the motives of human evil, such as the fulfillment of covenants (الوفاء بالعهود [fulfilling covenants]), which are a security and guarantee between the parties involved in agreements. The violation and betrayal of these covenants lead to enmity and hatred, whether at the level of individuals, communities, or nations. Upholding and fulfilling these covenants ensures a great social security.

The noble verse then mentions patience (الصبر [As-Sabr]) in three of the most challenging situations. If a person can embody patience in any one of these, by Allah's grace, they will likely be able to embody it in other situations as well. These situations are: {الْبَأْسَاءِ} [extreme poverty], {وَالضَّرَّاءِ} [illness], and {جِنِّ الْبَأْسِ} [the intensity of battle in the cause of Allah, Exalted be He]. Each of these scenarios is a severe trial in its own right, and whoever is mindful of Allah's watchfulness over them will be able to adorn themselves with these qualities. This is because their hope in Allah is immense—that He will replace their poverty with good fortune, their illness with health and reward, and their perseverance in the face of the enemy with victory or martyrdom, granting them eternal, blissful life.

This illustrates Allah's guidance that a person may be tested with any of these trials. If they are afflicted with any of them, they should recognize the outcome of this matter, as Allah, Exalted be He, concludes this magnificent and noble verse by saying: {أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ} [Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:177). So, O Allah, make us among the truthful and the righteous by Your mercy, O Lord of the worlds, O Most Merciful of the merciful.

The truthful and the righteous are the best of creation, having been adorned with the best of virtues, thus deserving the highest praise. Allah, Exalted be He, has mentioned in many noble verses of His Book the rewards and recompense He has prepared for the righteous (المتقين [Al-Muttaqeen]).

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنثَى بِالْأُنثَى ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۚ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١٧٨) وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (١٧٩)}

[O you who have believed, prescribed for you is legal retribution for those murdered - the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. But whoever overlooks from his brother anything, then there should be a suitable follow-up and payment to him with good conduct. This is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy. But whoever transgresses after that will have a painful punishment. And there is for you in legal retribution [saving of] life, O you [people] of understanding, that you may become righteous.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 178-179)

As the Quranic context transitions from explaining the essence of righteousness to establishing principles that ensure a secure and stable life for people, allowing them to live a dignified and peaceful life and fulfill their obligations in this world and the hereafter, Allah, the Exalted, says: { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى } [O you who have believed, prescribed for you is legal retribution for those murdered] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 178). The verse begins with an address, specifically directed to the believers, as they are the ones responsible for implementing the laws of this great religion. The word (كُتِبَ) [prescribed] indicates that this ruling has been made obligatory and firmly established for you, requiring you to implement it with justice and equality for those who commit murder. This phrasing implies a binding obligation to uphold this ruling and to ensure justice among the people in cases of murder. It further suggests that all parties must protect what Allah has ordained, avoiding favoritism and concealing the truth. The ruler is obligated to enforce this command, and the subjects must comply. Even the family of the murderer must allow the ruler to execute what Allah has prescribed. No one should protect a murderer by concealing him, for this would hinder the execution of Allah's decree upon the one whom Allah has prescribed retribution.

Allah then provides further clarification by stating: { الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنْثَىٰ بِالْأُنْثَىٰ } [the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 178). Imam Al-Qurtubi explained that a group of scholars understood this verse as specifying the ruling for each category when one of their own is killed, thus clarifying the ruling for a free person when they kill another free person, a slave when they kill another slave, and a female when they kill another female (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an 2/165).

The scholars of Tafsir mentioned that this verse was revealed due to the presence of individuals who were unfair in seeking retribution. For instance, if a slave was killed, they would demand that a free person be killed in return, out of stubbornness and injustice (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/215; Ibn al-Jawzi, Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm at-Tafsir, 1/163). This indicates that the Quran, in its revelation, addressed prevailing issues and realities that would extend beyond its time, thus organizing the lives of Muslims for their future through divine legislation.

It also highlights the importance of understanding the reasons behind the revelation (Asbab al-Nuzul) to grasp the intended meaning of Allah's words, as well as the significance of knowing the abrogating and abrogated verses (Nasikh and Mansukh) and the necessity of correlating related verses. This approach is crucial to understanding Allah's intent because, as mentioned in Surah Al-Ma'idah, Allah says, { وَكُنَّا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنْ نَفْسٌ بِالنَّفْسِ } [And We decreed upon them therein that the life for the life] (Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:45). A grave mistake is made when an individual isolates a verse without connecting it to others or to what clarifies it through the blessed Sunnah.

This all demonstrates that Islam has expanded the minds and elevated the thinking, which is why the scholars of Sharia are among the most intelligent and insightful people. This is also why the scholars in the books of Tafsir and Fiqh preferred to explore legal rulings from all aspects, even

concerning someone who killed a non-Muslim under protection (Dhimmi) or stole their property. This indicates that this Shariah enlightened people's lives through its prescribed limits and illuminated the scholars' minds by delving deeply into the details of the rulings and examining the meanings of the evidences, connecting them within the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), ultimately making Islamic jurisprudence a distinguished and highly esteemed school of thought. It has also enriched the Muslims, sparing them the need to innovate laws that people do not agree upon. So, all praise and thanks be to Allah.

The verse then highlights the aspect of forgiveness, which is one of the objectives of Sharia among Muslims: {فَمَنْ عَفَىٰ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ} [But whoever overlooks from his brother anything] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178). Here, the bond of brotherhood is affirmed even in the case of murder, as Allah refers to the relationship as "brotherhood" despite the severity of the situation. This emphasizes that what has transpired does not negate the brotherhood of Islam. Therefore, if someone forgives the killer and accepts blood money or pardons without any compensation, they must deal with the situation with kindness and good conduct: {فَاتَّبَاعُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ} [then there should be a suitable follow-up and payment to him with good conduct] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178). The relative of the murdered person should follow up with the killer with kindness, without imposing hardship, and should not demand beyond what the killer can bear. Instead, they should act with benevolence in the process of seeking justice, not pressuring the killer beyond his capacity if blood money is requested. Conversely, the killer is obligated to fulfill his responsibility, but this should be done with excellence: {وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ} [and payment to him with good conduct] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178), without delay or any verbal or physical harm. This is a noble and great directive from a merciful and generous Lord, encouraging forgiveness through exhortation and subtle suggestion, and then laying out the etiquette of dealing between the two parties, centering the relationship

on brotherhood: {فَمَنْ غُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ} [But whoever overlooks from his brother anything] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178).

Allah then emphasizes His mercy in this ruling by saying: {ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ} [This is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178). The fact that Allah has prescribed retribution but also provided the opportunity for forgiveness is a manifestation of Allah's leniency towards you and His mercy upon you. Thus, it is incumbent upon us to be grateful and to praise Allah for this Shariah with its profound rulings that encompass both apparent and hidden mercy, in what Allah commands and decrees, and in what He forbids and prohibits. This serves as a testament to Allah's mercy, showing that He did not intend hardship for His servants in this religion.

Allah then clarifies what may occur after the implementation of retribution, the payment of blood money, or complete forgiveness between the two parties involved. He immediately sets forth the consequence for any further transgression: {فَمَنْ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ} [But whoever transgresses after that will have a painful punishment] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178). This warning serves to prevent any escalation or continuation of enmity between the parties, effectively cutting off the potential for further wrongdoing with a severe threat: {فَمَنْ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ} [But whoever transgresses after that will have a painful punishment] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178). This highlights the precision and foresight of Sharia, as it addresses not only the immediate issue but also any possible future harm that could arise from human actions. Sharia is a law revealed by the All-Knowing, the Wise, designed to address all potential outcomes in matters that deeply affect the human soul, effectively eliminating the root of evil among people.

Allah then emphasizes the blessing of this divine ruling on retribution: {وَلَكُمْ} [And there is for you in legal retribution] {فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} [saving of] life, O you [people] of understanding, that you may become

righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:179). In this retribution, whether through the implementation of the prescribed punishment on the murderer, acceptance of blood money, or forgiveness, lies the preservation of life. The preservation of life among people is achieved by enforcing this ruling, as it deters individuals from following their whims, arrogance, and excessive behavior. The fear of retribution stirs the human heart, knowing that their fate could be the same if they commit murder. Therefore, anyone with a rightful claim against their brother should seek justice through legal means, not by taking matters into their own hands through murder. Herein lies the significance of the ruler's presence, the existence of the state, and the extension of its authority and power to ensure the implementation of Allah's Sharia. It also underscores the importance of supporting the ruler in upholding Allah's law.

The verse concludes with Allah's words: {الْعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} [that you may become righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:179). By implementing Allah's Sharia, taqwa (piety) is achieved, leading to the prevention of murder. Following Allah's commands brings about the fear of Allah, and in fearing Allah lies the avoidance of the sin of murder. Through taqwa, all of this is realized, and when it is realized, it becomes evidence of true piety.

{كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ (١٨٠) فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (١٨١) فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُوصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٨٢)}

[Prescribed for you when death approaches [any] one of you if he leaves wealth [is that he should make] a bequest for the parents and near relatives according to what is acceptable - a duty upon the righteous. Then whoever alters it after he has heard it - the sin is only upon those who have altered it. Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing. But if one fears from the bequeather [some] error or sin and corrects that which is between them, there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 180-182)

The Quranic context then shifts to instruct Muslims on the importance of making a will when there are signs of impending death. Allah says: {كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةُ} [Prescribed for you when death approaches [any] one of you if he leaves wealth is that he should make a bequest] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:180). The term {كُتِبَ} [prescribed] indicates that it has been made obligatory upon you, O believers, to make a will when the signs and causes of death become apparent, such as an illness from which recovery is not expected, or calamities like murder or similar situations. Those whom Allah has blessed with abundant wealth, which is referred to as {خَيْرًا} [wealth], are instructed by Allah to make a bequest for their parents and near relatives according to what is acceptable: {الْوَصِيَّةُ} [a bequest for the parents and near relatives according to what is acceptable - a duty upon the righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:180).

If a person leaves behind significant wealth, they are obligated to include their parents and relatives in their will, ensuring that the relatives are prioritized according to their needs and financial situation. This act of making a will is one of the obligations of piety, and it is a sign of the testator's righteousness. Scholars have elaborated on this, discussing

whether the will applies to one-third of the wealth and whether the one-third applies to significant wealth rather than smaller amounts. There is also debate on whether this applies to parents who do not inherit. Those interested in the detailed legal rulings can refer to Tafsir literature and Fiqh books related to inheritance.

This verse reflects Allah's care for human beings, their wealth, and their relatives, ensuring preservation, distribution, and harmony among them. It also demonstrates the precision of divine instructions, which encompass knowledge, thought, vision, and purpose, and simultaneously instills love for Allah in the hearts of believers. This leads one to recognize that such legislation could only come from our Lord, the Blessed and Exalted. Every aspect of it is miraculous in its precision, clarity, and rulings, for which we praise and thank Allah.

Allah then addresses the situation of those who witness the will and are aware of its contents, whether they are witnesses or heirs, and then alter it from what the testator had stipulated: { فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ { [Then whoever alters it after he has heard it - the sin is only upon those who have altered it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:181). The reward for the testator remains with Allah for what they have stipulated in their will, but the sin falls upon those who, after hearing it, change and alter it. Allah says: { إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ } [Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:181). Allah has heard the will of the testator and knows that you have heard and understood it. He also knows what happened after the will – whether it was implemented or altered. Since Allah's hearing and knowledge encompass you, you should act as a believer who is certain that Allah is Hearing and Knowing. This certainty should instill in you a fear of the One who has full knowledge and power, leading you to act in accordance with this divine guidance, which is both eloquent and impactful on the listener who understands its meaning.

Given that the testator may act unjustly or unfairly, either by showing favoritism to one of the heirs or by employing some trick or for any reason and in any form of harm, Allah, the Exalted, has provided a noble and great directive that serves the best interest of all involved: {فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُوصٍ { جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ [But if one fears from the bequeather [some] error or sin and corrects that which is between them, there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:182).

This verse reflects Allah's care for His servants. Since people might make unintentional mistakes or intentional errors, Allah addresses this by saying: {فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُوصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا} [But if one fears from the bequeather [some] error or sin] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:182). "جنف" (genef) refers to a deviation from what is right and just without intent, while "إثم" (ithm) indicates a deliberate departure from the truth. In either case, the testator needs advice from those who are present at the time of the will to correct the will and to rectify the situation for both the testator and the beneficiaries.

It is the duty of those present at the time of the will to provide this advice, and there is no sin upon them for doing so: {فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ} [there is no sin upon him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:182). This divine directive from the Lord of the worlds removes any hesitation or concern that might arise in the heart of someone present at the will, thinking that it is the testator's matter alone and that they do not need to intervene to prevent injustice in the will. The Shariah has removed all potential concerns, which is a testament to its precision. It addresses even the subtleties that might go unnoticed initially. How could it not be so when it is from the All-Knowing, the All-Aware?

Sheikh Ibn Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned regarding this verse that those present at the time of the will must advise with kindness and justice and discourage any form of injustice. If the testator persists in their unjust actions and does not heed the advice given, it is incumbent upon those present to rectify the situation among the beneficiaries,

ensuring justice through mutual agreement and reconciliation, and reminding them to clear the conscience of their deceased. In doing so, they have performed a great good deed and are not liable in the same way as those who alter an unjust will. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/142-143)

Allah concludes the verse by saying: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} [Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:182). This divine forgiveness is extended to those who err unintentionally. One can also derive from this that human beings are prone to mistakes, and sometimes, even when turning away from this world and approaching the Hereafter, they may act deliberately in error. Emotional effects such as love, affection, or hatred and animosity can linger within a person even until their final moments, making it essential for one to be vigilant of these psychological states and strive to overcome them.

It is crucial that a person prioritizes what is with Allah in every situation and ensures that neither their love nor their hatred leads them to excessiveness or injustice.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (183) أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۚ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ ۗ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (184) شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُم وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ}

[O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous - [Fasting for] a limited number of days. So whoever among you is ill or on a journey [during them] - then an equal number of days [are to be made up]. And upon those who are able [to fast, but with hardship] - a ransom [as substitute] of feeding a poor person [each day]. And whoever volunteers excess - it is better for him. But to fast is best for you, if you only knew. The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you, and perhaps you will be grateful.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 183-185).

Allah, the Exalted, explains the ruling of the obligation of fasting in His statement: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} [O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:183). The verse begins by addressing the believers in a call that signifies the importance of what is being called for. This address from Allah to the Muslims is tied to the distinct characteristic of faith {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [O you who have believed], which is a noble rank, as if to say, "O you who have believed in what has been revealed to you."

It is indeed a great honor that our Lord, the Exalted, calls His servants with the title of faith. After this call, the verse clarifies what has been prescribed,

obligated, and established upon them – fasting. The same wording is used in the verses regarding retribution and the will: {كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ} [Prescribed for you is legal retribution] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:178) and {كُتِبَ} [Prescribed for you when death approaches [any] one of you if he leaves wealth is that he should make a bequest] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:180). Similarly, in the verse regarding the obligation of fasting: {كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ} [Decreed upon you is fasting], meaning it has been prescribed and firmly established upon you. This command was given in the second year of the noble Hijrah, indicating the significance of what Allah has commanded and instructed. The word {كُتِبَ} [prescribed] signifies an obligatory command, one that is firmly established.

Allah also informs that the obligation of fasting was also prescribed upon those before you: {كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ} [Decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:183). This information serves to encourage the Muslim to emulate those who preceded him in fulfilling this obligation. It also indicates that this is not a command exclusive to this Ummah, but rather, fasting is a devotional obligation upon you as well as those before you. This removes any notion that it is a punishment, and dispels any feelings of burden or difficulty associated with fasting. Instead, fasting increases and strengthens piety, and raises one to lofty ranks: {الْعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} [that you may become righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:183). This is from the grace of Allah upon His servants, as He clarifies to them His divine wisdom in this obligation and the immense benefit it brings, which is the attainment of piety. This indicates that fasting cultivates piety within the believer.

This divine wisdom is a mercy from Allah, for the fasting person abstains from food and drink for the sake of Allah, and Allah rewards him with increased piety through this great act of worship. There is no doubt that fasting is a shield and protection against the pathways of the accursed

devil. It offers numerous psychological, moral, and health benefits, along with immense reward, as evidenced by many prophetic Hadiths.

Allah, the Exalted, in His mercy, eases the burden on the souls by specifying the duration of fasting in a way that indicates its brevity: { أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ } [a limited number of days] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:184). This phrase emphasizes that the days are not many, but rather few and counted, reflecting the mercy of the Most Gentle, Most Merciful in prescribing the obligation of fasting to His believing servants. This highlights the importance of mercy, gentleness, and kindness when guiding others, whether in education, preaching, or advising, and also in all aspects of life, such as in the workplace, in cooperation among members of society, and in every situation unless the circumstances necessitate otherwise due to a reason that requires firmness.

Allah's mercy continues by removing the burden from those who are ill or traveling: { فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ } [So whoever among you is ill or on a journey [during them] - then an equal number of days [are to be made up]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:184). This reflects the precision of obligatory acts of worship in Islam, considering what might prevent fulfilling the obligation and thereby lifting the burden. This meticulous consideration leaves no room for doubt that such precision could only come from Allah, the All-Wise, All-Knowing, Most Merciful.

The verse also addresses another category of fasting individuals: { وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ } { يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ } [And upon those who are able [to fast, but with hardship] - a ransom [as substitute] of feeding a poor person [each day]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:184). These are those who can fast but find it difficult due to some reason. They are permitted to break their fast and feed a poor person for each day missed. This ruling applied at the beginning of the obligation of fasting but was later abrogated, as will be explained by the will of Allah. However, Allah emphasized the superiority of fasting over breaking it, encouraging people to fast rather than choose to break it and

feed others: {فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ} [And whoever volunteers excess - it is better for him. But to fast is best for you, if you only knew] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:184).

The statement {فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ} [And whoever volunteers excess - it is better for him] implies that if someone feeds more than one poor person for each day, it is better for him. However, fasting is better than feeding, as mentioned by Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Tawus, Muqatil, and others from the early generations (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/220).

This reflects the consideration that Shariah gives to human nature in its guidance, taking a gradual approach while encouraging and motivating toward what is better and more complete. This indicates the importance of taking into account people's conditions when providing guidance in educational, professional, and other aspects, recognizing the differences in people's abilities and making provisions accordingly. It also emphasizes that those with lesser abilities should not be neglected; rather, they should be given care and provided with what suits their capabilities, while being motivated and encouraged to strive for improvement and excellence.

If such care and consideration are shown by Allah in matters of worship, treating His servants with gentleness, encouragement, and motivation toward perfection, then it is even more imperative that such considerations be applied among people in their interactions with one another.

In Allah's statement {وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ} [But to fast is best for you, if you only knew] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:184), attention is drawn to the knowledge possessed by the believers regarding the permission given to those who can fast but find it difficult. They are instructed to feed a poor person or more as required, while being encouraged to fast because it is ultimately better and more beneficial. The verse places knowledge as the foundation for choosing the better option after understanding the preference: {إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ} [if you only knew], indicating a choice with

encouragement and motivation toward the more complete option. This is a remarkably creative method of guidance.

We praise Allah for teaching us through His legislation in ways that we can apply to our lives by analogy. Here lies the role of the Muslim in benefiting from the divine methods of guidance found in the Quran, whether in the fields of preaching, education, family life, professional conduct, social interactions, or management. These methods can be applied to various aspects of life, reflecting the wisdom and comprehensiveness of the divine guidance that encompasses every facet of human existence.

The completion of the verse regarding the obligation of fasting is beautifully framed with praise, as it begins with commendation and exaltation of the month of Ramadan: { شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ } [The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185). This highlights to the believer the exalted status and significance of this month in the sight of Allah, which necessitates the believer's care and recognition of its importance. This also serves to encourage the believers to accept the forthcoming abrogation of the initial permission to break the fast for those other than travelers and the sick.

From this noble Quranic context, Muslims learn the method of emphasizing the importance and virtue of something by beginning with it, making it a motivator for adopting it, understanding its significance, and engaging with it with conviction. The verse also highlights the virtue and status of the Quran, as it was the means through which the month of Ramadan was praised. This implies that the Quran was revealed to the lowest heaven in the month of Ramadan, specifically on the Night of Decree, as Allah says: { إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ } [Indeed, We sent the Qur'an down during the Night of Decree] (Surah Al-Qadr, 97:1). Thereafter, it was revealed in parts according to the incidents to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ),

as narrated by Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him). (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/222)

Allah, the Exalted, also praises the Quran in this verse by describing it as a source of guidance: {شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ} [The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185). The Quran serves as guidance for all of humanity – both for the disbeliever and the believer. For the disbeliever, it provides the signs and evidence that guide them to the religion of Allah, illuminating the path to faith. For the believer, it clarifies what Allah desires from them, outlining His commands and prohibitions. The Quran reveals what Allah loves and what He detests, offering clear instructions on what to do and what to avoid.

Additionally, Allah praises the Quran for its clear evidences: {وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ} [clear proofs of guidance and criterion] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185). The Quran contains unmistakable signs and arguments that, when reflected upon, guide one to the truth. These evidences confirm the correctness of the guidance it brings, distinguishing truth from falsehood and righteousness from error, separating what is lawful from what is forbidden (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/222).

This indicates that whoever seeks guidance should turn to the Quran. If one desires to learn, to understand the arguments and proofs, they should delve into the Quran. If one wishes to convey the truth to others, the Quran is the tool to do so. For those seeking knowledge and its foundations, the Quran is the primary source. Those who wish to learn jurisprudence and monotheism should study the Quran. Anyone wanting to discern the differences between truth and falsehood should turn to the Quran. It is the light and goodness that illuminates the path to Allah's will. This also highlights the special connection between the month of Ramadan and the

revelation of the Quran, underscoring the virtue of reading the Quran during this blessed month.

After highlighting the significance of Ramadan and the revelation of the Quran within it, Allah says: {فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ} [So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185). This command is directed to those who witness the beginning of the month, instructing them to fast, thereby abrogating the previous allowance for those who were healthy and residing to either fast or feed a poor person for each day missed, as mentioned in the earlier verse (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/222).

Allah then exempts travelers and the sick, stating: {وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ} [And whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of days [are to be made up]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185). This reflects His generosity and kindness, as explained earlier. The repetition of this exemption emphasizes its continuity after the abrogation, ensuring that it is not mistakenly assumed to be nullified along with the option for those who can fast but with difficulty. As previously clarified, the ill and travelers have the option to defer their fasts.

Allah further explains the reason for exempting the sick and travelers from fasting and allowing them to make it up later: {إِيرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ} [Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185). This demonstrates His mercy and care, enabling the sick and travelers to postpone their fasting. It highlights that Allah does not intend for this noble obligation—or any other command—to be a source of hardship for Muslims. Rather, He makes it easy for them to achieve obedience to Him. The purpose of fasting is to cultivate piety, which is a tremendous success for those who attain it, as Allah has clarified in a previous verse: {إِنَّا أَنِئْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامَ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} [O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed

upon those before you that you may become righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:183).

For detailed jurisprudence on making up missed fasts, the conditions of the sick and travelers, the duration and distance of travel that permits breaking the fast, and on whom fasting is obligatory, one should consult the relevant books of Tafsir and Fiqh.

Allah then says regarding the sick and travelers: {وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ} [and to complete the period] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185). Here, Allah clarifies that He intends for them to make up the days they missed from fasting so that they may complete the full number of days of the month: {وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ} [and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185).

Then, Allah guides them to engage in the act of glorifying Him, which expresses gratitude and appreciation for having been guided to this act of worship and for being granted the success to perform it: {وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا} [and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you, and perhaps you will be grateful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185).

This verse serves as an encouragement to proclaim Allah's greatness at the end of Ramadan, as mentioned by the majority of scholars of Tafsir. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "It is incumbent upon the Muslims to glorify Allah when they see the crescent of Shawwal." It is also narrated from him that one should continue glorifying Allah from the sighting of the crescent until the conclusion of the sermon (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/204).

This indicates that fasting is a blessing that warrants gratitude to Allah. Indeed, every act of worship is a tremendous blessing from Allah,

deserving of thankfulness, which begins with glorifying Allah, an act that itself is a symbol of remembering and thanking Him.

{وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ}

[And when My servants ask you concerning Me, indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:186).

The Quranic context transitions to addressing the question of Allah's proximity and distance, raised by a Bedouin who asked the Prophet (ﷺ): "Is our Lord near so that we may converse with Him, or is He far so that we must call out to Him?" The Prophet (ﷺ) remained silent until Allah revealed: {وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ} [And when My servants ask you concerning Me, indeed I am near]. This is a profound verse and a sincere question, where the questioner sought knowledge about the nearness or distance of their Lord, the Exalted. The Prophet (ﷺ), who does not speak from his own desire, paused, and a great answer was provided by a Merciful Lord.

Allah is indeed near to His servants, hearing them, even hearing their secrets and private conversations, and He knows their state and condition. Nothing about His creation is hidden from Him. Allah's nearness to His creation is befitting His Majesty and Glory; it is not like the nearness of creatures to one another. His power is not like their power; He is the Creator of their power.

This verse teaches that Allah is near with His knowledge, awareness, and power. Allah says: {وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ} [And We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein] (Surah Qaf, 50:16). The Prophet (ﷺ) also said: "O people, take it easy on yourselves. You are not calling upon one who is deaf or absent. You are calling upon the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. The

One you are calling is closer to any one of you than the neck of his camel."
(Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu' al-Fatawa, 15/17)

This clarification from the Prophet (ﷺ) was given to those who were with him during one of the battles when they were raising their voices in takbir (saying "Allahu Akbar"). He explained to them that Allah is closer to a servant than the servant is to his own self. If a servant were to reflect on a matter to make a decision for himself, it might take him time. However, if Allah wills to guide the servant in that matter, He inspires him with the right decision even before the servant fully processes it in his mind. The servant's heart opens up to the right choice, and his desires align with it, leading him to make the decision. Thus, by His power, Allah is closer to the servant's ability than the servant himself.

One of the benefits of this noble verse is the importance of observing proper etiquette with Allah in seeking, supplicating, and beseeching Him. A servant should be certain that Allah is near, hears his private thoughts, complaints, needs, and requests, and therefore, should not raise his voice excessively. Another benefit is that Allah responds to prayers, as He says: {أَجِيبْ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ} [I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:186). A Muslim should pray with the certainty of a response, knowing that Allah is more aware of him and the most suitable times for granting his requests. Through this, Allah may ward off harm or bring about good for him.

A Muslim should respond to Allah's commands by implementing them, respond to His prohibitions by avoiding them, and strive in performing the recommended acts. He should also have faith that leads him to righteousness: {فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ} [So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:186).

Righteousness is the opposite of error; it involves placing things in their proper place, prioritizing the Hereafter over this world, knowing the

correct path and following it, and recognizing the wrong path and avoiding it. This divine guidance, {فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ} [So let them respond to Me and believe in Me that they may be rightly guided], indicates that perfect guidance is achieved through responding to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and having faith in Allah and in what believers are commanded to believe in.

{أَجَلٌ لَّكُمْ لَيْلَةُ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۚ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۖ فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۚ ثُمَّ أَتِمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۚ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ}

[It has been made permissible for you to be intimate with your wives during the nights preceding the fast. They are clothing for you, and you are clothing for them. Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He accepted your repentance and forgave you. So now, have relations with them and seek that which Allah has decreed for you. And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until the night [sunset]. And do not have relations with them as long as you are staying for worship in the mosques. These are the limits [set by] Allah, so do not approach them. Thus does Allah make clear His ordinances to the people that they may become righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187).

The Quranic context returns to the matter of fasting after a brief pause to address the question about Allah's proximity to His servants. One of the benefits of this pause is that it sharpens attention and creates anticipation for the following verses, which reflect Allah's mercy towards fasting believers by extending the time allowed for marital relations, eating, and drinking during Ramadan nights. Initially, when fasting was first prescribed, the allowance to eat, drink, and engage in marital relations lasted only until the Isha prayer or until one slept before Isha. If someone slept or prayed Isha, they were required to abstain from these until the next evening, which caused significant difficulty. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/226)

Allah, in His mercy, extended this period, as He says: {أَجَلٌ لَّكُمْ لَيْلَةُ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ ۚ} [It has been made permissible for you to be intimate with your wives during the nights preceding the fast], referring to marital relations. By stating that the highest form of intimacy is permissible, it implies that everything lesser is also allowed. Allah then describes the relationship

between husband and wife with the metaphor {هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ} [They are clothing for you, and you are clothing for them], indicating mutual comfort, protection, and closeness. This intimate bond between spouses is established by Allah, showing that the psychological comfort between them is a shared blessing, with neither having superiority over the other in offering it. The word "لباس" [clothing] signifies covering, closeness, and direct contact, just as clothing touches the body. Reflecting on this, one can see that spouses should embody these qualities for each other, making them a reality in their lives.

Allah then reveals His knowledge of the difficulty faced by the Muslims due to the short period allowed for breaking the fast and the fact that they were betraying themselves by engaging in marital relations or eating during the prohibited times. Therefore, He removed this burden, as He says: {عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَاوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ} [Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He accepted your repentance and forgave you]. This is a manifestation of His mercy and generosity.

The phrase {عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَاوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ} [Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves] highlights Allah's awareness of human actions. The use of the plural form implies that others may have shared the same experience, alleviating the burden of anyone who came to the Prophet (ﷺ) confessing their mistakes. This teaches the importance of discretion when correcting mistakes, as was the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice of addressing issues generally rather than singling out individuals. As Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported: "When the Prophet (ﷺ) heard about something concerning a man, he would not say, 'Why did so-and-so do such and such?' Rather, he would say, 'Why do people do such and such?'" (Abu Dawood, 5/143, Hadith 4788)

Then, the kindness of Allah, the Exalted, becomes evident in His forgiveness: {فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ} [So He accepted your repentance and forgave you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187). Allah not only accepted their

repentance but also forgave them as if nothing had occurred. Glory be to Allah, the Oft-Returning, the Most Merciful. Following this, comes the direct permission: {فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُمْ} [So now, have relations with them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187). This is followed by linking this intimacy to its intended purpose: {وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ} [and seek that which Allah has decreed for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187), which refers to seeking offspring. It serves as a reminder of the purpose behind the pleasure that the spouses seek. Praise be to Allah, who has bestowed upon His servants these blessings, making things easy, facilitating, and teaching them.

For clarity, the term "الولد" (offspring) applies to both males and females. Then, Allah further clarifies and removes any doubts regarding the permissibility of eating and drinking: {وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا} [And eat and drink] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187). The verse then specifies the duration of this allowance: {حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ} [until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187), meaning until the whiteness of the day is clearly distinguished from the darkness of the night at the time of Fajr. This demonstrates the precision of the Quran in defining the start of the fast, making it a fixed time that does not change, which is at Fajr, recognized by the clarity of the day's light from the night's darkness. The fast then continues until nightfall, which is the time of sunset: {ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ} [Then complete the fast until the night] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187).

This is followed by a warning regarding what is prohibited for those in a state of i'tikaf (seclusion in the mosque), specifically engaging in marital relations: {وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ} [And do not have relations with them as long as you are staying for worship in the mosques] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187). This exception applies specifically to those in i'tikaf among the fasting individuals at night, as it is forbidden for them to have intercourse both day and night—at night due to their state of i'tikaf and during the day due to fasting. I'tikaf is an act of devotion involving staying in the mosque for the worship of Allah.

Allah then says: {تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا} [These are the limits [set by] Allah, so do not approach them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187). These rulings are the boundaries set by Allah, and thus they should not be violated. The word "تِلْكَ" [These] refers to these specific commands and prohibitions, while "الحدود" [boundaries] are the barriers that prevent anything from entering them that does not belong and from exiting what does. This is also why penalties for sins are called "حدود" [limits], as they prevent those who commit them from repeating such actions (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/225).

This passage emphasizes the importance of respecting and upholding the boundaries set by Allah within oneself and the significance of raising the next generation to honor these divine limits. It underscores the necessity of training the soul to adhere to Allah's boundaries and to refrain from transgressing them.

The phrase {فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا} [so do not approach them] suggests not only that one should not cross these boundaries but also that one should not even come close to them, as approaching them could lead to overstepping and committing what is forbidden. This implies that a Muslim should consider this verse as a source of strength to resist any inclination or deviation. If a temptation to sin arises, one should remind oneself: {تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا} [These are the limits [set by] Allah, so do not approach them]. If the self is inclined to disobey, one should counter it with the words {فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا} [so do not approach them]. And if Satan tries to entice one into transgressing a boundary of Allah, the believer should find strength in the verse {تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ} [These are the limits [set by] Allah, so do not approach them]. This verse serves as a powerful reminder for the believer to keep the divine limits at the forefront of their life.

The verse concludes with Allah's words: {كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ} [Thus does Allah make clear His ordinances to the people that they may become righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187). Just as Allah has clarified

these boundaries, He has also clarified all the related rulings so that those addressed by these commands do not transgress them and so that they know how to follow the right path, obey Allah, and avoid overstepping His limits. This indicates that those who fear Allah by respecting His boundaries will be blessed with piety, which in turn will bring them great benefit and goodness.

{وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ}

[And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:188).

The verse begins with the prohibition: {وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ} [And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly], forbidding the acquisition, exchange, or circulation of wealth in a manner that is contrary to what is right and just. The term "eating" is used to describe this corrupt handling of wealth, {وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا} [And do not consume], as wealth obtained unlawfully may be spent on food or other things, but Allah equates taking it in this corrupt manner to consuming forbidden food, which one puts into their body. This analogy emphasizes the severity of such actions, portraying them as a vile and detestable act that a person of integrity should instinctively reject.

The phrase {بَيْنَكُمْ} [among yourselves] indicates that this prohibition applies to any corrupt means of exchanging or circulating wealth. The word {بِالْبَاطِلِ} [unjustly] encompasses all forms of prohibited actions, such as deceit, gambling, bribery, usury, accepting payment without fulfilling the work, or withholding full payment from those who have completed their work. The term covers all these unlawful actions, making it clear that Allah's prohibition of consuming wealth unjustly applies to all transactions

involving forbidden elements. This is a testament to the profound eloquence and comprehensive nature of the Quranic language.

This verse establishes a comprehensive rule without specifying the various forms of wrongdoing or the methods of unlawful transactions, allowing it to encompass all existing and future forms of unjust wealth acquisition. This reflects the high ethical and jurisprudential value in the Shariah's ability to address new and emerging forms of corruption, demonstrating the miraculous legal, intellectual, and moral aspects of this divine law. The verse serves as a guiding principle from Allah, the Most Glorious, emphasizing that the objectives of the religion aim to eliminate social corruption, prevent enmity, and avoid the exploitation of others.

Allah then adds: {وَتُدَّلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ} [or send it [in bribery] to the rulers], clarifying one method of unjustly acquiring wealth—by bribing judges or rulers to obtain what rightfully belongs to others. {لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ} [in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin].

This verse serves as a reminder and clarification of the wrongful acts that a person might commit against others, such as unjustly seizing their wealth, fully aware that they are not entitled to it. Such an act is consuming wealth in sin. This indicates that the Shariah does not rely solely on the judgment of a ruler or judge to regulate the exchange or acquisition of wealth, especially when some evidence may be concealed, leading to a judgment in favor of the wrongdoer over the wronged. Instead, the Shariah addresses a higher principle—self-accountability—by instilling a fear of sin and the punishment of Allah. This approach ensures that individuals are conscious of their actions and the moral consequences, even if they can manipulate worldly judgments in their favor.

{يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلَةِ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ
 اتَّقَى وَأَتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ}

[They ask you about the new moons. Say, "They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj." And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back, but righteousness is [in] one who fears Allah. And enter houses from their doors. And fear Allah that you may succeed] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:189).

The Quranic context then shifts to answering a question posed to the Prophet (ﷺ) about the new moons, referring to the crescent moon that appears small and gradually grows until it becomes a full moon, then diminishes until it disappears, only to repeat this cycle every twenty-nine or thirty days. Allah revealed: {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلَةِ} [They ask you about the new moons], which highlights one of the benefits of the Quran being revealed gradually, as it provides answers to many questions posed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

In response, Allah says: {قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ} [Say, "They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj"]. The term {مَوَاقِيتُ} [measurements of time] encompasses numerous benefits for all people, both Muslims and non-Muslims alike, as everyone benefits from the timekeeping provided by the phases of the moon. For Muslims, these lunar cycles hold additional significance, particularly for the timings of acts of worship. The moon serves as a timekeeper for worship, such as fasting and zakat, as well as for contracts, debts, appointments, and countless other human affairs. This single phrase carries immense value and meaning.

The term {مَوَاقِيتُ} [measurements of time] covers the periods and times agreed upon by people, including due dates for repaying debts, various appointments, and religious observances. The term {النَّاسِ} [the people] includes all of humanity, both Muslims and non-Muslims. This reflects one of the universal benefits that Allah has bestowed upon His creation. A person should reflect on the precise wording of this Quranic verse and

appreciate the profound linguistic accuracy and the abundant eloquence and clarity it contains.

Allah then specifically mentions the time of {الحج} [Hajj] among the benefits of the lunar phases, highlighting it as an example of the acts of worship associated with the moon's cycles. This serves to emphasize and bring attention to Hajj while also correcting a misguided religious belief that was held by some who entered the state of Ihram for Hajj during the pre-Islamic period. Allah corrects this erroneous practice with a clear negation, saying: {وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا} [And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back]. It was a custom among the Ansar that if one of them entered Ihram for Hajj or Umrah during the days of ignorance and then needed to return home for something, they would not enter through the door but would instead climb over the wall from the back of the house, thinking that no barrier should come between them and the sky (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/230).

They believed that avoiding passing under the doorframe was an act of piety and obedience to Allah. However, the Most Merciful invalidated this custom or belief by negating the notion of righteousness associated with it, saying {وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا} [And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back]. Allah begins by removing this deep-rooted ignorance to replace it with divinely legislated knowledge: {وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ اتَّقَى} [but righteousness is [in] one who fears Allah]. Here, Allah clarifies that true righteousness lies in the fear of Allah. This highlights the invalidity of innovations (bid'ah) in religious practices, even if they are done with the intent of worship. It establishes that such innovations are neither acts of obedience nor righteousness, but rather, righteousness is found in adhering to what Allah has commanded, as He has legislated it, without addition or subtraction, and without deviating from it.

Allah then commands the correct practice: {وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا} [And enter houses from their doors]. This also demonstrates that Islam's approach is

one of high ethical standards, not based on hardship or extremism, but rather is accommodating, without undue strictness.

This explanation also clarifies the reason for mentioning Hajj specifically among the acts of worship in this verse. As Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned, the connection between the mention of Hajj and the act of entering houses from the back was due to both issues being raised in the context of questions about the new moons and about entering houses from the back (Al-Qurtubi).

The verse concludes with Allah's command to fear Him, leading to success: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ} [And fear Allah that you may succeed]. This indicates that fearing Allah leads a person to success, prosperity, and salvation, motivating the Muslim to cultivate this fear of Allah in themselves and others, as it governs behavior both in private and in public.

The methodology of the verse illustrates the importance of gradual and systematic correction. The verse begins by dispelling the deep-rooted ignorance: {وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا} [And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back], addressing the incorrect practice first. Then, it provides the correct knowledge that necessitates following and adhering to the truth: {وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ اتَّقَى} [but righteousness is [in] one who fears Allah]. Following this, the verse moves on to correcting behavior after the understanding of righteousness has been clarified: {وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا} [And enter houses from their doors]. Finally, the verse concludes with an exhortation that motivates change and adherence to the command: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ} {لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ} [And fear Allah that you may succeed].

Through this structure, the verse provides a precise, educational methodology for addressing and correcting errors. It demonstrates a thoughtful progression—from removing misconceptions, to imparting the correct understanding, to guiding behavior, and finally, offering a motivational reminder. This approach serves as a scientific and pedagogical model for effective correction, education, and instruction.

{وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ (190) وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقْبَلُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ ۖ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ ۚ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ (191) فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (192) وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ (193) الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَاتُ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ (194) وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (195)}

[Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors. And kill them wherever you overtake them and expel them from wherever they have expelled you, and fitnah is worse than killing. And do not fight them at al-Masjid al-Haram until they fight you there. But if they fight you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers. But if they cease, then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. Fight them until there is no [more] fitnah and [until] worship is [acknowledged to be] for Allah. But if they cease, then there is to be no aggression except against the oppressors. [Fighting in] the sacred month is for [aggression committed in] the sacred month, and for [all] violations is legal retribution. So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you. And fear Allah and know that Allah is with those who fear Him. And spend in the way of Allah and do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction [by refraining]. And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:190-195)

The address in this verse is directed towards the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and the believers, as it comes in the plural form with a command: {وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ} [Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:190). In this first verse that permits fighting, Allah commands adherence to two key principles: First, to fight only those who fight against the Muslims, and second, to avoid transgression.

The significance of this verse is in its clear definition of the objective of fighting, which is to be solely { فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ } [in the way of Allah]. This excludes any fighting that is not for the sake of Allah, and thus a true fighter (mujahid) is one who fights in the way of Allah, and a true martyr (shahid) is one who falls in the way of Allah.

The verse also includes the command to fight those who fight the Muslims, but it emphasizes the ethical conduct of warfare with the single phrase { وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا } [and do not transgress]. The scholar Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, explains that this encompasses prohibitions against mutilation, treachery, killing women, children, the elderly, monks, and hermits, as well as the destruction of trees and the killing of animals without necessity (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/233).

This indicates that Islam is a religion of ethics, peace, and mercy, not one of vengeance, killing, and harm. It preserves the security and well-being of people, and its combat objectives are to repel evil and bring about benefit, without exceeding the limits even in warfare. The verse concludes with the statement { إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ } [Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors], emphasizing that Allah does not love transgression and those who engage in it. This serves as a warning against transgression, urging self-restraint and ensuring that Muslims act in accordance with the will of Allah so that their struggle remains truly in His cause.

After Allah permitted fighting against those who attack the believers, He also commanded the Muslims to fight the polytheists of Mecca in an imperative form, even allowing them to fight wherever they find them: { وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ } [And kill them wherever you overtake them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:191). He further instructed: { وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ } [and expel them from wherever they have expelled you], which refers to expelling them from the place they had driven the Muslims out of—Mecca. This is where the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Muhajirun (the emigrants) were forced to leave, abandoning their wealth and possessions to escape the persecution

and oppression of the polytheists. The divine command is therefore just, as it mirrors the actions of the enemy: just as they harmed, oppressed, and expelled the Muslims, the Muslims are commanded to fight them and expel them from Mecca. This reflects the justice of Islam in its dealings.

Allah then clarifies a profound religious truth, saying: {وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ} [and fitnah is worse than killing] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:191). The fitnah here refers to the trials and persecution in religion, which are more severe and harmful than the killing of the disbelievers. This refers to the torture, oppression, and physical and psychological warfare that the polytheists waged against the Muslims, including defaming the Prophet (ﷺ) by accusing him of sorcery, fortune-telling, and poetry, as well as inflicting physical harm.

This emphasizes that religious persecution and forcing people away from their faith are among the gravest of crimes and dangers. It highlights the severity and seriousness of those who lead people away from the path of Allah, stressing the need to be vigilant against religious fitnah, in all its forms and manifestations, whether through words, images, or other methods. This vigilance is crucial to protect the faith and to prevent such trials from being introduced into the lands of the Muslims.

The Quranic statement draws a comparison between the harm and severity of killing and the even greater harm of forcing a believer away from their faith: {وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ} [and fitnah is worse than killing]. This comparison highlights the importance of identifying and eliminating any ideas or concepts that might hinder the process of striving (jihad) or achieving the intended goal. It also emphasizes the need to support and protect believers who are being tested in their faith. This principle can be applied broadly in various fields, including dawah (invitation to Islam), education, and administration, by removing intellectual barriers through the comparison of benefits and harms, and by determining the correct and wise course of action.

Allah then underscores the sanctity of Mecca: { وَلَا تَقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّىٰ } [And do not fight them at al-Masjid al-Haram until they fight you there. But if they fight you, then kill them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:191). This serves as evidence of the sacredness of the Kaaba, which necessitates its reverence and respect both in spirit and in action. The command to refrain from fighting at the Sacred Mosque unless provoked by the enemy emphasizes the obligation to uphold high standards of respect and dignity, even in times of conflict. This was exemplified during the conquest of Mecca, where the Prophet (ﷺ) did not initiate hostilities, and Allah granted the Muslims victory without a battle. This is described as { كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ } [Such is the recompense of the disbelievers].

Allah also outlines what should be done if the disbelievers cease their hostility: { فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ } [But if they cease, then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:192). If they abandon their disbelief and embrace Islam, Allah will forgive them and have mercy on them. This shows that Islam erases all past sins and that the ultimate goal is not to conquer and humiliate the enemy but to bring them into Islam.

The reason for fighting is further explained: { وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ } [Fight them until there is no [more] fitnah and [until] worship is [acknowledged to be] for Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:193). The purpose of this struggle is to prevent the persecution of people for their faith and to ensure that the worship of Allah is established, particularly in Mecca, where Islam must prevail, and all forms of polytheism must be eradicated.

If the disbelievers abandon their disbelief and embrace Islam, the guiding principle becomes: { فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ } [But if they cease, then there is to be no aggression except against the oppressors]. This reflects justice, the elimination of oppression, the achievement of the goal, and the principle of fair treatment. Islam turns enmity into brotherhood through faith, eliminating the causes of hostility and protecting lives, regardless of

past conflicts. Thus, Muslims are not commanded to exact revenge or mistreat those who convert to Islam; rather, Allah says: { فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ } [But if they cease, then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful].

Allah says: { الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَاتُ قِصَاصٌ } [The sacred month is for the sacred month, and for [all] violations is legal retribution] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:194). This verse emphasizes the principle of reciprocation, particularly in response to any aggression. If someone commits an act of aggression and fights during the sacred months – Dhu al-Qa'dah, Dhu al-Hijjah, Muharram, and Rajab – then the Muslims are permitted to fight back in those same months. Anyone who violates what Allah has made sacred is subject to retribution. This is reflected in the principle: { فَمَنْ اعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْنَا فَعَلْنَا مِثْلَهُ لَئِنْ عَلَيْنَا بِكُمْ عَظِيمًا } [So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:194).

This principle illustrates Islam's respect for what Allah has made sacred, while also acknowledging the necessity of defending against the evil of an aggressor, even if the aggression occurs during a sacred month, in a sacred place, or against someone in a state of ihram. The benefits of this principle include ensuring justice and security and preventing the disbelievers from exploiting the sanctities established by Islam to commit aggression or oppression. This applies at both the individual level – such as someone in ihram during Hajj or Umrah who is subject to harm or injustice – and at the collective level. These verses were revealed in the context of the events at Hudaibiyyah, and scholars of Tafsir have detailed the circumstances surrounding them (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/236-237).

Recognizing that human nature might not easily restrain itself when given the permission to retaliate, potentially leading to a desire for revenge, Allah commands adherence to **taqwa** (God-consciousness), which involves observing His limits and not exceeding them. As Ibn Sa'di explains, **taqwa** is essential in ensuring that one remains within the boundaries set by Allah

and does not transgress. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/153)

Allah Almighty says: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ} [And fear Allah and know that Allah is with those who fear Him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:194). Here, Allah commands the believers to have **taqwa** (God-consciousness), and informs them that He is with those who fear Him. This implies that whoever desires Allah's support, aid, and protection must adhere to **taqwa**. Conversely, it also means that whoever does not fear Allah, Allah will abandon them, leaving them vulnerable to failure and misfortune in every aspect of their life.

Allah then commands His servants to spend in His cause: {وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} [And spend in the way of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:195). This command encourages those who are well-off to give charity in obedience to Allah, without limiting it to a specific aspect. The directive is broad, encompassing all forms of goodness, making it a general principle for spending in Allah's way. Since this command appears within the context of jihad, it particularly emphasizes spending in the cause of jihad. Allah also warns against withholding wealth that leads to one's own destruction: {وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ} [and do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction]. This imagery suggests that withholding money from spending in the way of Allah leads to destruction, as if one is leading oneself into ruin by being stingy. Conversely, spending in the way of Allah prevents such destruction, as expressed in the hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ): "Indeed, charity extinguishes the wrath of the Lord and saves from a bad death" (Ibn Majah, 3/52, Hadith 664).

Spending in the way of Allah strengthens the well-off to assist the less fortunate, the strong to support the weak, and the rich to aid the poor. In the context of jihad, it has the added benefit of protecting the well-off and others from harm and elevating Islam by repelling the oppression of tyrants.

Finally, Allah commands goodness: {وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ} [and do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:195). This command encompasses all forms of goodness—whether through wealth, influence, words, or any other means. Those who practice **ihسان** (excellence in conduct) gain the love of Allah, which is a tremendous and noble reward. This love from Allah entails His care, guidance, and support, and it even results in placing love for the person in the hearts of others.

The verse {وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ} [and do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:195) serves as a powerful motivator for a person to overcome the stinginess of their soul and propel them toward acts of goodness. If a person hesitates in performing an act of kindness, they can resolve to do it by reminding themselves of this verse: {وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ}. If they feel stinginess creeping in, they can combat it with these words. If they consider what they are giving too much, they can find strength in this command. If they become lazy in doing good, they can re-energize themselves by recalling: {وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ}. And if they are tempted to put their own needs before others, they can remind themselves: {وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ}. This verse is a source of strength for the believer, empowering them whenever they remember it in moments of kindness and in various situations.

May Allah grant us success, assistance, and guidance, and make us and our fellow Muslims among the doers of good.

{وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ وَلَا تَخْلِفُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ۚ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۚ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۚ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَانْقُضُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ}

[And complete the Hajj and 'Umrah for Allah. But if you are prevented, then [offer] what can be obtained with ease of sacrificial animals. And do not shave your heads until the sacrificial animal has reached its place of slaughter. And whoever among you is ill or has an ailment of the head [making shaving necessary must offer] a ransom of fasting [three days] or charity or sacrifice. And when you are secure, then whoever performs 'Umrah [during the Hajj months] followed by Hajj [offers] what can be obtained with ease of sacrificial animals. But whoever cannot find [or afford it] - then a fast of three days during Hajj and of seven when you have returned [home]. Those are ten complete [days]. This is for those whose family is not in the area of al-Masjid al-Haram. And fear Allah and know that Allah is severe in penalty] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:196).

Allah, the All-Knowing and All-Wise, instructs the believers regarding the obligations of Hajj and Umrah with the command: {وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ} [And complete the Hajj and 'Umrah for Allah]. The verse begins with a direct order, emphasizing the obligation to complete the Hajj and Umrah for those who have begun them. This highlights the importance of fulfilling these acts of worship with excellence, ensuring that all their pillars, obligatory acts, and recommended practices are observed to the best of one's ability. The command to complete these rituals also implies the need to eliminate any hesitation and to approach these duties with determination, which in turn teaches the Muslim to rely on Allah and to overcome any doubts that may lead to failure. This principle of excellence and thoroughness in performing one's duties extends to all aspects of a Muslim's life, as exemplified by the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): "When one of you undertakes a task, let him perfect it" (Albani, Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Da'ifah, No. 2647).

Moreover, the verse underscores a critical aspect of worship: sincerity to Allah alone. The command {لِلَّهِ} [for Allah] signifies that Hajj and Umrah should be performed solely for the sake of Allah, without any intention of showing off or seeking praise from others. This reinforces that Islam is a religion of sincerity, not of ostentation or seeking approval from people. When a person cultivates this sincerity, it fosters a habit of not turning to vanity or pride in their religious and worldly deeds. This in turn helps to eradicate arrogance, which breeds enmity and discord within the community. Thus, the quality of worship reflects on a person's overall conduct, influencing their moral behavior and interactions in all areas of life.

Islamic law addresses the potential obstacles that may prevent a pilgrim from completing the rites of Hajj or Umrah in the verse {فَإِنْ أُخْصِرْتُمْ} [But if you are prevented] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:196). The Shariah anticipates and provides for those who may face barriers preventing them from completing their pilgrimage, offering them an exception to alleviate any hardship. The term {أُخْصِرْتُمْ} [prevented] is used here in a general sense, encompassing any cause that might impede the completion of Hajj or Umrah. This broad language ensures that all possible reasons for being prevented from fulfilling the pilgrimage are included, demonstrating the precision of this divine legislation. Allah, in His infinite knowledge, is aware of all that may befall His servants, and this comprehensive understanding is reflected in the legislation that accommodates every potential scenario. The use of a single word, {أُخْصِرْتُمْ}, to cover all types of impediments is both a legislative and rhetorical miracle, showcasing the all-encompassing nature of Islamic rulings.

This legislative approach also serves as a model for developing regulations and instructions governing various aspects of life, particularly those related to public welfare. The verse provides a solution for those who are prevented from completing their pilgrimage: {فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ} [then [offer] what can be obtained with ease of sacrificial animals] (Surah Al-

Baqarah, 2:196). The person may sacrifice a sheep, one-seventh of a camel, or one-seventh of a cow. No specific conditions are imposed on the sacrifice, reflecting the ease and flexibility of this ruling, which is meant to accommodate the circumstances of the pilgrim. The provision of {فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ} [what can be obtained with ease] emphasizes that the ruling is designed to remove any burden from the pilgrim, allowing them to choose the most feasible option.

This approach teaches an important lesson in planning, organization, and instruction: the necessity of considering potential obstacles and providing appropriate solutions that serve as practical alternatives. It underscores the importance of flexibility and adaptability in legislative and regulatory processes, ensuring that the rules accommodate the real-life situations people may face. This methodology can be applied broadly in various fields to ensure that systems and instructions are comprehensive, considerate, and effective in addressing the needs and challenges of individuals and society.

Allah Almighty then highlights the proper sequence for exiting the state of ihram, instructing that it should only occur after the ritual sacrifice has been performed: {وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ} [And do not shave your heads until the sacrificial animal has reached its place of slaughter] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:196). This indicates that acts of worship in Islamic law follow an organized and structured methodology, ordained by the All-Wise, the Almighty. It is imperative to adhere to this structure as prescribed by Allah and explained by our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Allah then addresses additional circumstances that may affect those who are performing Hajj or Umrah: {فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ {صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ} [And whoever among you is ill or has an ailment of the head [making shaving necessary must offer] a ransom of fasting [three days] or charity or sacrifice]. This reveals Allah's deep awareness of the various conditions that may arise for His servants, which might necessitate

deviating from the prescribed rituals. Thus, He provides guidance on how to manage such situations, underscoring the meticulous nature of this divine law, which could only come from the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. This increases the believer's faith and conviction in the precision and wisdom of Shariah.

If someone with a medical condition requires the shaving of their head, the law permits this action but prescribes a compensatory act, allowing the person to choose between fasting, giving charity, or offering a sacrifice. The blessed Sunnah provides further details on these options, and Islamic jurists have elaborated on the specific rulings. One of the benefits of this divine legislative methodology is that it has produced brilliant scholars who, by the grace of Allah, have developed a wealth of knowledge unparalleled by any other nation. They have pioneered fields such as the principles of jurisprudence (Usul al-Fiqh), the science of Hadith, and other disciplines, all stemming from the divine legislative methodology.

Allah then explains the rulings related to the Tamattu' type of pilgrimage, applicable when there is no fear of danger: { فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا { اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ } [And when you are secure, then whoever performs 'Umrah [during the Hajj months] followed by Hajj [offers] what can be obtained with ease of sacrificial animals]. This applies to someone who enters the state of ihram for Umrah during the months of Hajj, then exits ihram, enjoys the permitted activities, and later enters ihram again for Hajj. Such a person is required to offer a sacrificial animal.

However, Islamic law also considers the realities a pilgrim might face: { فَمَنْ { لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامٌ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةً إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ } تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ } [But whoever cannot find [or afford it] — then a fast of three days during Hajj and of seven when you have returned [home]. Those are ten complete [days]]. The law accommodates those who may not have access to a sacrificial animal or cannot afford one, providing an alternative through fasting, split into two parts: three days during Hajj and seven upon returning home. This

arrangement is designed to ease the burden on the pilgrim, allowing them to fulfill their religious obligation without undue hardship.

This exemplifies the miraculous nature of the Shariah in considering various possibilities and the realities faced by people, ensuring that no undue difficulty is imposed. This thoughtful approach to legislation, which aligns divine requirements with the practical realities of life, could only come from a Merciful Lawgiver, who is both wise in His decrees and compassionate toward His servants.

This guidance imparts to the Muslim a methodology for organization and planning that elevates their thinking, expands their understanding, and broadens their perspective to encompass all aspects of life. It teaches them how to manage and address their own issues as well as the concerns of the community and the broader Ummah. This approach equips the believer with the tools to consider various circumstances and unexpected events that may arise for individuals, communities, or the entire Ummah in any matter. The methodology of Islam thus provides the believers with abundant goodness and wisdom.

Allah then specifies that this ruling is for those who are not residents of the Sacred Mosque: {ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ} [This is for those whose family is not in the area of al-Masjid al-Haram]. The scholar Ibn Sa'di explained that those who are residents of the Sacred Mosque are not required to offer a sacrificial animal because the reason for this requirement does not apply to them (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, 1/156). The jurists have further elaborated on this ruling in their detailed discussions.

Allah then commands believers to have **taqwa**: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ} [And fear Allah]. This command to fear Allah highlights the importance of maintaining **taqwa** during the performance of Hajj and Umrah, as there is no observer or judge over the pilgrim except Allah Himself. Therefore, it is imperative for pilgrims to perform these obligations as Allah has prescribed. This also

underscores the significance of emphasizing **taqwa** in dawah, education, and upbringing, reminding people to fear Allah in all matters. Repeatedly advising others to do good is important and beneficial, even in professional work and interpersonal relationships, ensuring that the encouragement to do good is always present.

Allah also issues a warning to those who fail to maintain **taqwa** and neglect or take lightly the rituals of Hajj and Umrah: {وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ} [And know that Allah is severe in penalty]. This indicates that failing to adhere to **taqwa** results in severe punishment from Allah for those who are negligent. Therefore, Muslims must take Allah's commands seriously and not treat them lightly. This warning serves as a deterrent, reminding believers that the fear of Allah leads to **taqwa** by His grace. Furthermore, the reminder that Allah is severe in punishment instills a sense of fear, which is a natural inclination of the human soul toward security and peace.

From an educational perspective, this teaches the importance of combining guidance with a clear explanation of the consequences for those who do not follow it. It also emphasizes the need for individuals to cultivate **taqwa** in themselves, as there is no human overseer who will hold the pilgrim accountable for shortcomings in their worship. Rather, the only observer, judge, and punisher is Allah alone, with no partners.

{الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ (١٩٧) لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ (١٩٨) ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٩٩) فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ (٢٠٠) وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ (٢٠١) أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ (٢٠٢) وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِنَّهُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَدٌ وَلَا إِنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِنَّهُمْ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَانْقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ}

[Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj. And whatever good you do - Allah knows it. And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah. And fear Me, O you of understanding. There is no blame upon you for seeking bounty from your Lord [during Hajj]. But when you depart from 'Arafat, remember Allah at al-Mash'ar al-Haram. And remember Him, as He has guided you, for indeed, you were before that among those astray. Then depart from the place from where [all] the people depart and ask forgiveness of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. And when you have completed your rites, remember Allah like your [previous] remembrance of your fathers or with [much] greater remembrance. And among the people is he who says, "Our Lord, give us in this world," and he will have in the Hereafter no share. But among them is he who says, "Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire." Those will have a share of what they have earned, and Allah is swift in account. And remember Allah during [specific] numbered days. Then whoever hastens [his departure] in two days - there is no sin upon him; and whoever delays [until the third] - there is no sin upon him - for him who fears Allah. And fear Allah and know that unto Him you will be gathered.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:197-203).

Allah Almighty further elaborates on this significant ritual, which is a pillar of Islam, by stating: {الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ} [Hajj is [during] well-known months] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:197). He explains that the months of Hajj are well-known to the audience being addressed. These months have been known since the time of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and include Shawwal, Dhu al-Qa'dah, and the first ten days of Dhu al-Hijjah. This indicates that what is clear and well-known does not require repeated explanation. Imam Al-Qurtubi mentions that Allah did not mention 'Umrah here because it can be performed throughout the year, whereas Hajj takes place only once a year during these specified months. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/269)

Allah then describes the ethical conduct required of those who have entered into this sacred rite: {فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ} [So whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj]. Once someone commits to Hajj, they are obligated to complete all its requirements, much like entering into a contract that requires adherence to all its terms. Imam Al-Qurtubi explains that this commitment begins internally with the intention and externally with the act of ihram and the audible pronouncement of talbiyah. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/272)

The prohibitions during Hajj—such as refraining from sexual relations, avoiding all forms of sin, and abstaining from disputes—help to develop the pilgrim's ability to control themselves by abstaining from what is forbidden. This strengthens their willpower, demonstrates their capacity for patience, and dispels any prior misconceptions they may have had about their ability to abstain from these acts. This self-discipline is a crucial step in the moral and ethical development of the individual, fostering virtues that extend beyond the pilgrimage into their social, familial, and professional lives.

Allah then reminds the believers of His knowledge of all their actions: { وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ } [And whatever good you do - Allah knows it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:197). This reminder, in the context of the prohibitions, serves as a motivator for the believer to perform good deeds and not to fall short in them. It assures them that Allah is aware of both their restraint from forbidden acts and their pursuit of goodness, and He will reward them accordingly. The verse does not specify particular types of good deeds, but instead leaves it open-ended, allowing the believer to engage in all forms of goodness according to their ability. This flexibility reflects the Qur'an's precise and miraculous guidance. Whether one has wealth, physical strength, knowledge, or the ability to remember Allah, each person can contribute to goodness in various ways, tailored to their unique circumstances.

Allah then instructs the pilgrims, in the form of a command, to prepare provisions for their journey: { وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ } [And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:197). This directive was given because some pilgrims used to embark on Hajj without bringing any provisions, considering it a form of reliance on Allah. However, Allah commanded them to carry provisions to avoid being dependent on others (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/246). This emphasizes that one of the conditions for Hajj is having the means to undertake it, as will be explained later, insha'Allah. This also demonstrates that Islam is a practical religion, instructing Muslims to take the necessary means, as Allah is the One who created these means and facilitated them for His creation. Allah guides His servants to even the most practical aspects of their journey, such as carrying physical provisions, and also draws attention to another type of provision—**taqwa**—which is the provision for the Hereafter that the believer prepares for their final return.

After emphasizing the importance of physical provisions, Allah highlights the spiritual provision of **taqwa**—which includes fear, humility, desire, awe, love, and other qualities that drive a pilgrim to apply the practical

aspects of their faith. This verse thus brings attention to both the provisions for the journey in this world and the provisions for the journey to the Hereafter. The early generations of Muslims understood the importance of provisions in maintaining their physical well-being and withstanding the hardships of travel. For instance, Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say that a person's nobility is reflected in the quality of their provisions during travel, and he would insist on traveling with those who brought the best provisions (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/246).

After Allah mentions the importance of provisions and the best type among them – **taqwa** – He commands that this **taqwa** should be directed solely toward Him: {وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ} [And fear Me, O you of understanding]. The address is directed to those with understanding and intellect, for anyone who submits and believes in Allah is indeed wise, having chosen truth over falsehood. Imam Al-Qurtubi explains that **al-albab** (singular: **lub**) refers to the core or essence of something, and thus the intellect is referred to as **lub** (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/274). By describing the believers as **ulul albab** (those of understanding), Allah praises them and commands them, honoring them with this title. This has important educational and da'wah implications, highlighting the value of acknowledging and praising the good qualities and characteristics of those being addressed, as this encourages and motivates them to do even more good.

Allah Almighty addresses the issue of trade during Hajj, as it was customary for the Arabs in pre-Islamic times to trade at markets such as 'Ukaz, Majannah, and Dhu al-Majaz during the Hajj season. They hesitated to engage in trade during this sacred time, so the verse was revealed: {لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ} [There is no blame upon you for seeking bounty from your Lord (during Hajj)] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:198). The verse begins by negating any sense of sin, {لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ} [There is no blame upon you], thereby permitting trade during Hajj and removing any concerns or reservations about this matter. Allah links their pursuit of wealth to His

favor, {أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ} [seeking bounty from your Lord], so that the believers understand that the wealth they seek is indeed a bounty from Allah.

This verse underscores several important principles: firstly, that seeking sustenance is an act of pursuing Allah's favor, achieved through both effort and prayer; secondly, that sustenance is a blessing from Allah; and thirdly, that Islam is a religion of action and work. It also emphasizes the permissibility of trade and the importance of lawful economic transactions, provided there is nothing inherently forbidden in the goods being traded or the manner of trading.

Allah then instructs the pilgrims regarding the necessity of remembrance: {فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُمْ مِّنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ} [Then when you depart from 'Arafat, remember Allah at al-Mash'ar al-Haram] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:198). 'Arafat is the site of the standing during Hajj, and it is the most significant act of the pilgrimage. As the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "**Hajj is 'Arafah**" (Narrated by al-Nasa'i, 5/256, Hadith 3016).

The word "أَفَضْتُمْ" [afadtum] means "you departed from 'Arafat." It is derived from the word "فاض" [fada], which means "overflow," like a vessel that overflows when it is filled to the brim. The word "أَفَضْتُمْ" [afadtum] depicts 'Arafat as being filled with people, so full that the pilgrims start to pour out of it, as if it is overflowing, and they flow towards the sacred site, which is Muzdalifah. Here, Allah commands them to remember Him at this sacred site, ensuring that the remembrance of Allah continues with the pilgrims. Furthermore, the command to remember is repeated, with the reason for it clearly stated: "وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ" [And remember Him as He has guided you]. This is a reminder of the blessing of guidance and being directed towards this great religion and its sacred laws. By attributing the guidance to Himself, "كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ" [as He has guided you], Allah makes it clear that it is He who guided the heart of the believer to this religion, sent the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) to them, and revealed the Book and the

Sunnah. The guided person would not have found guidance if Allah had not guided and assisted them. Recognizing this great blessing of being guided to this noble religion, which is the only path leading to the bliss of the Hereafter, necessitates that the believer should constantly remember and thank Allah. Praise and gratitude are due to Allah, the Almighty.

Allah also draws attention to the condition of the guided person before and after receiving guidance, comparing their previous state of misguidance to their current state of guidance: "وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ" [For indeed, you were before that among those astray]. This highlights the importance of comparing one's state before and after receiving any blessing, to fully recognize the favor of Allah upon them. This divine methodology can be adopted as a means of الدعوة [dawah] and education, so that the invited and the educated person may understand their condition before and after the guidance or reform. This method applies across all areas of reform, management, and professional conduct, as comparison reveals the blessings and progress from one state to another. However, this should not be done in a manner of boasting or rebuke, but rather as a reminder of Allah's favors, acknowledging that He is the source of all blessings.

Then Allah commands His servants, the pilgrims, to proceed to the next stage of the Hajj rites: {ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ} [Then depart from the place from where [all] the people depart] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:199), which refers to moving on to the site of Mina to complete the rites of spending the night, stoning the Jamarat, sacrificing the animals, and performing the Tawaf and Sa'i. Allah also commands the pilgrims to seek forgiveness: {وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} [And ask forgiveness of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:199). No matter how much obedience is offered to Allah, there will always be shortcomings and mistakes; therefore, seeking forgiveness is necessary. A worshiper should never consider themselves or their worship to be perfect, as deficiency, forgetfulness, and errors are inherent to human nature, thus necessitating the need for constant seeking of forgiveness in all situations.

This implies that even in the course of performing such a noble and strenuous act of worship as Hajj, Allah commands the pilgrim to seek forgiveness. How much more then does a person need to seek forgiveness throughout their daily life, weekly routines, monthly activities, and entire lifespan? The need and poverty of the servant for seeking forgiveness is immense. This highlights the importance of maintaining the practice of seeking forgiveness due to the possibility of falling into deficiencies, forgetfulness, mistakes, sins, incorrect efforts, and what might be mixed with acts of worship such as ostentation or seeking reputation, and other things that can spoil deeds.

Allah also highlights one of His great attributes: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} [Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful], reminding the believer to seek forgiveness while being fully aware that Allah is the One who forgives sins and shows mercy to those who seek forgiveness. Therefore, the one who seeks forgiveness should ask for it from the Forgiving and Merciful. This also underscores the concept of Tawhid (monotheism) by directing the act of seeking forgiveness solely to Allah: {وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ} [And ask forgiveness of Allah], ensuring that seeking forgiveness is not directed towards anyone other than Him, the Almighty.

Then Allah commands His servants, the pilgrims, to remember Him after completing their rites: {فَإِذَا قُضِيَتْ مَنَاسِكُكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا} [And when you have completed your rites, remember Allah like your [previous] remembrance of your fathers or with [much] greater remembrance] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:200). Allah instructs the pilgrims to continue remembering Him after the conclusion of their Hajj, just as a child constantly remembers their father and mother, with their tongues perpetually mentioning them throughout the day. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/250)

If the verse refers to adults, it applies similarly – "My father came," "My mother came," "Where is my father?" "My father said," "My mother said." However, a child mentions their parents even more frequently. This

comparison highlights the importance of remembrance and that a person should constantly be engaged in the remembrance of Allah. Just as a child, from the moment they wake up, continuously mentions their mother and father—crying out for them when they need food, and even during times of contentment and play—a Muslim should likewise remember Allah before eating and drinking by saying "Bismillah" (In the name of Allah), and after finishing their food and drink by saying "Alhamdulillah" (All praise is due to Allah). In this way, they are always in a state of remembrance. Before and after prayer, upon waking up, and in all their affairs, they should be remembering Allah.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, **"Let your tongue always be moist with the remembrance of Allah"** (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 5/427-428, Hadith 3375). A person should be even more engaged in the remembrance of Allah than a child is in mentioning their parents, as Allah says: {كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا} [like your [previous] remembrance of your fathers or with [much] greater remembrance]. We ask Allah to make our times filled with His remembrance and gratitude.

From an educational, developmental, and da'wah perspective, as well as in professional and managerial contexts, this verse demonstrates the importance of using analogies for clarification, as seen in this profound Qur'anic comparison. Analogies serve as an effective means of conveying and simplifying understanding. This also indicates that analogies do not equate the two subjects in status but rather illustrate a concept or situation to clarify the meaning, for the status of the remembrance of our Lord is far greater and more honorable.

Allah Almighty clarifies the condition of people in seeking the world and the Hereafter, dividing them into two categories. The first is mentioned in His words: {فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ} [And of the people is he who says, "Our Lord, give us in this world," and he will have in the Hereafter no share] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:200). This type of person is

consumed by the life of this world, its adornments, demands, and endless hopes, and he frequently prays and pleads for worldly matters, neglecting what concerns him in the Hereafter, which is more enduring and complete. This divine statement about such people serves as a reminder of the importance of balance and moderation, and the need to focus on the Hereafter by increasing supplication for it, as it is better and everlasting.

Allah also describes the condition of the second type of people: { وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ { رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ } [But among them is he who says, "Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:201). This type of person is concerned with both worldly and otherworldly matters in his supplication and is mindful of the punishment of the Fire, so he seeks refuge in Allah from it. This verse illustrates that some people have short-sighted aspirations, focusing solely on the world and forgetting to seek the Hereafter, while others have higher aspirations, not limiting their requests to the world but also seeking the Hereafter through supplication and success in attaining it. This indicates that Allah loves those who seek both the world and the Hereafter and that both belong to Allah, and the servant will not attain them except from their Owner, the Almighty. This supplication is beneficial as it encompasses all forms of goodness, for "good" is comprehensive of all good, and requesting it implies seeking to avoid all evil. Thus, when a believer asks Allah for good in both the world and the Hereafter, he is asking for the best of both worlds and seeking refuge from all evil that leads to the Fire. How great is this supplication!

This was also one of the most frequent supplications of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: **"The most frequent supplication of the Prophet (ﷺ) was: 'O Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.'"** (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 4/169, Hadith 6389).

Then Allah says: {أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ} [Those will have a share of what they have earned, and Allah is swift in account] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:202). It is mentioned in the interpretation that this refers to the second group, the group of Islam, meaning they will have the reward of Hajj and the reward of supplication, as the supplication of a believer is an act of worship. It is also said that "those" refers to both groups, so the believer will have the reward for his actions and supplication, while the disbeliever will bear the punishment for his shirk (associating partners with Allah) and his focus on worldly matters only (al-Qurtubi, al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, 2/287).

Mentioning both interpretations demonstrates how some meanings of the Qur'an encompass multiple facets, increasing the benefit and value derived from the text. The verse concludes by stating the swift reckoning of our Lord, the Almighty, {وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ} [and Allah is swift in account], emphasizing that Allah's accounting is not measured by human standards or by their criteria, for Allah is All-Knowing and All-Powerful.

Allah Almighty reiterates and emphasizes the importance of His remembrance: {وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ} [And remember Allah during [specific] numbered days] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:203). This refers to the act of making Takbir (saying "Allahu Akbar") during the Days of Tashreeq after the obligatory prayers. These are the days of Mina, which are the three days following the Day of Eid. The specification of these days for remembrance indicates their virtue, suggesting the importance for Muslims to be diligent in remembering Allah during these days.

Furthermore, this verse highlights the importance of specifying certain practices during teaching, guiding, and advising. The verse also reflects the leniency of this religion by permitting those who hasten to leave: {فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ} [Then whoever hastens [his departure] in two days - there is no sin upon him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:203). Allah lifted any sin from those who hasten to depart after two days. And for those who delay and

complete the three days: {وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ} [And whoever delays [until the third] - there is no sin upon him, for him who fears Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:203). This encourages staying until the third day for those who have taqwa (fear of Allah).

Allah then commands His servants to have taqwa: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۖ تُحْشَرُونَ} [And fear Allah and know that unto Him you will be gathered] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:203). This verse contains two reminders: the command to have taqwa and the reminder of the return to Allah, as returning to Him should motivate the believer to act righteously and avoid evil.

May Allah grant us success, steadfastness, and guidance, both for me and for my fellow Muslims.

{وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ (٢٠٤) وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ (٢٠٥) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ (٢٠٦) وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاةِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ }

[And of the people is he whose speech pleases you in worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the fiercest of opponents. And when he goes away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption therein and destroy crops and animals. And Allah does not like corruption. And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah," pride in the sin takes hold of him. Sufficient for him is Hellfire, and how wretched is the resting place. And of the people is he who sells himself, seeking means to the approval of Allah. And Allah is kind to [His] servants].
(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:204-207)

It becomes clear from the previous verse the condition of people in their pursuit of worldly life and the hereafter. In these verses, Allah Almighty explains the state of some people who conceal disbelief while outwardly professing Islam. Allah says: {وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ} [And of the people is he whose speech pleases you in worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the fiercest of opponents] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:204). Here, Allah informs His Messenger of the reality of the hypocrites. This is general for every hypocrite, even if it was revealed concerning specific individuals. These are a type of people who display outwardly what contradicts what they hide within. They present beautiful speech and the best of words, showing agreement in religion and loyalty, while deceitfully masking their true intentions. They claim sincerity, yet they are liars, and they are the fiercest in argumentation, presenting smooth talk while harboring evil and falsehood within.

This reveals the true state of the hypocrite, who takes this deceitful approach by showing Islam and allegiance with his tongue while

harboring hatred and enmity toward Islam and the Muslims in his heart. This teaches the believer not to be deceived by words without corresponding actions, as true application is the real test and distinction between a Muslim and a hypocrite. Actions are evidence of intentions and words. This disclosure from Allah serves as a warning to believers about these individuals, necessitating caution against them.

Another trait of the hypocrite is: { وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ } [And when he goes away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption therein and destroy crops and animals. And Allah does not like corruption] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:205). Just as he is twisted in speech, he is corrupt in actions, for when he turns away, his efforts lead to widespread corruption on earth. His corruption is general and varied, both in word and deed, including the destruction of agriculture, which is the source of plant growth and fruits, and the destruction of livestock, which is the source of animal produce. Since the sustenance of people depends on these two, he deliberately seeks to destroy the resources of the people. This is contrary to what Allah desires and loves, as { وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ } [And Allah does not like corruption] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:205). This statement clarifies that this religion does not condone corruption, nor does it approve of it; rather, it prohibits it and punishes those who engage in it. What a noble religion this is!

Another characteristic of the hypocrite is his arrogance in upholding falsehood over truth: { وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ } [And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah," pride in the sin takes hold of him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:206). He does not accept the guidance that warns him against his vile actions and disgraceful behavior. When he is admonished and told to fear Allah in his ugly deeds and corrupt speech, and to return to the path of truth, righteousness, and faith, he stubbornly refuses and is driven by arrogance, insisting on upholding sin over truth. This illustrates the dangerous impact of hypocrites on the community and the peril of arrogance in rejecting advice and guidance. It underscores the importance

of humility in both the advisor and the one being advised. This hypocrite is threatened by Allah with Hellfire: {فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَيْسَ الْمِهَادُ} [Sufficient for him is Hellfire, and how wretched is the resting place] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:206). Hell will suffice as his punishment and ultimate abode – a wretched dwelling and final destination.

Allah Almighty has exposed the psychological and practical realities of this type of people, revealing their deceptive methodology of using sweet words while harboring malice, hatred, and enmity towards Islam and Muslims. Allah also clarified their corrupt behavior, driven by a love for spreading practical corruption on earth, particularly in the sources of people's sustenance. Their actions stem from a deep-seated envy and wickedness, a reflection of their corrupt and spiteful nature. Allah exposes their reality, showing that they do not submit to the truth, no matter how profound the admonition. After being told to fear Allah, they are still driven by arrogance in sin: {وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ} [And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah," pride in the sin takes hold of him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:206). They choose to uphold their sins, fully aware of their malicious intentions. Thus, Allah has decreed their punishment – Hellfire is their destination. This serves as a warning to believers about the traits and characteristics of hypocrites, urging them to avoid such behaviors and embrace humility as a defining trait of true believers.

Allah then describes the second type of people: {وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ} {مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ} [And of the people is he who sells himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:207). This type of person sacrifices the most precious things they have for the sake of pleasing Allah. They redeem themselves from disbelief and hypocrisy, even if it means losing wealth and status, because nothing is too valuable compared to seeking the pleasure of Allah. In contrast, the first type sells their soul for the lowest of prices, succumbing to hypocrisy.

This verse serves as a great lesson, teaching us through its methodology that one should be willing to pay any price if it means securing the pleasure of Allah. An example of this is found in the story of Suhayb al-Rumi, as this verse was revealed concerning him. When Suhayb ibn Sinan al-Rumi (RA) accepted Islam and decided to migrate, the people tried to prevent him from taking his wealth with him. They told him that if he wanted to leave, he would have to leave his wealth behind. Suhayb (RA) gave up his wealth and freed himself from them. When this news reached the Prophet ﷺ, he said, "Suhayb has profited, Suhayb has profited" (Sahih Ibn Hibban, Hadith 7082).

'Umar ibn al-Khattab and a group of companions met Suhayb at the outskirts of the city and said to him, "The trade has indeed been successful." (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/254).

The verse ends by highlighting one of Allah's attributes: {وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ} [And Allah is Gentle with His servants] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:207). Out of His gentleness, Allah guides and grants success to His servants, showing forbearance even towards disbelievers, hypocrites, and sinners. Were it not for His gentleness, many would have perished. All praise is due to Allah for His compassion towards us and all of humanity.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ (٢٠٨) فَإِنْ رَلَّتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَاغْلُظُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (٢٠٩) هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ الْعَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ (٢١٠)}

[O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy. But if you deviate after clear proofs have come to you, then know that Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. Do they await but that Allah should come to them in covers of clouds and the angels [as well] and the matter is [then] decided? And to Allah [all] matters are returned.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:208-210).

The verse begins with Allah addressing the believers with the words {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [O you who have believed], which is a form of honor and elevation from Allah, addressing His believing servants with such a high status. This call in such a manner motivates the believer to pay attention and listen carefully. Allah then commands them with the words {ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً} [enter into Islam completely]. This means that they should enter into the obedience of Allah entirely, implementing all aspects of faith and the Sharia of Islam without exception, performing all good deeds and acts of righteousness.

This command signifies that Islam is a comprehensive system that must be followed in its entirety, without picking and choosing based on personal desires or whims. It implies that the faith and its obligations are not subject to selective application; rather, every aspect of it must be upheld consistently. The word {كَافَّةً} [completely] also suggests that all believers must collectively adhere to the teachings of Islam, with no one left behind or neglecting any part of it.

This comprehensive nature of Islam is emphasized by the scholars, such as Ibn Kathir and Ibn al-Jawzi, who have detailed various interpretations and explanations. Whether {كَافَّةً} refers to the believers themselves or to the entirety of Islam, it carries significant implications for the completeness

and unity required in following the faith. Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim* (1/255); Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm al-Tafsir* (1/205)

The word {كافة} (completely) in the verse holds profound significance, whether it relates to the believers or to peace. In either interpretation, it carries crucial connotations and an important demand, showcasing the magnificent eloquence and miraculous nature of the speech of our Lord, blessed and exalted be He.

Then Allah Almighty commands the believers not to follow the footsteps of Satan, as mentioned in {ولا تتبعوا خطوات الشيطان} [and do not follow the footsteps of Satan]. The word {خطوات} (steps) implies that Satan leads a person towards sin gradually, step by step, guiding them from one misstep to another. Thus, the believers are warned against their enemy, who drags them into sins in a gradual manner.

Next, Allah Almighty warns His servants about falling into error: {فإن زللتكم من} [if you slip after clear proofs have come to you], cautioning them against deviation after knowledge has been established, and what is required and prohibited has been made clear. The word {زللتكم} indicates a deviation from the straight path, as deviation usually occurs after stability. This warning from the Wise and All-Knowing is fitting for all forms of deviation, drawing attention to the consequences of deviating from His obedience and command after the clear signs have come.

Thus, be aware that {الله عزيز حكيم} [Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise]. This statement underscores His exalted status, blessed and exalted be He, indicating that He is {عزيز} (Exalted in Might), to whom all things are humbled; He is exalted and cannot be overpowered, powerful in His retribution, and possesses an elevated and noble status. His might is coupled with absolute wisdom in His legislation, commands, prohibitions, and governance. There is no one exalted in might except Allah, and no one wise except Allah. This should prompt caution against deviating from the obedience due to the Exalted and Noble, who possesses these attributes.

This style stirs both shyness and fear simultaneously, heightening awareness and caution against error. How magnificent, how pure, and how beautiful are His methods, blessed and exalted be He, in His noble and revered Book.

Moreover, Allah Almighty begins the preceding verse with {يا أيها الذين آمنوا} [O you who have believed], which serves to awaken the inner faith of the believers. You are the believers, and it does not befit you to err after the clear proofs have reached you.

Then Allah Almighty, in a tone of reproachful questioning, addresses those who delay embracing Islam: {هل ينظرون إلا أن يأتيهم الله في ظلل من الغمام والملائكة وقضي الأمر} [Do they wait except that Allah should come to them in covers of clouds and the angels and the matter is [then] decided? And to Allah [all] matters are returned]. These are the ones upon whom the evidence has been established, yet they persist in their disobedience, disbelief, and following the footsteps of Satan, turning away from the truth. So, are they waiting until the Day of Judgment when the final decision is made, and every person is recompensed according to their deeds? {وقضي الأمر وإلى الله ترجع الأمور} [And the matter is [then] decided, and to Allah [all] matters are returned]. Will they believe then, when faith will no longer benefit them, as the matter will have been settled, and the final judgment among the creatures will have been made? Are they waiting for Allah Almighty to bring upon them what He has promised of reckoning?

In this rhetorical style, Allah Almighty addresses those who are slow to embrace Islam in a manner that provokes deep reflection, contemplation, and careful consideration. By beginning the speech with a tone of reproachful questioning, Allah awakens the minds that are distracted by the worldly life and neglectful of the Hereafter. This method is designed to stimulate intellectual engagement and encourage the listener to reflect and return to the truth, which urges them to hasten into Islam. Allah, blessed and exalted be He, describes something of what will occur on the Day of

Judgment and recompense in a manner that stirs both the mind and emotions with awe and fear of that great and dreadful event. The verse concludes with the words of Allah Almighty: {وإلى الله ترجع الأمور} [And to Allah [all] matters are returned], indicating that all matters return to Allah, and likewise, all creatures will return to Him, whereupon the reckoning and recompense will take place.

Exalted is Allah, whose noble Book is filled with what stimulates the minds and souls toward the well-being of His servants, through commands, prohibitions, guidance, and clarification, teaching and reminding, employing a variety of intellectual and emotional provocations.

{سَلِّ بِنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ كَمْ آتَيْنَاهُم مِّنْ آيَةٍ بَيِّنَةٍ ۖ وَمَن يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ (٢١١)
 زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۗ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ
 بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (٢١٢)}

[Ask the Children of Israel how many a sign of evidence We have given them. And whoever exchanges the favor of Allah [for disbelief] after it has come to him - then indeed, Allah is severe in penalty. Beautified for those who disbelieve is the life of this world, and they ridicule those who believe. But those who fear Allah are above them on the Day of Resurrection. And Allah gives provision to whom He wills without account.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:211-212)

The discourse returns to the eloquent and powerful style of the Qur'an, once again addressing the Children of Israel. Allah Almighty reminds them of His blessings, which they exchanged for disobedience: {سَلِّ بِنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ كَمْ آتَيْنَاهُم مِّنْ آيَةٍ بَيِّنَةٍ ۖ وَمَن يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ} [Ask the Children of Israel how many a sign of evidence We have given them. And whoever exchanges the favor of Allah [for disbelief] after it has come to him - then indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.] The verse begins with the command {سَلِّ} [Ask the Children of Israel], directing the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to question them. This question is meant as a form of reprimand and rebuke to the Children of Israel, highlighting their ingratitude and stubbornness (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/20).

This verse also serves as a consolation to the Prophet (ﷺ) regarding the obstinacy of the Children of Israel in rejecting faith in him. It sheds light on their persistent nature of defiance and their tendency to exchange the blessing of religion, despite the many clear and miraculous signs that were shown to them. The word {كَمْ} emphasizes the abundance of these clear signs {كَمْ آتَيْنَاهُم مِّنْ آيَةٍ بَيِّنَةٍ} [how many a sign of evidence We have given them]. Despite the overwhelming proofs and miracles, such as the staff of Moses, the glowing hand, the parting of the sea, and the manna and quails, they altered what was in their scriptures, thereby distorting their religion.

This underscores that even though the Children of Israel received these signs, they did not benefit from them, which mirrors their response to the message of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Though a small number of them embraced Islam, the majority did not.

This serves as a warning to all who exchange the blessings of Allah, including the blessing of faith, for disbelief, for the punishment of Allah is severe. One of the lessons here is that religion is an immense and noble blessing that must be honored through belief, action, and gratitude to Allah. The severity of the punishment for those who alter this blessing underscores its greatness and the grave danger of changing it, urging the preservation of faith as it is the path to salvation from Allah's punishment.

Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned that the phrase {وَمَنْ يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ} [And whoever exchanges the favor of Allah after it has come to him] is a general statement applicable to all people, although it specifically refers to the Children of Israel, as they altered what was in their scriptures and denied the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ). This phrase also applies to anyone who changes the blessings of Allah. Al-Tabari mentioned that the 'favor' here refers to Islam, which aligns closely with the first interpretation. The statement also extends to the disbelievers of Quraysh, for the sending of Muhammad (ﷺ) among them was a great blessing, which they exchanged for disbelief instead of accepting and being grateful for it (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/20-21).

The understanding of the scholars regarding the meaning of this verse indicates the principle established by the scholars that the generality of the wording prevails over the specificity of the cause. Allah Almighty intended that what He revealed in His Book be applied with knowledge, not merely for information or news. This implies that the goodness in the Book of Allah is for admonition and for acting upon knowledge. Then, Allah Almighty says: {رُئِيَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا} [Beautified for those who disbelieve is

the life of this world]. Allah informs us that those who disbelieved and rejected His law, the worldly life was adorned for them, becoming appealing in their eyes and hearts. Thus, they became content with it, finding peace in it, to the extent that their desires and aspirations were bound to it. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/167)

Their actions were entirely devoted to it, leading them to disdain and mock the believers. This indicates that one of the punishments from Allah Almighty for the disbeliever who rejects the faith, after the truth of Allah's law has become clear to him, is that the worldly life becomes adorned in his eyes and heart to such an extent that he mocks the servants of Allah who believe: {وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [and they ridicule those who believe]. This verse serves as a warning against the temptation of worldly adornment. It also suggests that those who prefer the worldly life over the Hereafter tend to mock those who prioritize the Hereafter over the worldly life. This highlights that mockery is a consistent strategy of the disbelievers throughout all times, as Allah has pointed out. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Muslim not to be swayed by the mockery of the disbelievers or to appease them by belittling what they ridicule. This also shows that mockery is one of the methods used by the disbelievers to deter others from the path of Allah, so the believer must be vigilant against it to attain the status described by Allah: {وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ} [But those who fear Allah are above them on the Day of Resurrection]. The pious will be in the highest ranks, enjoying eternal bliss, while the disbelievers will be in the lowest depths, suffering various forms of torment and misery. This reinforces the patience of the believers in the face of what they encounter from the disbelievers regarding their faith.

Moreover, this signifies that wealth is one of the best motivators for a believer to adhere to piety, which, by Allah's grace and mercy, grants him the best and highest degrees.

Then, Allah Almighty clarifies an important matter, which is the source of sustenance: {وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ} [And Allah gives provision to whom He wills without account]. This highlights the reality of sustenance and its true source, encouraging the believer to seek provision from the One who owns it in truth. Both worldly and otherworldly sustenance are in the hands of Allah, which necessitates that the believer ask Allah, blessed and exalted be He, for sustenance in this life and the next, as well as steadfastness in the faith, for He is the Giver. The verse also indicates that Allah provides for whom He wills without account, not in proportion to the deeds of the servant. He is Generous when He gives, and His gifts are abundant and vast, without measure. No matter how much a servant obeys Allah, it is little compared to what Allah gives in return. The blessings Allah bestows on the servant far exceed the worship and obedience the servant offers, making any comparison futile. Allah's giving is plentiful in both this world and the Hereafter. We ask Allah for His grace, generosity, and mercy.

{كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ}

[The people were a single community, then Allah sent the prophets as bringers of good tidings and warners and sent down with them the Scripture in truth to judge between the people concerning that in which they differed. And none differed over it except those who were given it - after the clear proofs came to them - out of jealous animosity among themselves. And Allah guided those who believed to the truth concerning that over which they had differed, by His permission. And Allah guides whom He wills to a straight path.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:213)

Allah Almighty clarifies the condition of humanity after Adam (peace be upon him) until the sending of the messengers. He says, {كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً} [The people were a single community, then Allah sent the prophets as bringers of good tidings and warners]. This indicates that the original state of humanity was that they were all one nation, following the faith of Adam (peace be upon him). As they multiplied, disputes and differences increased, leading to deviations and the worship of idols. Thus, Allah sent Noah (peace be upon him) as the first messenger to be sent to humanity.

One of the benefits of this noble verse is that Allah summarizes the state of humanity in just two words, {أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً} [a single community]. Then, the reason and purpose for sending the messengers are clarified, {فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ} [then Allah sent the prophets as bringers of good tidings and warners]. Allah encapsulates the essence of the messengers' mission in two words, carrying two roles: {مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ} [bringers of good tidings and warners]. This reflects the miraculous eloquence and profound clarity of the Qur'an in its expression and detail. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "There were ten centuries between Noah and Adam; all of them were upon a path of truth, then they differed, so Allah sent the

prophets as bringers of good tidings and warners" (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/257).

This verse highlights humanity's need for someone to renew their religion due to the differences that arise among them. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, **"Indeed, Allah sends to this Ummah at the head of every hundred years someone who will renew their religion for them."** (Abu Dawood: 4/480, Hadith 4291).

If such differences occur in the religion of Allah, it is even more likely that people will differ in matters less significant, such as daily life, social relationships, professions, and interests. This underscores the importance of addressing these realities in a way that restores unity to groups and communities. Humanity needs this renewal from time to time, whether on the level of the Ummah, society, family, profession, or public interests.

The noble verse in which Allah Almighty speaks about the prophets as {مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ} [bringers of good tidings and warners] illustrates that the role of the prophets is to give glad tidings of Paradise to the obedient and to warn the disobedient of Hellfire, along with conveying the divine guidance of Allah. This indicates that the mission of scholars and preachers is akin to that of the prophets: to educate people. However, they do not possess the ability to guide people in the absolute sense (hidayah tawfiqiyyah), but rather, they provide guidance by directing people to the truth through what Allah has revealed to His prophets in the scriptures. As Allah says, {وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ} [and sent down with them the Scripture in truth]. These divine books were revealed to the messengers by Allah, signifying that the prophets do not innovate in religion from themselves but rather through what has been revealed to them. Similarly, the scholars who are close to Allah must strive based on what Allah has revealed. This signifies that Allah's guidance is aligned with what He has revealed of the truth. Allah further clarifies the role of the prophets in judging between people in matters of dispute, aiming to restore the unity they once had:

{لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِيْمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيْهِ} [to judge between the people concerning that in which they differed].

This also suggests that people cannot achieve unity unless they return to what unites them, namely, the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ), which serve as the symbol and foundation of their unity. The entire Book is truth, and it was revealed by Allah {بِالْحَقِّ} [in truth]. Allah then explains that those who differed concerning the truth after the books had come to them did so out of jealousy and animosity: {وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيْهِ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ} [And none differed over it except those who were given it - after the clear proofs came to them - out of jealous animosity among themselves]. This indicates that jealousy and transgression are among the most dangerous causes of division within the community, as they foster discord and fragmentation. Transgression encompasses meanings of injustice, exceeding boundaries, oppression, and arrogance.

Allah Almighty also shows His favor upon this Ummah by guiding them to what others before them had differed over: {فَهَدٰى اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ مِنْ} [And Allah guided those who believed to the truth concerning that over which they had differed, by His permission]. First, this guidance is a grace from Allah {فَهَدٰى اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا} [And Allah guided those who believed], and second, His guidance is by His knowledge and will {بِاِذْنِهٖ} [by His permission], knowing both them and what He guided them to, with His support and will. All praise and thanks are due to Allah. The difference among previous nations was centered on the truth {لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ مِنْ} [concerning that over which they had differed]. This indicates that transgression drives a person to dispute even over the clear and manifest truth revealed by Allah, fueled by injustice, arrogance, and a desire for superiority over others. How much more so when it comes to disputes over people's rights? This underscores the importance of nurturing a love for truth, humility, and purifying the soul from transgression, as it leads to injustice, arrogance, and excessive pride.

One of the manifestations of their differences is their disagreement over the day of worship. The Jews chose Saturday, the Christians chose Sunday, while Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) to Friday. They also differed regarding the Qiblah (direction of prayer); the Christians faced the east, and the Jews faced Jerusalem, while Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) to the true Qiblah. They differed in the manner of prayer; some would bow without prostrating, some would prostrate without bowing, some would pray while speaking, and some would pray while walking. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) to the correct way of prayer. They also disagreed about fasting; some would fast for only part of the day, and others would abstain from certain foods. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) to the correct practice of fasting.

They also differed regarding Ibrahim (peace be upon him). The Jews claimed he was Jewish, and the Christians claimed he was Christian, but Allah made him a monotheist and a Muslim, and Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) to the truth regarding him. They also differed about Isa (peace be upon him); the Jews denied him and accused his mother of a grave falsehood, while the Christians made him a god and a son of God. But Allah made him His spirit and word, and Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) to the truth regarding him (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/257-158).

Every disagreement that arises in this Ummah is a reflection of the ways of those who earned Allah's anger and those who went astray. Allah concludes this explanation by affirming that He is the Guide and the Granter of success: {وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ} [And Allah guides whom He wills to a straight path]. He guides whomever He wills from His creation to the truth. This underscores the immense blessing of guidance, and the rightly guided person should attribute his guidance to Allah alone. Every blessing should be attributed not to one's own power, understanding, intelligence, or wisdom, but to Allah alone. A person

should seek guidance from Allah and request all needs from Him, seeking refuge in Him from all that is undesirable.

Therefore, in supplication, a Muslim says:

"Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta, wa 'aafini fiman 'aafayta, watawallani fiman tawallayta, wabarik li fima a'tayta, waqini sharra ma qadayta, fa'innaka taqdi wala yuqdaa 'alayka, wa innahu la yadhillu man walayta, wala ya'izzu man 'adayta. Tabarakta Rabbana wata'alayta."

(O Allah, guide me among those You have guided, and pardon me among those You have pardoned, and take me as a protector among those You have taken as a protector, and bless me in what You have given, and protect me from the evil of what You have decreed. Indeed, You decree, and none can decree over You, and none can be humiliated whom You have befriended, and none can be honored whom You have opposed. Blessed are You, our Lord, and Exalted.) (Abu Dawood: 2/133-134, Hadith 1425).

{أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلاَ إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ}

[Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, "When is the help of Allah?" Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:214)

Allah Almighty explains His way of testing and refining believers: {أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلاَ إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ} [Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, "When is the help of Allah?" Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near.]

This noble verse begins with a rhetorical question, asserting that believers may sometimes overlook the trials and tribulations that accompany the journey to Paradise. Do they imagine that they will enter Paradise without undergoing trials? Through this, the believer is made aware of a fundamental principle in Allah's dealings with His servants, so they may understand and accept it. Moreover, in His kindness and mercy, Allah consoles the believers by indicating that these trials are not unique to them. They are part of Allah's way, even with those who came before them: {وَلَمَّا {يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا} [such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you. They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken]. This reassurance helps to calm the heart and encourages patience and contentment with the trials of poverty (al-ba'sā') and illness and disease (al-darrā'), and the fear of enemies (zulzilū).

This verse serves as a reminder that such trials are a means of purification for the believer and an elevation of his rank for entry into Paradise. It indicates that the path to Paradise is lined with trials. With this knowledge, the believer learns the importance of patience, contentment, and the supplication for well-being and deliverance from all trials, hoping for a good outcome. Should they encounter any trial, they are reminded that this has been decreed by their Lord, blessed and exalted be He.

Mentioning the trials faced by those before them is also a form of consolation for the believers, so they do not think that only they are subjected to Allah's trials. Even the messengers themselves were tested: {وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ} [they were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, "When is the help of Allah?"]. They sought victory over their enemies and prayed for relief from the hardships they were enduring. The word {وَزُلْزِلُوا} [they were shaken] conveys intense movement and fear that causes hearts to tremble, as seen in the severe trials that caused the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) to cry out for help during the Battle of the Confederates, as Allah says in Surah Al-Ahzab: {إِذْ جَاءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ} [When they came at you from above you and from below you, and when eyes shifted [in fear], and hearts reached the throats].

Finally, Allah Almighty concludes the verse with the reassuring statement: {أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ} [Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near]. This indicates that trials are followed by relief, and the believer must exercise patience. Thus, when the companions saw the overwhelming number of the Confederates, and their hearts nearly failed, they said, "This is what Allah and His Messenger promised us, and Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth." And this only increased them in faith and submission. Allah then sent the wind and unseen soldiers, and the Confederates were defeated, as the help of Allah was indeed near them.

{يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلَّوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ}

[They ask you, [O Muhammad], what they should spend. Say, "Whatever you spend of good is [to be] for parents and relatives and orphans and the needy and the traveler. And whatever you do of good - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:215)

The Qur'anic context then shifts to address the believers' question to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) regarding voluntary charity and its avenues. Allah Almighty says, {يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ} [They ask you, [O Muhammad], what they should spend]. This reflects the companions' eagerness to learn about the paths of charity that bring them closer to Allah. The eloquence of the Qur'an is evident in how it mentions the general type of spending, {قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُ مِنْ خَيْرٍ} [Say, "Whatever you spend of good..."], which encompasses all forms of goodness. While 'good' generally refers to wealth, the use of this broad term indicates inclusivity, allowing everyone to contribute according to their capacity, whether it be wealth, food, clothing, or anything else, whether little or much.

Allah then clarifies the hierarchy of those deserving of charity, {فَلِلَّوَالِدَيْنِ ۖ وَلِلْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ} [then [it is to be] for parents and relatives and orphans and the needy and the traveler]. The people most deserving of charity are those who have the greatest rights over the giver, starting with the parents. After them come the relatives, and it is understood that the order of relatives is based on their degree of closeness and need. A relative in need is prioritized over a relative who is not in need, and the type of need varies among them. The comprehensive language of the Qur'an covers everyone in this regard.

Following the relatives, Allah mentions {الْيَتَامَىٰ} [orphans], who have no means of earning a livelihood or taking care of their needs, and thus, they are particularly emphasized due to their vulnerability. Next in line are {الْمَسَاكِينِ} [the needy], who are people in need but unable to fulfill their

basic necessities. Lastly, {الْبَنُ السَّيِّلُ} [the traveler] is mentioned, referring to those who are stranded during their travels and in need of assistance.

This detailed order demonstrates Allah's care and compassion in His guidance for His servants, commanding them to use their resources to fulfill the needs of others. It also shows that Islam is built on a system of organization, as the allocation of voluntary charity is arranged in a manner that could only come from the Most Wise, the All-Knowing, and the Most Kind. The circle of spending extends beyond the near ones to include even the distant, such as orphans, the needy, and travelers.

One of the lessons to be drawn is that the giver should realize that the One who provided him with wealth is the same One who commanded him to spend from what He gave him. The One who made others in need of him is also the One who made him independent of others, and He is capable of making him in need of others and enriching others without him. Glory be to the One in whose hand is the dominion of all things.

Allah then explains the reward for the giver: {وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ} [And whatever you do of good - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it]. This verse highlights two aspects: the first is the action of the servant, {وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ} [whatever you do of good], and the second is the action of Allah, {فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ} [indeed, Allah is Knowing of it]. This eloquent expression suggests that Allah has full knowledge and awareness of the servant's actions. He knows what the servant spends in charity, which implies that Allah, blessed and exalted be He, is fully aware of it and will therefore preserve, reward, and compensate the servant for this deed. The believers have firmly established this belief.

The verse also contains a subtle aspect of Qur'anic eloquence. Allah begins the verse with {مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ} [whatever you spend of good] and concludes with {وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ} [whatever you do of good]. In the first instance, there is an emphasis on the servant's response in spending good, while in the second, there is a focus on Allah's knowledge and awareness of the good

deed, without explicitly mentioning the reward, as it is already well-established among the believers. The verse suffices with the mention of Allah's knowledge of the believer's action {وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ} [and whatever you do of good - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it], showcasing the miraculous eloquence in every word of His noble Book.

{كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ}

[Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.]
(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:216)

Allah Almighty informs us of the obligation of striving in His cause: {كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ} [Fighting has been enjoined upon you], meaning that jihad has been made obligatory. The verse begins by stating the mandatory nature of jihad in the path of Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) was not permitted to engage in combat during his stay in Mecca. However, after the migration, he was granted permission to fight those who fought against him from among the polytheists. Allah says, {أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلُمُوا} [Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought because they were wronged] (Surah Al-Hajj, 22:39). Then, permission was given to fight against the polytheists in general. There is a difference of opinion regarding the specific reference of this verse. Some scholars say it refers specifically to the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), for whom fighting alongside the Prophet was an individual obligation. Once the legislation was established, it became a collective obligation, as mentioned by Ata' and Al-Awza'i. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/27)

This reflects the gradual approach in the imposition of fighting, demonstrating Allah's wisdom in considering the circumstances. Allah laid down a framework for preaching, social interaction, and defense that must be adhered to, so that each aspect can bear its fruit by Allah's permission.

Allah did not command His Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions who had embraced Islam to fight while they were in Mecca, out of consideration for the principle of fewness and abundance, strength and weakness. He did not command them to take risks, even though He was capable of granting them victory despite their small numbers and the large number of their enemies. However, His commands were in alignment with His universal laws regarding abundance and scarcity, strength and weakness. This did not prevent miracles, such as those that occurred during the Battle of Badr.

This suggests that the Ummah must learn from this divine methodology, carefully considering Allah's laws in all matters of jihad, its requirements, and its demands, so that it can be a wise Ummah, guided by the Qur'an and wisdom.

Allah then explains the reality of the human soul and its natural disposition: {كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ} [Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you]. The Qur'an presents practical truths that must be understood and adhered to, acknowledging these realities without ignoring them, especially when dealing with something that goes against human nature. The Qur'an clearly states these facts, illustrating that any guidance, reform, or development of the individual must not ignore the psychological and natural realities of human beings. Rather, it is necessary to affirm these natural and psychological traits that Allah has instilled in human beings, and then clarify what is required, even if it entails going against one's nature or disposition. This approach is more effective for proper guidance and acceptance, and it helps avoid self-deception or rejection once these truths are discovered, or the lack of perseverance due to improper and incorrect handling that does not align with these realities.

The dislike mentioned here does not refer to what Allah has ordained in terms of jihad, but rather to the impact it has on the soul. The act of going out for jihad involves leaving behind family, homeland, and wealth, and exposing the body to potential pain or death. The divine response to this

natural psychological and even intellectual disposition comes by presenting convincing truths that reassure the believer of the blessing in what Allah decrees and mandates upon His servants: {وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ} [But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you]. This is a faith-based equation that, when understood and comprehended by the believer, allows them to live happily with Allah's obligations, content with Allah's decrees, and grateful for every aspect of divine judgment and destiny.

This understanding leads to submission to Allah in every circumstance and state, and satisfaction with the changing conditions, while being patient and diligent in pursuing every means that brings about good and protects from evil. It also elevates one's reliance on Allah, who loves those who place their trust in Him, as He says in another verse, {إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ} [Indeed, Allah loves those who rely upon Him] (Surah Al-Imran, 3:159). The great verse indicates that what one dislikes may actually be beneficial, and what one loves may be harmful, highlighting the human inability to perceive the ultimate consequences of what they love or hate. This necessitates seeking refuge with the One who holds the knowledge of the unseen and the details of the outcomes of all matters and things: {وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ} [And Allah knows, while you know not]. He is the Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, the Mighty, the Wise. Therefore, it becomes necessary to entrust all matters to Him, to respond and be content with His decree and judgment.

Especially since this noble verse affirms Allah's knowledge and His encompassing awareness, while denying the servant's knowledge and understanding of the outcomes and hidden aspects of what they love and hate. The examples in the lives of people are endless in this regard, due to their abundance and diversity.

Allah continues to address the emotional and practical aspects of jihad in His path through other verses, such as in the same surah where He says: {وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ} [And do not say of those who are killed in the way of Allah, "They are dead." Rather, they are alive, but you perceive [it] not] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:154), and in Surah Al-Imran, {وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ} [And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision, rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty, and they receive good tidings about those [to be martyred] after them who have not yet joined them - that there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve] (Surah Al-Imran, 3:169-170).

Allah addresses this matter in a way that aligns with the human inclination towards seeking future rewards by promising the one who strives in His path a great reward that makes the fighter willingly offer himself in the cause of Allah. With this truth and divine guidance, the believer overcomes the natural aversion to jihad, replacing it with a desire and love for striving in the cause of Allah, despite the aversion to the injuries and disabilities that may occur. Thus, jihad for the sake of Allah encompasses both its hardships and the love of obedience to Allah, with the love of obedience prevailing over the hardship, driving the fighter to act with determination and devotion to his Lord, the Almighty.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya provides profound insights into the wisdom and benefits of Allah's statement, {وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ} [But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you]. He states that this verse contains several lessons, wisdoms, and benefits for the servant. If the servant understands that what is disliked may bring about something beloved, and that what is beloved may bring about something disliked, he will not feel secure from harm arising from pleasure, nor despair from pleasure arising

from harm, due to his ignorance of the outcomes. For Allah knows what the servant does not know. This leads to several important outcomes:

One of these outcomes is that there is nothing more beneficial for the servant than to obey Allah's commands, even if it is initially difficult, because its outcomes are all goodness, happiness, and joy, even if the soul dislikes it, for it is ultimately better and more beneficial for the soul. Similarly, there is nothing more harmful for the servant than to engage in what Allah has forbidden, even if the soul desires it and inclines towards it, for its outcomes are all pain, sorrow, evil, and misfortune.

Another secret of this verse is that it necessitates the servant's reliance on the One who knows the outcomes of all matters and acceptance of what He chooses and decrees for the servant, hoping for a good end. It also teaches that the servant should not insist on his own preferences or ask for what he has no knowledge of, for perhaps it contains harm and destruction that he is unaware of. Therefore, the servant should not choose anything over what Allah has chosen for him but should ask Allah to choose the best for him and to make him pleased with His choice, for there is nothing more beneficial than this.

Another benefit is that when the servant entrusts his affairs to his Lord and is content with what Allah chooses for him, Allah will assist him with the strength, determination, and patience needed for what He has chosen. Allah will protect him from the harms that could arise from his own choices, and He will show him the good outcomes of His choice for him, outcomes that he could never have achieved on his own. (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Al-Fawa'id*: 146-147)

{يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۚ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يَقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا ۚ وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَبِمَتِّ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٢١٧) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (٢١٨)}

[They ask you about the sacred month - about fighting therein. Say, "Fighting therein is great [sin], but averting [people] from the way of Allah and disbelief in Him and [preventing access to] al-Masjid al-Haram and the expulsion of its people therefrom are greater [evil] in the sight of Allah. And fitnah is greater than killing." And they will continue to fight you until they turn you back from your religion if they are able. And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever - for those, their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter, and those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally. Indeed, those who have believed and those who have emigrated and fought in the cause of Allah - those expect the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:217-218)

This noble verse indicates that there was a question or questions posed to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) regarding fighting during the sacred months, which are Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram, and Rajab. Allah Almighty says, {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ} [They ask you about the sacred month - about fighting therein]. The Prophet (ﷺ) had sent an expedition to Nakhlah, led by Abdullah ibn Jahsh and accompanied by some of the companions (may Allah be pleased with them), to gather information about the enemy. By Allah's will, they encountered a caravan of Quraysh, and a skirmish ensued, resulting in the death of a man named Amr ibn al-Hadrami, the capture of two others, and the seizure of their goods. The expedition returned to Madinah, and this took place on the last day of Jumada al-Thani and the first night of Rajab.

[They ask you about the Hour], {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ} [They ask you about the spoils of war], {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ} [And they ask you about the soul], {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ} [And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnayn], {عَنِ ذِي الْقُرْنَيْنِ} [And they ask you about the mountains], and {يَسْأَلُكَ النَّاسُ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ} [People ask you about the Hour].

Whether the revelation came in response to the companions' questions (may Allah be pleased with them) or due to the objections of the polytheists, one of the benefits of the Qur'an being revealed in stages is to address emerging issues, clarify the truth, and provide answers to the questioners. It also serves as guidance on what Muslims should do in matters of religion and worldly affairs, offering consolation to the Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers, as well as gradual instruction and other benefits that require extensive, independent study.

Allah Almighty responds to the question about fighting during the sacred month by saying, {قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ} [Say, "Fighting therein is great [sin], but averting [people] from the way of Allah and disbelief in Him and [preventing access to] al-Masjid al-Haram and the expulsion of its people therefrom are greater [evil] in the sight of Allah]. The noble verse clarifies a truth that the polytheists ignore, or they are heedless of, but Allah knows it and knows their reality. Fighting during the sacred month is indeed a grave sin {قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ} [Say, "Fighting therein is great [sin]]; however, averting people from Allah's religion, disbelieving in Him, expelling the Messenger (ﷺ) and the believers from the Sacred City, and their homeland, is a greater sin and more severe in Allah's sight than fighting during the sacred month. This is a rebuke and judgment against them: How can you denounce killing during the sacred month when you have committed greater sins by preventing people from believing, disbelieving in Allah and the truth that has come to you, and expelling the Messenger (ﷺ) and the believers from their land and the Sacred Mosque?

This Qur'anic style provokes the mind and thought, encouraging reflection on the reality of the matter and comparison between what the polytheists denounce and what they themselves do—the ugliness of disbelief, preventing the believers from practicing their faith, and even expelling them from their homeland. It also emphasizes the seriousness of the crime by comparing these matters. This is one of the educational and preaching methods that a preacher, teacher, and defender of rights must use—refuting erroneous thoughts with irrefutable and effective evidence that the sound mind cannot deny.

The verse demonstrates an educational method by stimulating thought and reflection on reality, which often leads a person to see only the aspect of truth that strengthens their argument, while ignoring or overlooking the aspect that presents the argument against them. Allah commands His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to confront them with this truth: { قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ } [Say, "Fighting therein is great [sin], but averting [people] from the way of Allah and disbelief in Him and [preventing access to] al-Masjid al-Haram and the expulsion of its people therefrom are greater [evil] in the sight of Allah].

The noble Qur'anic style is one that asserts and establishes facts without ignoring or distorting their true nature in any way. Allah affirms the sanctity of the sacred months, without dismissing or negating it in defense of what occurred. Instead, He asserts it: { قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ } [Say, "Fighting therein is great [sin].] and then highlights what is even graver, which is the expulsion of its people from the Sacred Mosque. This emphasizes the importance of understanding the opponent's misconceptions to establish the truth and demonstrates a method of presenting arguments that the opponent may have overlooked.

Moreover, it teaches that a person may recognize the truth only from the perspective that supports them, while ignoring or being oblivious to the other perspective that does not serve their interest. This needs to be

clarified to them when presenting evidence. The verse further strengthens the argument against them by addressing their oppression: { وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ } [and fitnah is greater than killing], whether this fitnah refers to disbelief or their persecution of Muslims to turn them away from their faith. This is a more severe crime than killing in the sacred month.

This serves to correct and reinforce the understanding of the comparison, differentiation, and distinction between the killing of a believer by a disbeliever and the persecution of a believer in his faith. The disbeliever's persecution of a believer in his religion is a greater crime than the believer killing the oppressive disbeliever. This indicates that sins vary in severity, with some being greater than others. It also teaches that one should not focus on minor offenses while neglecting major sins, becoming scrupulous about minor faults while overlooking significant transgressions.

This principle also applies to a Muslim's daily conduct, where one may avoid minor missteps but overlook major sins. It is essential to continually self-reflect and hold oneself accountable, as scrutiny is crucial for staying on the straight path.

The persistent efforts of the disbelievers to lead Muslims away from their faith and revert them to disbelief are evident from their continuous attempts to divert Muslims from their religion, as emphasized in the verse: { وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا } [And they will continue to fight you until they turn you back from your religion if they are able]. The disbelievers are relentless in their attempts to tempt Muslims away from their faith through all possible means of trial and temptation, which necessitates that Muslims be vigilant and cautious of all types and methods of fitnah (temptation), whether they come through visual, auditory, intellectual, or emotional channels.

Allah Almighty warns the believers in this noble verse: { وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ } [And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever - for those,

their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter]. This indicates that disbelief nullifies righteous deeds. May Allah grant us safety and steadfastness. The final outcome for those who apostatize and die as disbelievers is that {أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ} [they are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally]. This serves as a warning to the believers at all times against turning away from the religion of Allah.

Shaykh Ibn Sa'di (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned that some scholars interpret that this verse was not abrogated because the unrestricted command to fight is understood in light of the restricted one. This verse is specific to the general command for fighting, and one of the great merits of the sacred months is the prohibition of initiating combat during them. However, fighting in self-defense is permissible during the sacred months, just as it is permissible in the sacred precincts (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/172).

This verse, along with others, directs the mind to contemplate and reflect on various aspects, particularly those that scholars, jurists, and commentators have focused on when reconciling between verses to understand the fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) they contain. Among these aspects are the extent to which the sacred months have been abrogated or not, and the deep consideration of how to reconcile the absolute with the restricted, and the general with the specific. This Islamic methodology has given rise to scholarly schools in the fields of jurisprudence and tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis).

When Allah clarified in the Qur'an that there was no sin upon the members of the expedition for the killing that occurred, Abdullah ibn Jahsh and his companions hoped for the reward of those who engage in jihad. They asked the Prophet (ﷺ), "O Messenger of Allah, do we hope for a reward for this battle, as the mujahideen receive?" Allah then revealed: {إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} [Indeed, those who have believed and those who have emigrated and fought in the cause of

Allah - those expect the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful]. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/262)

{يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا ۚ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ} [فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ]

[They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, "In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefit for people. But their sin is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they should spend. Say, "The excess [beyond needs]." Thus Allah makes clear to you the verses [of revelation] that you might give thought] [To this world and the Hereafter.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:219)

This noble verse reflects the companions' deep concern for their religion, as they asked about the rulings on wine and gambling. Wine refers to intoxicants, and gambling refers to games of chance. According to the books of tafsir, Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) once said, "O Allah, provide us with a clear ruling regarding wine," and then this verse was revealed: {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ} [They ask you about wine and gambling]. When the verse was recited to Umar, he again prayed, "O Allah, give us a clear ruling regarding wine." Then, the verse in Surah An-Nisa was revealed: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ} [O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated]. But Umar repeated his request, saying, "O Allah, provide us with a clear ruling regarding wine," until the verse in Surah Al-Ma'idah was revealed: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رَجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ} [O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/262).

This progression indicates the companions' understanding that wine and gambling were not virtuous, recognizing that wine leads to the loss of reason and that gambling involves unjustly consuming others' wealth. The

gradual prohibition of wine also reflects Allah's mercy toward the believers, considering their attachment to wine and gambling from the days of ignorance. These practices had become habitual, making it difficult for some to give them up easily. Therefore, the prohibition was revealed gradually, demonstrating Allah's consideration for human nature and conditions. Allah, the All-Knowing and Sustainer, deals with human nature according to the natural laws He has instilled within the human psyche.

This gradual approach also teaches us the importance of considering human characteristics and inherent tendencies when guiding, advising, and teaching. It emphasizes dealing with these tendencies according to their needs, without ignoring them, to ensure that guidance is effective and yields results. Among these tendencies are forgetfulness, heedlessness, and the weakness of the human soul, highlighting the need for continuous reminders. Since the human soul becomes attached to certain things, it sometimes requires a replacement or must strive against its desires. This principle also applies to the acquisition of virtues, which may require similar gradual efforts. The Prophetic tradition alludes to this, as the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, **"Knowledge is acquired through learning, and patience through striving to be patient"** (Al-Haythami, Majma' az-Zawa'id: 1/133). He also said, **"A person will continue to speak the truth and strive for truthfulness until he is recorded with Allah as a truthful person"**. (Ahmad, Al-Musnad: 6/273, Hadith 3727)

The noble verse contains a methodology of gradual education by first explaining the reality of wine and gambling, followed by the acknowledgment of the sin associated with them, without overlooking the benefits they may provide. Then, it presents a comparison between their harms and benefits. Allah Almighty says: {قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ} [Say, "In them is great sin"], affirming that they involve significant sin, not just minor wrongs, but serious offenses. This is due to the grievous actions committed by the intoxicated, including both verbal and physical indecencies, leading

to major sins. It also includes the neglect of essential duties, such as prayers. Similarly, gambling leads to unjust gains, causing enmity, resentment, and the loss of wealth without legitimate cause. These harms call for their avoidance because of the sins they entail.

However, Allah also acknowledges that there are benefits to these practices: {وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ} [And [yet, some] benefit for people], whether the temporary euphoria felt by the intoxicated or the financial gains from the buying and selling of alcohol, or the acquisition of wealth and goods through gambling without much effort. Yet, Allah, in His infinite wisdom, presents a comparison that leads to the completion of knowledge and understanding, and ultimately to conviction. He makes it clear that the sin associated with wine and gambling far outweighs their benefits: {وَإِنَّهُمَا أَكْبَرُ} [But their sin is greater than their benefit].

This is a clear and merciful explanation from the Most Merciful regarding the ruling on wine and gambling, presented in a way that enlightens the mind and is palatable to the soul. Despite His power to forbid them outright, without any explanation, Allah chose to educate the Muslims and help them understand in a manner that enlightens their minds, preparing them to face the matters of religion and worldly affairs with a scientific methodology that elevates their thinking and broadens their perspective. This also enables them to convey and disseminate this knowledge among themselves and to others, with deep understanding and great insight.

The methodology Allah employed in establishing this ruling teaches us the importance of acknowledging reality and not misleading the advised by ignoring certain truths. The Qur'an does not ignore the fact that there are benefits to be gained from wine and gambling, even as it encourages people to avoid them. Instead, it presents the truth and the reality that people recognize regarding these practices, acknowledging that there are indeed benefits: {وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ} [And [yet, some] benefit for people]. It even

uses the plural form "benefits" to indicate that there are multiple advantages.

After stating the reality, Allah then clarifies the comparison between the sin and the benefit, leading to the conclusion that the sin should be avoided, even if it means forfeiting the benefit. The emphasis is on prioritizing the avoidance of sin over the pursuit of benefit. This approach is persuasive to the soul, as it involves informing and educating about the facts, showing that the advisor understands the benefits and does not ignore their reality. Allah affirms the benefits derived from wine and gambling and does not dismiss them. He also corrects the risks associated with these practices by clearly stating that their harm is greater, thereby guiding people toward the right path.

Allah Almighty clarifies that the truths known to people are incomplete and lead to sin due to the imbalance between benefits and harms: { وَإِنَّهُمَا أَكْبَرُ } [But their sin is greater than their benefit]. This is an educational and invitational approach that achieves its purpose by Allah's permission. It does not ignore what people love and hate but rather corrects and clarifies what is more complete, better, more beneficial, and what leads to salvation and deliverance. This approach respects the faculties of reason, instilling trust in the guide and the guidance itself, and it encourages careful listening and deep reflection. It helps the mind weigh the differences between warning and encouragement, between what is more virtuous and less so, between right and wrong, and between the lawful and the forbidden. Praise be to Allah for this clarity and instruction from the Most Merciful.

This teaches us the educational and invitational importance of using comparison, preference, and prioritization to guide the addressee toward the truth, which may be hidden from them. It also highlights the importance of not ignoring or bypassing the facts, as well as the

significance of addressing the mind with rational arguments, which is more likely to lead to acceptance.

The verse further includes another question from the believers to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ} [And they ask you what they should spend]. This question pertains to the amount of spending. The Most Merciful made this matter easy and accessible: {قُلِ الْعَفْوَ} [Say, "The excess (beyond needs)]. The requirement for spending is what is easy and feasible, without burdening the giver. Thus, they are encouraged to spend what is surplus to their needs, without harming themselves, so that they do not become dependent on others. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/42).

{كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ} [Thus Allah makes clear to you the verses]—in this way, Allah elucidates the signs that guide toward the truth and the beneficial knowledge of what pleases Him. {الْعَالَمُ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ} [so that you might give thought to this world and the Hereafter]. This verse draws the believers' attention to reflect on both this world and the Hereafter. It is a comprehensive and profound directive. Reflecting on this world encompasses considering beginnings, wealth, efforts, pauses, gains and losses, riches and poverty, its transient nature, and its impermanence, along with the many changes and fluctuations of worldly life. Likewise, reflection on the Hereafter includes pondering its permanence, the eternal life it offers, the happiness and bliss for the believers, and the misery, suffering, and punishment for the disbelievers, along with all other aspects of the Hereafter that invite contemplation.

The divine guidance to reflect on the world and the Hereafter also compels a comparison that encourages prioritizing the eternal, lasting outcome over the fleeting, temporary one. This call to attention is conveyed with the simplest yet most thought-provoking eloquence, particularly after the questioners sought clarification on matters concerning their religion and worldly affairs for the sake of their Hereafter.

Moreover, this reflects Allah's generosity in imparting knowledge and teaching. The answers to their questions are provided more expansively than the inquiry itself necessitates, which underscores the importance of generosity in teaching and in responding to the questions of those who seek knowledge. This is particularly true in the field of knowledge, and more so in religious knowledge, which leads to the Hereafter.

{وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ}

[And they ask you about orphans. Say, "Improvement for them is best. And if you mix your affairs with theirs - they are your brothers. And Allah knows the corrupter from the amender. And if Allah had willed, He could have put you in difficulty. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:220)

This noble verse addresses a concern that weighed heavily on the minds of the Muslims regarding the handling of orphans' wealth. Out of fear of unintentionally consuming from the orphans' property, they went so far as to separate their own food from that of the orphans. They then asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) for guidance, and Allah Almighty responded: {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ {اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ} [And they ask you about orphans. Say, "Improvement for them is best. And if you mix your affairs with theirs - they are your brothers. And Allah knows the corruptor from the amender. And if Allah had willed, He could have put you in difficulty. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:220).

Allah explains the matter of orphans to His servants with a single word: {إِصْلَاحٌ} [Improvement], encompassing all aspects of preserving, managing, and ensuring the growth of the orphans' wealth. Improvement stands in opposition to corruption: {إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ} [Improvement for them is best], which means undertaking actions that protect and enhance their assets

from all perspectives. This is better than strict separation, which could lead to neglect and a lack of growth.

Furthermore, Allah goes on to permit what eases their burden: { وَإِنْ تَخَالَطَوْهُمْ } [And if you mix your affairs with theirs - they are your brothers]. This allows for mixing with orphans in food, wealth, and other affairs, as long as it serves their best interests and alleviates hardship. Allah associates this effort towards improvement with the quality of brotherhood: { فَأَخْوَانُكُمْ } [they are your brothers], a term that signifies connection, love for good, protection, and growth, while eliminating all that is contrary, such as corruption in any form. This implies that the brotherly relationship should exemplify love for good and aversion to evil.

Allah then points to the inner intentions and motives, known only to the individual and to Allah: { وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ } [And Allah knows the corrupter from the amender]. He is fully aware of your intentions when you interact with the orphans and manage their wealth. This knowledge instills a sense of caution and reverence, leading to the continuous mindfulness of Allah in all of one's actions, especially regarding the orphans' wealth, which is the central focus of this verse.

The statement { وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ } [And Allah knows the corruptor from the amender] serves as a behavioral principle in all aspects of life. Often, intentions and objectives behind actions cannot be determined by behavior or evidence alone; only what is within the hearts is known by Allah, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. This verse guides individuals to constantly evaluate their actions in every moment by reminding themselves that [Allah knows the corruptor from the amender] { وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ }.

If someone doubts their own sincerity, they should purify and rectify their intentions by recalling this verse. If someone is uncertain about the righteousness of their actions or behavior, they should correct themselves by reflecting on this statement. When one strives to improve the condition

of others but encounters unintended results, they should reassure themselves with the knowledge that [Allah knows the corrupter from the amender] {وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ}. And if someone doubts the intentions of others, they should remind themselves that [Allah knows the corruptor from the amender] {وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ}.

This principle instills a sense of accountability before Allah and encourages continuous self-reflection and sincerity in one's actions, knowing that ultimate judgment lies with Him, who fully knows the hidden and the apparent.

By analogy, this divine methodology suggests that in various aspects of life, especially those involving others, it can be challenging to fully grasp all the details and nuances. This necessitates approaching such matters with the intent to improve first, considering the principle of brotherhood second, and being certain that Allah is fully aware of people's actions, intentions, and objectives, which are never hidden from Him. The benefit of this behavioral approach extends to principles of management, such as in business administration, in administrative and public relations, as well as in social and familial relationships. A person should strive to uphold the principle of improvement, which is based on the principle of brotherhood, while constantly being mindful of Allah's surveillance and His knowledge of all intentions and goals. This principle serves as a guiding rule for behavior, with broad authority and profound implications for those who reflect on its aspects and benefits. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Allah Almighty then expresses His favor upon the believers through this noble and grand directive: {وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ} [And if Allah had willed, He could have put you in difficulty]. If Allah had desired to impose hardship upon you by not granting this concession or by not clarifying it, He could have done so. However, by lifting this burden and hardship, Allah has provided incentives and means for good and the attainment of benefits for the orphan. This statement from Allah teaches the believers the greatness

of the legislation He has provided and the good that has been achieved through it. By highlighting the removal of this hardship, the verse also conveys that understanding blessings through their opposites enhances one's appreciation. This is an educational method, where attention is drawn to opposites to help recognize blessings.

The verse concludes with Allah's statement: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ} [Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise]. The attribute of might encompasses complete strength and overwhelming power, as Allah is sovereign over all affairs. He is wise in His commands, prohibitions, legislation, and decrees, as well as in His creation, giving life, and causing death.

He is wise in every matter, the One who perfects all things. Wisdom lies in placing everything in its rightful place, opposing all forms of randomness and chaos. The pairing of these two attributes in the phrase {إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ} [Indeed, Allah is Almighty, Wise] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:209) reveals that despite His absolute dominion, His overwhelming power, and His irresistible might, Allah is profoundly wise in all His affairs. His wisdom governs His decrees and decisions, aligning them with His divine names and attributes, such as mercy, compassion, support for the oppressed, and justice for the wrongdoer.

Wisdom is a noble and exalted attribute, one that Allah has praised in another verse {وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا} [And whoever is granted wisdom has certainly been given much good] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:269). There is no doubt that the wisdom granted to human beings pales in comparison to the perfect wisdom of the Giver and Bestower, Allah. While human wisdom is subject to the imperfections inherent in humanity, the wisdom of Allah is flawless. Those blessed with wisdom among people are often distinguished by their ability to act with strength and righteousness in the most fitting manner. Praise be to Allah, who possesses these sublime attributes and the most beautiful names. Truly, wisdom is the art of placing everything in its proper place.

{وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَةَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَ وَلَآئِمَةً مُّؤْمِنَةً خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ وَيُبَيِّنُ ءَايَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ}

[Do not marry polytheistic women until they believe. And a believing slave woman is better than a polytheist, even though she may please you. And do not marry polytheistic men [to your women] until they believe. And a believing slave is better than a polytheist, even though he may please you. Those invite [you] to the Fire, but Allah invites to Paradise and to forgiveness, by His permission. And He makes clear His verses to the people that perhaps they may remember.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221).

The noble verse addresses the matter of selecting a spouse based on religion: {وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَةَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَ} [Do not marry polytheistic women until they believe] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). The verse includes a prohibition against marrying polytheistic women until they embrace faith. Allah, the Exalted, then explains the reason behind this prohibition: {وَلَآئِمَةً مُّؤْمِنَةً خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ} [And a believing slave woman is better than a polytheist, even though she may please you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). The verse indicates a process of comparison between two matters: admiration and goodness. Admiration may not necessarily be what is best and most beneficial; hence, it is crucial to consider the other criterion, which is goodness. This principle is a valuable one, inspiring the believer to extend its benefit to all aspects of life.

Among the insights of the verse is that it mentions admiration, which pertains to various parts and different components. The Prophet (ﷺ) highlighted this when he said, "A woman is married for four things: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty, and her religion. So marry the one who is religious, may your hands be rubbed with dust." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3/360, Hadith 5090). The sources of admiration in a woman can be found in these four criteria.

Allah Almighty explains the application of the other criterion, which is the goodness derived from faith: {وَلَا أَمَّةٌ مُؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ} [And a believing slave woman is better than a polytheist, even though she may please you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). This goodness stems from the inherent virtues and effects of faith, which guide a woman in her actions and relationships, safeguarding herself, wealth, children, and husband. A believing woman seeks Allah's pleasure through obedience and kindness to her husband, something that is absent in a polytheist due to her lack of faith. The purposes of faith within her heart elevate her in both this world and the hereafter.

This principle applies equally to the choice of a husband, as Allah says: {وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ} [And do not marry polytheistic men [to your women] until they believe. And a believing slave is better than a polytheist, even though he may please you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). This reflects the same comparison between admiration and goodness.

Allah then reveals another aspect of goodness: {أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ} [Those invite [you] to the Fire] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). The polytheists invite to the Fire, as they call to it through every door of idolatry, moral transgressions, harm, hatred for Muslims and Islam, leading others to disbelief, and turning people away from the path of Allah. All of this stands in stark contrast to Allah's call: {وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ} [But Allah invites to Paradise and to forgiveness, by His permission] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). This is a profound difference that necessitates avoiding and not choosing those who invite to the Fire, regardless of how pleasing they may seem.

The verse also contains a significant insight: Paradise and forgiveness are attained only by Allah's permission and will: {وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ} [But Allah invites to Paradise and to forgiveness, by His permission]

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). This calls for continuous supplication and asking Allah for steadfastness on the truth until the servant meets Him. No one has any portion of success except by Allah's permission.

Finally, Allah says: {وَيُبَيِّنُ ءَايَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ} [And He makes clear His verses to the people that perhaps they may remember] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:221). Allah, Blessed and Exalted, clarifies His commands and intentions for His servants, teaching them what they were ignorant of so that they may act according to His rulings, comply with His commands and prohibitions, and remember these clarifications when forgetfulness occurs.

{وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَأَعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهَرْنَ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ (٢٢٢) نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلَاقُوهُ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ}

[They ask you about menstruation. Say, "It is harm, so keep away from women during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. But once they have purified themselves, approach them from where Allah has ordained for you. Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves." Your wives are a place of sowing seed for you, so come to your place of cultivation however you wish and put forth [righteousness] for yourselves. And fear Allah and know that you will meet Him. And give good tidings to the believers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222-223)

Allah Almighty clarifies the matter that some Muslims inquired about concerning the status of a woman during her menstruation. In Jewish tradition, when a woman menstruated, they would neither eat with her, drink with her, nor cohabit with her in the house. When the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was asked about this, the verse {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ} [They ask you about menstruation] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222) was revealed. The response from Allah came with the utmost eloquence: {قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى} [Say, "It is harm"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222). Allah, the All-Knowing and All-Powerful, described it with a single word "harm" (أذى), which is comprehensive in its meaning, without delving into the details of the harm. This approach preserves the woman's dignity and modesty, sparing her the discomfort of having others know about her personal matters. Allah, our Lord, protected her from having to disclose such details publicly. The concept of safeguarding modesty and privacy is frequently emphasized in the Quran, as seen in the cases of divorced women {وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ} [And divorced women shall wait [as regards their marriage] for three menstrual periods] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:228) and widows {وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ} [And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - they, [the wives] shall wait four

months and ten days] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:234). The term "harm" (أذى) is a metaphor for the discomfort a woman experiences during this period, whether it be emotional or physical, and thus, the husband is required to avoid causing her any distress during this time .

Allah then commanded that women should be avoided during menstruation: {فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ} [So keep away from women during menstruation] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222). Allah further detailed, {وَلَا تَقْرُبُوهُنَّ} [And do not approach them until they are pure] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222). This indicates that sexual intercourse is prohibited during menstruation, which is agreed upon by consensus. The specification of avoiding intercourse during menstruation implies that other forms of intimacy, not involving intercourse, are permissible, as long as they are within what Allah has allowed . As the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, *“Do everything except sexual intercourse”* .

Among the benefits of the jurisprudential issues related to this matter is the way the Sunnah has provided further clarification. Jurists and commentators have thoroughly examined the combination of the indications from the noble Quranic verse and the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to derive significant and profound jurisprudential rulings in this regard.

Another benefit is the Quranic style in delivering answers, which is full of profound etiquette, as previously mentioned. The verse provides the intended meaning and judgment without delving into details that might cause discomfort to the listener. This emphasizes the importance of adopting this noble Quranic approach in guidance and education, and in speaking and conversing with others—ensuring that the language used is imbued with modesty, preserves the feelings of others, and selects praiseworthy expressions. It also highlights the importance of training the younger generation in this refined manner.

Allah then explains the permissibility and the return to the natural state after menstruation and purification: {فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ} [But once they have purified themselves] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222). This phrase carries two aspects: the end of menstruation, which marks the beginning of purification, and its completion with the ritual bath (ghusl), which the Sunnah has further elucidated. {فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ} [Approach them from where Allah has ordained for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222). This is another example of conveying information with great propriety. When purity is achieved, the husband may approach his wife in the manner that Allah has permitted, avoiding any approach that Allah has prohibited. This ethical approach in teaching serves as a model for the method of instruction, tailored according to the type of audience. It also indicates that modesty is a characteristic of this great religion, and it must be upheld and encouraged.

Allah Almighty then explains what He loves from His servants in this regard: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ} [Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222). Allah loves those who frequently repent, recognizing that humans are prone to shortcomings, slips, and sins, and He loves this act of repentance from the believers. Similarly, He loves those who cleanse themselves from physical impurities, such as through washing and performing ghusl (ritual purification) from major impurities like post-coital impurity and menstruation, as well as from dirt and other things that necessitate cleanliness and purification. Thus, Allah's love encompasses those who purify themselves from both sins and physical impurities, whether tangible or intangible.

From the jurisprudential benefits, scholars have extracted subtle insights and interpretations that have expanded minds and illuminated them with deep thought and deduction. For instance, in the verse {فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ} [But once they have purified themselves, approach them from where Allah has ordained for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:222), some

scholars have inferred a recommendation and guidance to engage in marital relations after purification. Ibn Hazm, may Allah have mercy on him, held that it is obligatory after each menstrual cycle, and other scholars of jurisprudence have debated whether it is obligatory or merely permissible. They argue that the Prophet's actions serve as a guiding example that might shift the ruling away from being obligatory.

Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, after mentioning these opinions, concluded by stating that the ruling returns to what was established before the prohibition. If the act was obligatory, it remains obligatory, as in the verse {فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرْمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ} [And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists] (Surah At-Tawbah, 9:5), or if it was permissible, it remains permissible, as in the verse {وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا} [And when you have completed the rites, then hunt] (Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:2), or {فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ} [And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land] (Surah Al-Jumu'ah, 62:10). According to this opinion, the evidences are harmonized, as mentioned by Al-Ghazali and others, and it was chosen by some of the later scholars, and this is the correct view.

This highlights, from an academic, intellectual, and educational perspective, the profound impact of the Quran in its teachings and implications on the emergence of Islamic jurisprudence, principles, and methods of deduction. Scholars have built their deep understanding on principles derived from the texts of the Quran and Sunnah, and the essence of their differences lies in the depth of contemplation, synthesis, and meticulous extraction of meanings. Their minds and intellects were elevated to such a high level of understanding the implications of the texts, showing that the Quran enlightens minds and does not leave them static before the text but rather encourages them to be active and dynamic within its scope.

In addition to the previous explanation regarding the matter of a woman during her menstruation, Allah, the Exalted, further clarifies the relationship between a man and his wife concerning another matter that people inquired about. This issue was based on what was circulated by the People of the Book, specifically the Jews in Medina, who claimed that if a man approached his wife from behind in her private part, the child would be cross-eyed (الحول). Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, responded with the verse: {نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ} [Your wives are a place of sowing seed for you, so come to your place of cultivation however you wish] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:223), thus invalidating this belief. This verse addressed and corrected the incorrect belief that had spread among the people, demonstrating one of the benefits of the Quran being revealed gradually to address the diverse issues faced by the people. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/61).

Commentators, including Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, explained that this verse allows for marital relations in any position – whether from the front or the back – so long as it is in the same place of intercourse, i.e., the vagina, as confirmed by authentic Hadiths. Ibn Kathir also mentioned an incident where Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, responded to a man who inquired about this matter, saying: *"In any position – standing, sitting, front-facing, or back-facing – but only in the vagina, do not exceed that."* This interpretation was upheld by the majority of the Companions, the Followers (Tabi'in), and the leading scholars of jurisprudence, who understood the verse to mean that intercourse is permissible from any position as long as it is within the bounds of the permissible area. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/270)

Its meaning, according to the majority of the Companions, the Followers (Tabi'in), and the leading scholars of jurisprudence, is that intercourse is permissible from any position – whether front-facing or back-facing – so long as it is in the vagina. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/62)

This reflects Islam's meticulous attention to the details that a Muslim needs in terms of clarification. It presents these clarifications in a clear, comprehensive manner, imbued with profound etiquette and modesty, while ensuring complete clarity. The text is rich in teaching a methodology of modesty in discourse and educational explanation, making it easy for the reader to recite it to both the young and old, men and women alike. This is part of the Quran's miraculous eloquence. The Quran expresses this through the verse {نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ} [Your wives are a place of sowing seed for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:223), where "harth" (sowing field) is the place of planting and cultivation, just as a woman's womb is where a child is conceived and develops. Then, Allah says regarding a man's intimate relations with his wife, {فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ} [So come to your place of cultivation however you wish] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:223), which reveals an eloquent style filled with modesty, preserving the sense of dignity and decency for both the man and the woman. This is consistent with Allah's names and attributes, as mentioned in the hadith, "*Indeed, Allah is modest and concealing*" (Ahmad, Musnad Ahmad: 4/224; Abu Dawud, Sunan Abi Dawud: 4013).

At the same time, Allah says, {إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ} [Indeed, Allah is not timid in telling the truth] (Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:53), which implies that modesty does not prevent the truth from being revealed and clarified, but it should be conveyed with the utmost modesty, which is one of Allah's attributes. This underscores the importance of cultivating modesty in speech, choosing appropriate words, and avoiding language that could be inappropriate or objectionable in any context. This refined etiquette is a characteristic of the righteous servants of Allah, led by our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Their speech was devoid of vulgar expressions or anything unbecoming. Instead, they carefully selected their words, as Ibn Abbas (RA) did when he responded to a question, as previously mentioned, by saying, "*In any position – standing, sitting, front-facing, or back-facing – but only in the vagina,*

do not exceed that." This high level of decorum extended into the writings of scholars, whose works clearly expressed the truth in the most beautiful language, without resorting to anything less. May Allah teach us and grant us the etiquette that He loves and is pleased with.

Among the contextual benefits is the choice of the word "أنى" in the phrase "أنى شئتم" [however you wish]. The term "أنى" is more general in the Arabic language than the words "كيف" (how), "أين" (where), and "متى" (when), as it can be used to inquire or inform about something with multiple aspects (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/62). Then Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says "وقدموا لأنفسكم" [And put forth (righteousness) for yourselves], which is a reminder of what a Muslim should prioritize with his wife (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/273).

Ibn Abbas (RA) commented on this by saying that it refers to saying "*In the name of Allah*" before engaging in intercourse, emphasizing the importance of beginning with the name of Allah (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/64).

It also advises preparing what will benefit you in the Hereafter, and putting forth obedience and righteous deeds for yourselves. Some scholars have interpreted it as seeking children and progeny. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/64)

There is nothing preventing the interpretation of the verse from encompassing all the aforementioned meanings. This is one of the rhetorical characteristics that distinguishes the Quran, where its meanings are broad enough to include multiple intended purposes. Among the benefits is the connection between the desires of the spouses and both worldly and hereafter goals, along with the remembrance of Allah by saying His name, which is emphasized for its importance, virtue, and the blessings it brings. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "*If any one of you, when he wants to approach his wife, says: (Bismillah, Allahumma jannibna ash-shaytan wa jannib ash-shaytan ma razaqtana.) 'In the name of Allah, O Allah, keep us*

away from the devil and keep the devil away from what You grant us,' and if it is decreed that they should have a child, the devil will never harm him." (Al-Bukhari: 2/438, Hadith 3271).

The verse concludes with the command to fear Allah: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ} [And fear Allah], which is a repeated admonition from Allah in the Quran. This repetition is to remind the believer of the importance of this command and to keep it in mind at all times. By maintaining taqwa (God-consciousness), goodness is achieved, and evil is repelled. Taqwa necessitates refraining from what Allah has forbidden and complying with what He has commanded, while also fostering a sense of fear when one falls short or slips. This fear encourages the believer to seek repentance and forgiveness when mistakes and errors occur.

Allah then reminds His servants of their return to Him: {وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلَاقُوهُ} [And know that you will meet Him], making the believer aware that he will be held accountable and rewarded or punished for his actions. Allah then instructs His Prophet (ﷺ) to {وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ} [Give good tidings to the believers]. The verse does not specify the reward to encompass all forms of goodness from Allah in this world and the Hereafter, which is a rhetorical method to create anticipation for great blessings. If the promise of a human being to another human being generates excitement and longing, how much more so when it is the promise of the Most Generous Creator? This has educational and da'wah (Islamic preaching) implications, emphasizing the importance of good tidings as an effective and influential method, as well as the importance of reminding people of taqwa, and repeating it to ensure that the listener is constantly reminded to strive for and adhere to goodness.

{وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (٢٢٤) لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ}

[And do not make [the name of] Allah an excuse in your oaths against being righteous and fearing Allah and making peace among people. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing. Allah does not impose blame upon you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He imposes blame upon you for what your hearts have earned. And Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:224-225)

These verses illustrate the proper conduct that a person should maintain towards their Creator, Allah, the Exalted, and they clarify the principles regarding oaths and swearing by Allah, including the prohibitions and etiquettes associated with them. Allah says: {وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [And do not make [the name of] Allah an excuse in your oaths against being righteous and fearing Allah and making peace among people. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:224).

When a person feels the need to affirm their truthfulness, what they have seen, heard, or know, or what they will do or refrain from doing, or to refute an accusation, they may swear by Allah to confirm their statement. However, this may lead to excess and overstepping in their oaths. Allah, the Exalted, clarified this matter in a way that encompasses all aspects and implications of oaths, covering all meanings and concepts related to it.

The Companions of the Prophet (RA), as well as other scholars, understood this text from multiple angles, reflecting the comprehensive guidance from Allah. This is part of the miraculous eloquence of the Quran, where a brief and concise text can encompass all the intended aspects that need to be explained. The miraculous nature of the Quranic language lies not only in the words and their vast meanings but also in the structure of the sentences, which include a wide range of intended and desired indications.

Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, summarized the exegetical interpretations, stating: "Do not refrain from performing acts of kindness, citing your oath as an excuse, such as saying, 'I swore not to do such and such.'" This meaning was supported by Ibn Abbas, Al-Nakha'i, Mujahid, Al-Rabi', and others. Sa'id ibn Jubayr said: "It refers to a person who swears not to be kind, not to maintain family ties, and not to make peace between people, and when advised to do so, he responds, 'I have sworn an oath.'" Some interpreters said that the verse also means: "Do not swear falsely by Allah if you intend to act righteously, with piety, and to make peace."

Among the sayings and implications is the advice to minimize the use of oaths, as this aligns with righteousness and piety. Excessive swearing often leads to negligence and a lack of consideration for the rights of Allah. It is also advised not to make oaths trivial, using them for every truth and falsehood. Additionally, if a person is requested to do good, they should not use an oath as an excuse by saying, "I have sworn an oath," when in fact, they have not sworn. Another interpretation is that if someone swears not to maintain family ties, not to give charity, not to reconcile, or anything similar that falls under the categories of goodness and righteousness, they should expiate for their oath and perform the good deed (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*: 3/64-65).

The noble verse encompasses the major types of goodness that an oath should not prevent from being fulfilled, which are righteousness, piety, and reconciliation between people: { وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا } [And do not make [the name of] Allah an excuse in your oaths against being righteous and fearing Allah and making peace among people] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:224). Righteousness, piety, and reconciliation are more important and should take precedence over fulfilling an oath. This highlights the importance of understanding the principle of prioritization among different matters, enhancing the level of thought, deduction, and reasoning. It encourages Muslims to prioritize their actions,

elevating their understanding and ability to deduce and reason in ways that strengthen social and moral structures, and favor the Hereafter over worldly concerns. These meanings in understanding the benefits of the Quran elevate the recipient's mindset toward productive thinking and actions that serve the interests and objectives of Islamic law. These are essential for educational curricula, pedagogical methods, and practical management systems.

Another benefit from the verse is that an oath should not prevent acts of righteousness; rather, one should expiate the oath and perform the good deed. This indicates the high status of righteousness, maintaining ties, and other forms of goodness in the sight of Allah, as He directs the one who swears an oath to expiate for it. It also underscores the importance of cooperation, unity, and maintaining strong ties, prioritizing these by expiating an oath. The verse reflects the Sharia's concern for all that brings goodness to believers and their community, guiding and facilitating them towards the doors of goodness that might have been closed by an oath.

The divine instruction in this noble verse concludes with Allah's statement: {وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is Hearing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:224), indicating that Allah hears what you say and knows what you conceal and reveal. In the context of oaths, a person may swear about something unknown to the one being sworn to, and only the one swearing knows it. However, Allah makes it clear that He hears and knows what the other person cannot know or understand. This serves as a reminder of Allah's knowledge of intentions: if the one being sworn to cannot know and understand, Allah hears and knows. If a Muslim keeps in mind Allah's attributes in every matter, it will guide them to what Allah loves, motivating them toward it, and preventing them from what Allah has forbidden, keeping them away from it. Among the etiquettes is that a Muslim should not make their Lord a target or hindrance in their oaths.

Allah Almighty further clarifies the teachings concerning oaths in the verse: {لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ} [Allah does not impose blame upon you for what is unintentional in your oaths] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:225). Allah has lifted the burden of sin from what the tongue may utter habitually, such as when people casually say "No, by Allah" or "Yes, by Allah" without the intention of making a deliberate oath. The scholars agree that "الغو الأيمان" refers to these casual expressions of oaths made without the intention of swearing or confirming anything. This is a great favor from Allah, as He has removed the burden and sin for this type of oath, which often slips from a person's tongue unintentionally.

However, accountability comes, as Allah explains: {وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ} [but He imposes blame upon you for what your hearts have earned] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:225). This means that Allah holds a person accountable when they deliberately swear to something, knowing they are lying, or when they swear with the intention of truthfulness, but it turns out to be false. The verse concludes with Allah's statement: {وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:225), indicating that Allah is forgiving towards His servants and patient with them. He does not hasten punishment upon them and forgives those who seek forgiveness and repent. Praise be to Allah for this great blessing and His noble attributes.

{الَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (٢٢٦) وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ}

[For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives is a waiting time of four months, but if they return [to their wives], then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. But if they decide on divorce, then indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:226-227).

The Quranic context transitions to issues of separation between spouses, where Allah the Exalted says: {الَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} [For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives is a waiting time of four months, but if they return [to their wives], then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:226). This verse and the one that follows address situations where a husband swears an oath not to approach his wife. If a husband swears such an oath for less than four months, this is like any other oath: he may either expiate for it and resume relations with his wife, or continue with his oath, and his wife has no claim against him because it is within the four-month period.

However, if the period exceeds four months, the wife waits for four months. {فَإِنْ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} [But if they return (to their wives), then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful] means that if the husband retracts his oath within the four months, Allah will forgive what has passed, and He has shown mercy by allowing them to expiate for their oath. If the husband does not return to his wife and the four months expire, the wife has the right to demand consummation, as it is her right after the four-month period. If the husband resumes relations, he must expiate for his oath, but if he refuses, the wife can either wait or request a divorce, and if the husband refuses, he can be compelled to divorce her. (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/180)

In this passage, the Quranic expression reveals a wealth of benefits, including the refined manner of speech that maintains a veil of modesty between the spouses. This linguistic subtlety allows the young to read it without fully grasping its implications, while the mature reader understands it without compromising their sense of modesty. This highlights the Quran's ability to elevate the human intellect and taste to high levels of morality, manners, and exquisite rhetorical style. It also underscores the importance of nurturing modesty in all aspects, including the careful choice of words that convey meaning without offending the virtue of modesty.

Additionally, the passage emphasizes the sanctity of marital rights, according to the capacities and characteristics that govern the relationship between husband and wife. Allah, the Exalted, has set this period at four months, which serves as a guideline, indicating to the man that he should not be absent from his wife for more than four months, whether due to travel or other reasons. This period represents the maximum limit, acknowledging the wife's rightful claim in this matter. If the husband refuses to fulfill his marital duties, the wife has the right to demand them, or she may request a separation through divorce if the limit is exceeded.

The passage also teaches the importance of preventing physical and emotional harm, fulfilling marital rights, and the fact that the range of options is limited and regulated by Sharia. It demonstrates the Sharia's concern for the most intricate aspects of the relationship between spouses. The specification of the four-month period also serves as evidence of the wisdom and knowledge of the Almighty, who knows the nature of women. No one else could determine such a period and decree it except the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Even the disciplining of a wife through separation should not exceed four months, as Allah says in Surah An-Nisa: { وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي ۖ الْمَضَاجِعِ } [and forsake them in bed] (Surah An-Nisa, 4:34). Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, once gathered a group of women and asked them about this matter. They mentioned four months, so Umar set the duration

of a man's military service at four months. When this period elapsed, he would call the troops back and send others in their place. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/72).

Let the Muslim reflect on how the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) adhered to the limits set by Allah, and how they took into account the circumstances of the people to ensure their well-being and the protection of their dignity. This reflection also reveals the methodology of organization and the way they derived rulings.

The verse fittingly concludes with the words {وَأِنْ عَزَّمُوا الطَّلَاقَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [But if they decide on divorce, then indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:227). If they resolve to divorce, knowing that Allah hears and knows their intentions and the state of their hearts – whether the decision is driven by harm, hardship, or the intent to inflict pain on the other party – this awareness should invoke a sense of accountability before the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. This understanding encourages spouses to avoid causing harm to one another, and if harm does occur, the rights are clearly defined and protected by Shariah to prevent it.

Praise and thanks are due to Allah for blessing His servants with this great legislation.

{وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ ۚ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ
عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ}

[Divorced women remain in waiting for three periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation. And they [women] have rights similar to those [of their husbands] over them according to what is reasonable, but the men have a degree over them [in responsibility]. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:228).

The passage transitions to another aspect concerning the divorced woman: {وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ} [Divorced women remain in waiting for three periods] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:228). The waiting period (iddah) for a divorced woman is three menstrual cycles. During this time, the woman is instructed to wait, as indicated by the term {يَتَرَبَّصْنَ} [remain in waiting]. The word {قُرُوءٍ} [periods] encompasses both the states of purity and menstruation, demonstrating the miraculous eloquence of the Quran, where a single word can encompass two different states.

Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, explained that {ثَلَاثَةُ قُرُوءٍ} refers to three cycles or transitions. The divorced woman experiences two states: she transitions from purity to menstruation and from menstruation to purity. This dual meaning aligns perfectly with the text, where the word captures both the purity and menstruation, making the term a shared name for both (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/76).

For justice and the preservation of rights, the divorced woman is required to wait during this period to ensure that she is not pregnant, which prevents the mixing of lineages and preserves the rights of the former husband if a child is involved. It also protects the rights of a future husband by ensuring that no child not belonging to him is attributed to

him. This ruling underscores the importance of the purity and preservation of lineage, the fairness of Sharia, and its meticulous and elevated legal rulings.

Indeed, it is obligatory for her to disclose if she is pregnant with the ex-husband's child: {وَلَا يَجِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ} [And it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:228). This prohibition indicates the impermissibility of concealing a pregnancy, as it involves the ex-husband's right to fatherhood. It also upholds the child's right to be attributed to their father. One of the benefits of this verse is the affirmation of Allah's Lordship, emphasizing that He is the Creator of the fetus. By stating {مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ} [what Allah has created], Allah confirms that it is He who created what is in the woman's womb, preventing the act of attributing creation to the husband and wife. Allah is the All-Creator, All-Knowing, while the woman's responsibility is either to declare or conceal the pregnancy.

Allah warns against concealing the pregnancy, appealing to the woman's faith if she believes in Allah and the Last Day, which highlights the importance of leveraging this specific faith-based motivation in education, da'wah (Islamic preaching), and legal matters. This approach stirs within the believer a fear of Allah, prompting the fulfillment of the trust of truthfulness out of fear of Allah, who has granted and entrusted this characteristic that necessitates honesty, even if it is difficult for the self.

At the same time, there is a warning against hiding the truth if one believes in Allah and the Last Day, when there will be accountability and recompense: {إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ} [if they believe in Allah and the Last Day] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:228). The way of true believing women compels them to reject concealment, as their belief in Allah and the implications of that belief, which include knowledge that deters them from hiding the truth, guides them. Their belief in the Last Day, which they understand as a day of reckoning and reward, further reinforces this. One of the benefits

here is the importance of utilizing characteristics and qualities that encourage the doing of good and the avoidance of harm.

Allah the Exalted further explains what a husband can do to reconcile with his wife: {وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ} [And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:228). Out of the ease and mercy of Islamic law, Allah, the Most Merciful, has granted the husband the right to take his wife back into the marriage as long as she is within her waiting period (iddah). One of the objectives of Sharia is to reunite the family and strive towards reconciliation.

A key point is that Allah refers to the husband as "بعل" (ba'l) in this context: {وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ} [Their husbands]. The term "ba'l" signifies the husband's superiority or authority over his wife, granted by Allah through the marital bond. This is similar to Allah's use of the word in the verse {أَتَدْعُونَ بَغْلًا} [Do you call upon Ba'l (a lord)] (Surah As-Saffat, 37:125), where it denotes a lord or master due to the elevated position (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/79).

The verse also emphasizes that the intention behind reconciliation should be for the purpose of reform and not to harm the wife: {إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا} [if they want reconciliation]. This demonstrates that the Islamic approach is based on good intentions, cutting off any malicious intent to harm the other party. The husband is not permitted to take his wife back solely to cause her harm. This intention is known only to the individual and, above all, to Allah, the All-Knowing, the Wise. Such sincerity and good intention can only exist within a system whose adherents believe in Allah and the Last Day. This realization makes the believer appreciate the blessing of Sharia alongside the blessing of faith, which manifests in righteous conduct and relationships, maintained by a methodology that cannot be achieved through any other means. Praise and thanks are due to Allah.

Among the benefits and implications of these verses is the wealth of Islamic jurisprudence on this subject and others, where scholars have

derived rulings with significant impact on the lives of spouses. These rulings can be found in detail in the books of jurisprudence and tafsir for those who seek further knowledge.

The verse introduces the balance of rights between spouses in Allah's words: {وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ} [And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them according to what is reasonable] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:228). Just as the husband has rights, the wife similarly has rights over her husband. Each spouse is responsible towards the other, and both should fulfill their respective rights with kindness and fairness.

Allah then clarifies that the husband has an additional degree of responsibility: {وَاللرِّجَالُ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ} [But the men have a degree over them]. This extra degree granted to the husband is due to his financial responsibilities and the inherent leadership role he holds in the relationship. One spouse must have authority over the other for leadership and direction, without diminishing the other's rights. Allah has granted this authority to the man because human nature and societal order necessitate it. Affairs cannot be managed effectively without a leader. As Allah says in Surah An-Nisa: {الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا} {أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ} [Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth] (Surah An-Nisa, 4:34). This preference and the ruling of an additional degree is a blessing from Allah, ensuring the proper functioning of the household and the well-being of the family, which includes children, guidance, and responsibility.

Allah concludes this noble verse with the words {وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ} [And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise]. This emphasizes that Allah is Almighty, possessing complete power and strength, which necessitates fearing His retribution for those who disobey Him and defy His commands. He is also Wise in His legislation and in His commands. Understanding these divine attributes and their connection to the verse's content compels caution

against disobeying Allah's orders or objecting to any aspect of His commands. Allah is Wise in His legislation, knowing about His creation, the human being, what the human does not know about himself. He is the Creator, closer to the human than the human is to himself.

{الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمُ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا بِمَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ ۚ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (٢٢٩)} فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ ۚ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ}

[Divorce is twice. Then, either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment. And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them unless both fear that they will not be able to keep [within] the limits of Allah. But if you fear that they will not keep [within] the limits of Allah, then there is no blame upon either of them concerning that by which she ransoms herself. These are the limits of Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits of Allah—it is those who are the wrongdoers. And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him afterward until [after] she marries a husband other than him. And if the latter husband divorces her [or dies], there is no blame upon the woman and her former husband for returning to each other if they think that they can keep [within] the limits of Allah. These are the limits of Allah, which He makes clear to a people who know.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229-230)

The passage transitions to discussing divorce and its etiquettes: {الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ ۖ} [Divorce is twice] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). Allah, the Exalted, permits the possibility of reconciliation after the first and second instances of divorce, as long as the wife is still within her waiting period (iddah). However, after the third instance, the marriage is dissolved completely: {فَإِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِإِحْسَانٍ} [Then, either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). This verse sets the parameters for either reconciliation or final separation.

One of the benefits of this ruling is that it provides the opportunity for reflection after the first divorce, and again after the second, ensuring that the couple only proceeds to the third divorce after experiencing the consequences of separation twice. This gives the couple a chance to

consider whether they truly wish to part ways or if they can reconcile. If they cannot reconcile, the divorce should proceed in the best manner possible, with proper conduct during the separation. This reflects the high level of etiquette and abundant mercy that Allah has decreed from above the seven heavens, ensuring that the husband upholds the rights of his ex-wife.

The command is either to retain the wife with kindness, treating her with fairness and noble conduct, or to release her with goodness. The term "بإحسان" [with good treatment] encompasses all that is beautiful, going beyond merely avoiding harm. It includes three key ethical components: refraining from injustice, as it contradicts ihsan (goodness), giving her all her material and emotional rights as part of ihsan, and going beyond by offering additional material and emotional rights, which represents the perfection of ihsan. This indicates that Allah's Sharia is based on ihsan, mercy, and the recognition of rights without causing harm.

This obligation encourages both the husband and wife to embody these values, as their fulfillment will have a positive impact on the psychological, behavioral, and moral stability of their children, who are the continuation of the family. These children will grow and be nurtured according to these principles, which will influence their future family lives, producing multiple generations that stem from the original family.

One of the rhetorical indications in this verse is that Allah has encompassed all the qualities of goodness in the act of retaining the wife with the single word "معروف" [acceptable manner], and similarly, all the qualities of goodness in releasing the wife are encompassed in the single word "بإحسان" [with good treatment]. These two words fully capture the broad and comprehensive ethical dimensions intended. This is part of the miraculous eloquence of the Quran and its profound moral implications.

Then Allah commands the husband not to infringe upon his wife's rights: {وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْنَاهُمْ هُنَّ شَيْئًا} [And it is not lawful for you to take anything

of what you have given them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). It is forbidden for the husband to take back anything from the dowry he gave her. The phrase "لَا يَجْلُ" [It is not lawful] signifies that the dowry has become her rightful property, and it is not permissible to violate this right. Taking it back would be an act of injustice and transgression, which is prohibited. This ruling reflects the Sharia's careful preservation of rights, even in the most intricate matters.

However, Allah provides an exception that allows for separation without harm or wrongdoing: {لَا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ} [Unless both fear that they will not be able to keep [within] the limits of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). This permission is granted to both the husband and wife. If the husband and wife fear – based on their strong belief – that they will not be able to uphold each other's rights, Allah addresses this situation by saying: {إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ} [But if you fear that they will not keep [within] the limits of Allah, then there is no blame upon either of them concerning that by which she ransoms herself] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). This directive is addressed to the judges, mediators, and well-wishers who are involved in resolving the matter. Allah informs them that the wife has the right to obtain her freedom by compensating her husband, and the husband is permitted to accept this compensation, which is known as "khula."

This ruling underscores the importance of upholding the limits set by Allah in marital relations. The continuation of the relationship is contingent upon the ability to uphold these divine limits; if this is not possible, the relationship should end. The limits of Allah encompass His commands, prohibitions, duties, rights, and responsibilities. This reflects the divine precision with which family matters are governed, ensuring that the establishment and continuation of a family are handled with the utmost care and respect. Muslims are thus obliged to respect the formation and dissolution of this significant institution.

Another important linguistic point is that the directive is specifically related to the husband and wife: {إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ} [Unless both fear that they will not be able to keep [within] the limits of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). It is a private matter between them, one that only they can truly know and assess. If, based on their past experience, they believe that they cannot uphold Allah's limits and fear the potential harm between them, they are permitted to separate.

Finally, Allah directs both spouses with a prohibition against transgressing His limits: {تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا} [These are the limits of Allah, so do not transgress them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). The verse first emphasizes that these are the defined limits set by Allah, {تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ} [These are the limits of Allah], and then warns against exceeding them: {فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا} [so do not transgress them]. This structure reflects the eloquent sequence of the Quranic phrasing, first identifying the limits and then cautioning against overstepping them.

The limits set by Allah are His noble Sharia, which includes commands, prohibitions, duties, rights, and responsibilities. After clarifying these limits, Allah directs the spouses to adhere to them, ensuring they comply and do not transgress by committing wrongs, neglecting duties, or overstepping bounds. Whoever violates these limits is oppressing themselves and the other party: {وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ} [And whoever transgresses the limits of Allah—it is those who are the wrongdoers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229). Such a person moves from the lawful to the unlawful, falls short in fulfilling their obligations, and crosses from what is acceptable to what is forbidden, thus becoming a wrongdoer deserving of punishment. This verse clearly indicates the prohibition of injustice, as Allah describes those who overstep His boundaries as wrongdoers. We ask Allah for safety and success.

Allah then explains the situation where a woman, after a final divorce (irrevocable divorce), can return to her previous husband. Allah says: {فَإِنْ

{طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ} [And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:230). If an irrevocable divorce occurs, she becomes prohibited to her previous husband unless the following condition is met: {حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ} [until she marries a husband other than him]. If she marries another man, and then he either divorces her or dies, it is permissible for the original couple to remarry: {فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا} [there is no blame upon the woman and her former husband for returning to each other] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:230). The verse thus indicates that if the second husband divorces her, there is no sin in the first husband and the divorced wife remarrying.

The word "أن يتراجعا" [return to each other] expresses the mutual desire of both parties, but it is conditional upon their ability to fulfill Allah's limits: {إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ نَقِيَمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ} [if they think that they can keep [within] the limits of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:230). This means that they should have a strong belief that they will be able to maintain the boundaries set by Allah. The condition emphasizes that the relationship is not based solely on desire but also on the ability to fulfill the marital rights prescribed by Allah. Fulfilling these rights is essential for a dignified life and a strong family foundation capable of nurturing the offspring Allah may grant them. This also highlights the importance of magnifying marital rights, as they are obligations commanded by Allah and not favors one spouse grants the other. The grace is from Allah, who established these rulings and the legal boundaries of the marital relationship.

Conversely, if they believe they cannot uphold Allah's limits, it is not permissible for them to proceed with reconciliation. This is to prevent the return of harmful relationships that could lead to further negative consequences.

Among the benefits of Allah's statement {فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ نَقِيَمَا} [there is no blame upon the woman and her former husband for returning to each other if they think that they can keep [within] the limits

of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:230) is the principle of making decisions based on what one believes to be most likely correct. When a person is uncertain and there is no way to be certain, they should act based on what they consider most likely. This brings resolve and reliance on Allah. The Islamic methodology discourages doubt, as it can lead to harmful thoughts and actions. For example, if a Muslim performs ablution and then doubts whether it has been invalidated, they should dismiss the doubt and rely on the original state of purity to eliminate uncertainty.

The verse concludes with Allah's words: {وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ} [These are the limits of Allah, which He makes clear to a people who know] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:230). This signifies that Allah has clearly outlined His Sharia regarding marriage, relationships, and divorce. It underscores the importance of knowing, applying, and adhering to these rules without overstepping them, as Allah has made them clear to those who possess knowledge and understanding. When Allah grants a person the capacity for understanding and knowledge, it removes any excuse for ignorance regarding what has been made obligatory and clear to spouses. This obligates them to act according to these teachings.

This implies that spouses must be knowledgeable about their marital rights and duties because they cannot uphold them without understanding them. Indeed, they are required to know these obligations so that they can fulfill them as Allah has prescribed. This also suggests the scholarly obligation for spouses to learn about their mutual rights and responsibilities, ensuring they meet their commitments and avoid becoming wrongdoers. As Allah stated in the previous verse, {وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ} [And whoever transgresses the limits of Allah – it is those who are the wrongdoers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229).

The phrase {وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ} [These are the limits of Allah, which He makes clear to a people who know] implies the obligation of acquiring knowledge about these limits, particularly for the husband.

{وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَبُغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوعًا ۚ وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ}

[And when you divorce women and they have [nearly] fulfilled their term, either retain them according to acceptable terms or release them according to acceptable terms. But do not keep them, intending harm, to transgress [against them]. And whoever does that has certainly wronged himself. And do not take the verses of Allah in jest. And remember the favor of Allah upon you and what has been revealed to you of the Book and wisdom by which He instructs you. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Knowing of all things.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231)

Allah Almighty outlines the methodology and etiquettes of divorce, where He says: {وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَبُغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ} [And when you divorce women and they have [nearly] fulfilled their term] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231). The phrase {فَلَبُغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ} indicates that there is a waiting period (iddah) for the divorced woman, specifically in the case of the first and second revocable divorces, as these have a defined term, which is the iddah. At this point, there are two options: either to take the wife back or to let her go, and these two options come with mandatory etiquettes and are not merely optional: {فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ} [either retain them according to acceptable terms or release them according to acceptable terms] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231). This is a command from Allah that if the husband decides to take his wife back, it must be with the intention of maintaining the marital relationship according to the rights and duties ordained by Allah, which is referred to as "retaining them in an acceptable manner." Alternatively, if he decides to let her go, it must be done without causing her any harm, referred to as "releasing them according to acceptable terms." Neither option should involve abuse or harm.

In the case of taking her back, the intention should not be to cause her harm: {وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا} [But do not keep them, intending harm, to transgress [against them]] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231). This refers to taking

her back with the intent to harm her, such as prolonging the iddah period by repeatedly taking her back, or any other malicious intent. Allah then makes it clear that anyone who commits such harm is wronging themselves: {وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ} [And whoever does that has certainly wronged himself] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231). The one who violates Allah's commandments by harming his ex-wife is, in fact, committing an injustice against himself, as he will face the consequences from Allah. The mention of "wronging himself" is significant because while the person is aware of the injustice towards his ex-wife, he may be neglecting or forgetting that he is also wronging himself by subjecting himself to Allah's punishment.

Upon reflecting on the address in these noble verses, one finds that they are directed toward the husband, given his role as the protector and maintainer (qawwam) and his responsibility, as well as the fact that the intention behind keeping or releasing the wife is something hidden that only he knows. Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of his intentions, and thus, the warning and the potential punishment are directed toward him. Allah addresses this matter by speaking to the one entrusted with the right of guardianship. If a person contemplates this, he would be ashamed before the One who addressed him, knowing his intention and granting him this wife as a source of tranquility. The only appropriate response to this blessing and status is to obey the One who honored him.

Another benefit is the rhetorical brevity in the two sentences: {فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ} [retain them according to acceptable terms] and {أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ} [or release them according to acceptable terms]. These two sentences, though opposite in meaning—keeping or releasing—are united by the virtue of "بِمَعْرُوفٍ" [according to acceptable terms], which indicates kindness in both actions, whether retaining or releasing the wife. The term "بِمَعْرُوفٍ" encompasses all qualities of goodness, both obligatory and recommended, as well as the additional acts of generosity beyond what is required.

From a rhetorical perspective, the word "ضَرَارًا" [intending harm] is used without specifying its degree or type, thereby encompassing all forms and levels of harm. This encourages the husband to fear Allah in every intention and in even the slightest degree of harm. Glory be to the One whose words encompass all His intended meanings. Just as Allah has preserved the man's right in guardianship, He has also preserved the woman's rights in all aspects of her life in her husband's household.

Allah then forbids mockery of His verses: {وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا} [And do not take the verses of Allah in jest] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231). This prohibition implies the obligation to avoid and be cautious of daring to treat Allah's verses with disregard, by not adhering to them or implementing their prescribed laws and arrangements. Whoever does not act according to these laws is essentially mocking and belittling them, as if they mean nothing to him. This warning indicates that whoever treats the verses of Allah with mockery has opposed the prohibition and disobeyed Allah, the Exalted, and thus deserves punishment.

The term "هُزُوًا" [jest] in the verse conveys the ugliness of the actions of those who do not comply with Allah's verses, requiring the believer to hold these verses in high esteem in their heart and to fully submit to and implement them. After this warning, attention is drawn to the value and status of the blessing: {وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ} [And remember the favor of Allah upon you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231). This refers to the blessings of Islam, the blessing of having wives, and the blessings of the laws with their inherent kindness and mercy. The verse serves as a reminder and a command to remember these blessings, which necessitates gratitude. Gratitude, in turn, requires praise, obedience, and the preservation of blessings in a manner that achieves Allah's pleasure with the one who remembers and thanks Him for them.

In Allah's statement {وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ} [And remember the favor of Allah upon you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231), He refers to the general blessings and

then specifically mentions those relevant to the situation: { وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِنَ { الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ } [and what has been revealed to you of the Book and wisdom]. These are the blessings of the Noble Quran and the Sunnah of His noble Messenger (ﷺ), which contain the legislation and guidance that organize human life in worship, creed, rulings, and various aspects of family, wealth, children, and society. They also cover all that the individual and the community, rulers and subjects, need to attain success in the Hereafter. Thus, the verse serves as an admonition for the addressed (i.e., the believers) { يُعِظُّكُمْ بِهِ } [by which He instructs you] because it contains exhortations through encouragement and warnings, stories, rulings, commands, prohibitions, and explanations of wisdom, among other things that provide guidance.

This highlights the educational and da'wah importance of combining admonition with teaching and instruction. The educational or da'wah session should end with an admonition that touches the hearts and stirs the emotions, as the best admonition is found in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), which contain sufficient and effective guidance.

It also emphasizes the significance of using encouragement and warnings to regulate behavior and the importance of reminding people of the blessings of the Benefactor. This helps to humble those who have become arrogant, especially when they are reminded of the many blessings they enjoy but often overlook due to their familiarity with them. Therefore, they need someone to remind them of these blessings.

Allah concludes the noble verse with the command to be conscious of Him: { وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ } [And fear Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231), because whoever adheres to it will be protected and supported by Allah. Allah then reminds and alerts the believers of His encompassing knowledge: { وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ } [And know that Allah is Knowing of all things] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:231). Since Allah is All-Knowing, nothing is hidden from Him, whether it

be the intentions, whether they are harmful or for reconciliation, or the outward actions. This should instill fear and reverence towards Him, necessitating obedience and avoiding disobedience.

{وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ}

[And when you divorce women and they have fulfilled their term, do not prevent them from remarrying their [former] husbands if they agree among themselves on an acceptable basis. That is instructed to whoever of you believes in Allah and the Last Day. That is better for you and purer, and Allah knows and you know not.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:232)

The context of divorce and reconciliation continues as Allah says: {وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ۚ} [And when you divorce women and they have fulfilled their term] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:232). This verse clarifies that when a woman is divorced, either with the first or second talaq (divorce), and she reaches the end of her waiting period (iddah), the address then shifts from the couple to the woman's guardians. Allah, the Most Merciful, commands them not to prevent the couple from reconciling: {فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا ۚ} [do not prevent them from remarrying their [former] husbands if they agree among themselves on an acceptable basis] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:232). Allah prohibits the woman's family from obstructing her by restricting or preventing her from returning to her husband if they mutually agree to reconcile in a manner that upholds their rights.

This illustrates that Islam's approach is constructive regarding family formation, cohabitation, and even in situations where separation occurs. One of the objectives of the religion is to ensure the continuity and preservation of the family unit. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the guardians to be supportive of this rebuilding process, as Allah loves and is pleased with it.

The directive and explanation also serve as an admonition from Allah to the guardians of women, highlighting the necessity of adherence: {ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ ۚ} [That is instructed to] whoever of you believes in Allah and the Last Day] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:232). True faith in Allah compels obedience, and the mention of the Last Day is significant because

it implies accountability and recompense. This shows that the explanation of rulings and methods of reconciliation is coupled with reminders of faith and the hereafter, emphasizing that the approach to reform, education, and da'wah should not end at mere knowledge dissemination. Instead, it should include faith-based motivation that drives the learner towards practical application of the educational and explanatory texts.

This point is illustrated by the incident involving the divorce of Abu Al-Badah's wife, mentioned in the reasons for the revelation. The sister of Ma'qil ibn Yasar was married to Abu Al-Badah. When he divorced her and her iddah ended, he regretted his decision and proposed to her again. She was willing, but her brother refused to marry her to him again, swearing by Allah that he would not allow it. Then this verse was revealed. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called Ma'qil and said to him: **"If you are a believer, do not prevent your sister from remarrying Abu Al-Badah."** Ma'qil replied, "I believe in Allah," and married her to him. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/104)

Allah Almighty clarifies the benefit of adhering to His guidance and commands when He says: {ذَلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ} [That is better for you and purer] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:232). This directive from Allah, the Exalted, is the most righteous and purest course of action. Although the less preferable option is not explicitly mentioned in the verse, it is understood that it refers to the human effort made in what they believe to be in the best interest of the wife, such as preventing her from returning to her husband. Often, this effort may stem from anger, stubbornness, or a desire for retribution, leading to decisions made in the wrong spirit. However, this divine legislation is better, purer, and more virtuous than what people may attempt to achieve through their own efforts, which are prone to flaws and shortcomings.

The phrase {ذَلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ} also suggests that Allah's methodology and ruling are free from any defect or shortcoming that might arise from

human decisions regarding the wife. It is also a purification for yourselves from the sin that may result from preventing the wife's return to her husband. Additionally, it purifies and elevates the couple's relationship by encouraging them to choose the best path for their life together, provided they commit to living together in kindness and avoid the causes of their previous separation. It is also more beneficial for the children to have both parents under one roof, providing a purer and more wholesome environment for the entire family, free from the defects and shortcomings that could arise from severing the possibility of reconciliation.

By omitting the less preferable option, the verse allows the text to encompass multiple beneficial aspects, as previously demonstrated by Allah's grace, generosity, and kindness.

Allah then explains the profound reason behind preferring His command over human judgment: {وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ} [And Allah knows, while you know not] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:232). This highlights the importance of prioritizing the divine revelation over human reasoning. The divine text originates from the knowledge that encompasses everything, while human intellect is limited and cannot grasp what is hidden or the full consequences of many matters. Moreover, human understanding cannot penetrate the intentions harbored in the hearts, whereas nothing escapes the knowledge of Allah, the All-Knowing. This necessitates placing revelation above reason and submitting to it fully. The believer responds with **"Our Lord, we hear and we obey."**

Among the general benefits highlighted is the Quranic emphasis on the foundation of the family, as prescribed by the Lord of all worlds. The verses provide guidance on resolving family issues, suggesting that separation may sometimes lead to a deeper and more meaningful reunion than what existed before. The desire for divorced spouses to reunite reflects a sense of regret and remorse for what transpired and a sincere intention to uphold kindness in their relationship. Since humans are prone to mistakes,

impulsiveness, and emotional changes, the wise Sharia allows for reconciliation even after a second divorce.

From another perspective, the Sharia provides an opportunity for couples who discover incompatibility or an inability to accept one another to separate amicably and with kindness, respecting the relationship even if it was brief.

There are profound and significant benefits in contemplating Allah's Sharia. Among the most prominent is the intellectual impact on scholars who engage in the study of Islamic jurisprudence, Quranic exegesis, Hadith, and theology. Their minds have been enlightened and enriched through the study of the Quranic verses and the teachings of the noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

{وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعُهَا لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ}

[Mothers may breastfeed their children for two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is their provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child. And upon the [father's] heir is a duty like that. And if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Seeing of what you do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 233)

The Qur'anic discourse shifts to the newborn child, the cherished fruit of marriage, whose love is deeply rooted in the heart. Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate, the Knower of the unseen, the Generous, has elaborated on this matter in His noble book, saying: {وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ } [And mothers may breastfeed their children for two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing period] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233).

This verse uses a declarative form to convey a command, emphasizing that a mother must care for her infant by nursing him for two full years. It also implies that the husband must support her in fulfilling this duty, and that the guardians of a divorced mother must allow her to nurse her child. The verse encapsulates all aspects and objectives of this matter with few words, serving as a decisive statement for all parties involved in the nursing process, regardless of the circumstances.

Allah then firmly establishes the specified period of nursing to prevent disputes and harm: {وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ} [And mothers may breastfeed their children for two complete years] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). The word "complete" decisively closes the door to any alternative interpretation, ensuring the child's right to proper care is protected from neglect or harm, whether due to disputes, divorce, or other causes.

The obligation for the mother to nurse is emphasized because she is more compassionate, attentive, and capable. The time limit indicates that there is no need for nursing beyond two years, and that the child does not require it thereafter. Allah Almighty then says: {لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ} [for whoever wishes to complete the nursing period] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233), indicating that two years represent the full term of nursing for those who wish to fulfill Allah's command completely.

Scholars of Tafsir have pointed out that this verse suggests that nursing for two years is not mandatory; weaning before the two years is permissible. Another insight is that breastfeeding beyond two years does not establish milk kinship (the legal bond of brotherhood through breastfeeding). However, the two years are a right for both the child and the mother, and no one has the right to dispute this due to this divine text, regardless of any interpretation.

For further insight, one might question whether the phrase {لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ} [for whoever wishes to complete the nursing period] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233) indicates an emphasis or a choice. Since Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has decreed that the nursing period be two complete years and explicitly mentioned its completeness, this phrase serves as an emphasis. Therefore, nursing the child for two full years is the ideal completion of nursing as commanded by Allah Almighty. However, it can also encompass both meanings: emphasis on the ideal standard and a choice when there is a legitimate reason preventing the completion of the two years, to alleviate any hardship. This is further supported by the

verse's statement: {فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا} [But if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233), referring to the weaning of the infant. This showcases the completeness of Allah's speech, where the wording of the verse encompasses all possible scenarios while upholding the authority of the ruling.

Allah then clarifies the father's responsibility by stating: {وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ} [And upon the father is their provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). Linguistically, the phrase {وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ} refers to the father, meaning "upon the one for whom the child was born." (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/108)

In other words, it is the father's responsibility to provide sustenance and clothing for the nursing mother according to what is acceptable, in proportion to his ability. This directive carries multiple benefits, including the understanding that the father, due to his capacity for hard work, is obligated to bear these expenses. This noble directive is intertwined with significant legal rulings and insights, encompassing critical issues related to the newborn and the nursing mother, whether she is divorced, widowed, or regarding the payment for the nursing mother's services. The phrase {بِالْمَعْرُوفِ} [according to what is acceptable] accounts for the differences in fathers' provisions, as some are financially well-off, some live modestly, and others fall somewhere in between. The phrase encapsulates all levels of sustenance for the servants of Allah, demonstrating the miraculous eloquence of the Qur'an, where a single word addresses multiple scenarios without causing hardship to the father. This is part of Allah's mercy, further emphasized by His words: {لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا} [No person is charged with more than his capacity] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). The term "capacity" refers to the varying abilities among people and serves as the criterion for the amount and quality of sustenance. Glory be to Him

whose verses encompass His intent, His rulings, His mercy, and His eloquence in a succinct manner that surpasses the ability of even the most eloquent speakers, even if they were to gather together over a single verse.

The verse also addresses the issue of preventing harm, as Allah says: { لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ } [No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). Since harm can take many forms and degrees, the wise Lawgiver forbade all types and levels of harm in a single word { لَا تُضَارَّ } [No should be harmed], indicating that neither the mother nor the father should harm each other through their child. If harm is avoided between the parents, the infant remains safe, making it unnecessary to mention the potential harm to the child explicitly in the verse, which showcases the ultimate eloquence and brevity in the Quranic expression, free from any superfluous words. In the Quran, every word is precise and indispensable. The word { لَا تُضَارَّ } is in the passive form, encompassing any party involved in causing harm, whether it be the father, the mother, the wife's guardians, the deceased husband's guardians, or anyone responsible for resolving disputes.

Examples of harm include preventing the mother from breastfeeding her child due to any obstacle or not providing her with adequate sustenance and clothing. Harm can also occur if the mother refuses to nurse the infant to spite the father, demands an excessive fee, or makes unreasonable demands regarding sustenance or clothing, among other forms of harm.

Allah then addresses potential family situations, such as the father's death, and provides a solution by stating: { وَ عَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ } [And upon the [father's] heir is a duty like that] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). This means that the child's heir, in the absence of the father and if the child has no wealth, must fulfill the same obligations as the father regarding the nursing mother's rights. Thus, Allah safeguards the rights of the nursing mother and assigns responsibility, ensuring the child's well-being through these profound and significant rulings. This demonstrates how this noble Sharia

encompasses even the minutest details, such as the rights of the child and the nursing mother.

The verse then provides further clarification on matters related to the infant and the parents, as Allah says: {فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا} [But if they both desire weaning] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). The term "fisal" refers to the separation between the child and breastfeeding, meaning the separation between the infant and the breast. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/113)

If the parents wish to wean the child before completing the two years, Allah requires mutual agreement and satisfaction from both parents, as stated: {فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا} [If they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). This weaning process must involve two important conditions: {تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا} [mutual consent] and {وَتَشَاوُرٍ} [consultation]. The combination of these two ensures the welfare of both parents and the child, preventing any harm that could otherwise occur.

This divine guidance illustrates a methodology for managing a significant aspect of family life. An observant individual can derive a systematic approach to resolving various challenges and problems, whether for individuals or groups, based on these principles aimed at fulfilling objectives. In essence, starting from the correct objectives leads to success in choosing and implementing effective administrative and regulatory methods for many aspects of life, including household, professional, and social relationships, among other interconnected areas.

Allah Almighty clarifies the permissibility of weaning the child if the two conditions previously mentioned are met: {فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا} [There is no blame upon either of them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). By removing any sin from the parents for mutually agreeing and consulting on the matter, the Qur'anic text implicitly indicates that if one parent makes the decision

alone without the other's consent, weaning is not permissible. Both parents are partners in the child's upbringing and in ensuring his best interests, which is to prevent any harm from one party to the other or to the child. This legislation reflects Allah's concern for the child's welfare, highlighting His mercy and protection through His laws and organization, and placing the burden of sin on anyone who harms the child.

This also emphasizes that the default period for breastfeeding is two complete years, with exceptions only under the specific conditions mentioned earlier. This consideration accounts for situations unique to each case, allowing the parents to decide based on what best serves the child's interest. This also shows the comprehensiveness of Islamic law in accommodating changing circumstances and the needs of the child, such as his ability to be weaned and to substitute milk with other food. Furthermore, it anticipates new developments over time that might lead to benefits, proving that this is a divine approach free from falsehood and derived from the Almighty, the Wise, and the Merciful.

The companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, also explained their practices during the time of the Qur'an's revelation. Qatadah stated that breastfeeding was obligatory for two years, and it was forbidden to wean before that. Then, with Allah's command {فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا} [If they both desire weaning] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233), it became permissible to wean before two years (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/113).

This principle extends to general matters as well, emphasizing that partners in any matter should not act solely for their benefit or cause harm without consultation. This approach prevents enmity and estrangement and fosters mutual affection, as one of the objectives of Sharia is the cohesion of individuals, groups, families, and society. This great objective of Islam should be practically taught to children within their family life,

and educational institutions should be aware of this to implement it within their educational environment.

Among the benefits related to *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, says: "This is evidence for the permissibility of *ijtihad* in legal rulings, as Allah has permitted the parents to consult on what leads to the well-being of the child, which is based on their predominant assumptions, not on absolute certainty". (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/113)

The Qur'anic discourse then transitions to another scenario regarding nursing: {وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ} [And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). This introduces a second type or aspect of nursing: the desire to hire a wet nurse for the child. The implied meaning in Arabic is "to hire a non-relative to nurse your children." Allah removes any blame by stating the permissibility of this action, while also mentioning the exchange involved {إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ} [as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable]. The phrase "when you give" encompasses two important implications: first, that you give the agreed-upon payment to the wet nurse, and second, that you mutually agree on the desire for substitute nursing, meaning both parents consent and intend good, seeking what is acceptable in the matter. Upon reflection, it is evident that both meanings are intended, as the sentence encompasses two significant implications in a single expression. This showcases the miraculous eloquence of the Qur'an (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/113).

The verse concludes with a profound admonition: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ} [And fear Allah and know that Allah is Seeing of what you do] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:233). This comprehensive admonition urges the believers to fear Allah in all their circumstances, followed by the reminder that Allah is fully aware of all conditions and actions. This serves as an important reminder at the end of teaching, advising, and clarifying matters,

as it brings the believer back to the truth and reminds them of what they may have forgotten.

{وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ}

[And those of you who die and leave behind wives should wait for four months and ten days. Then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner. And Allah is [fully] acquainted with what you do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 234)

The Qur'anic discourse then shifts to another family matter related to the death of a husband: {وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا} [And those of you who die and leave behind wives should wait for four months and ten days] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:234). Allah clarifies the state of a wife whose husband has passed away, specifying that her waiting period (iddah) differs from that of a divorced woman. Her iddah is four months and ten days, allowing time to determine if she is pregnant. Allah sums up the waiting period and the woman's abstention from marriage with a single word: {يَتَرَبَّصْنَ} [should wait], which implies patience and refraining from marrying another man until the specified period ends.

This directive preserves the feelings of a Muslim woman, whose modesty may prevent her from tolerating detailed discussions about her personal matters. The concise expression ensures that the woman is not distressed by explicit words about her situation. During this period, the rights of the deceased husband, the potential child, and the family lineage are safeguarded, preventing any confusion of lineage. Additionally, it protects the prospective husband from inadvertently introducing a foreign lineage into his family. Through this ruling, Allah preserves the rights of all parties involved.

There are detailed rulings regarding a woman whose husband has died, which have been comprehensively addressed in the prophetic tradition. This demonstrates that Islam is a complete system, integrating the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Among the benefits are the legal rulings that scholars have derived by analyzing general and specific texts, as well as unrestricted and restricted rulings, as encompassed in the blessed prophetic teachings. From these two sources, scholars have extracted profound knowledge, elevating their understanding and insight.

Allah then explains the state of the woman after her waiting period ends: {فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ} [Then when they have fulfilled their term] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:234), meaning when the iddah has concluded, {فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ} [there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:234). This directive addresses all those connected to the widow, including her guardians and others concerned, such as the judge and the deceased husband's relatives, particularly when she desires to remarry or adorn herself. The term {بِالْمَعْرُوفِ} [in an acceptable manner] indicates that these actions must align with Islamic teachings, ensuring that what is permissible in Shariah is upheld – nothing prohibited or disliked.

The verse also implies that the guardian has the duty to prevent his ward from exceeding what is permissible, as the prohibition is against {مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي} [what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner]. Thus, if a woman transgresses the bounds of what is acceptable, the guardian is obliged to intervene and prevent such actions. This highlights that Islam grants freedom to women within a framework of personal protection, safeguarding them from harm and preventing them from harming others. This is one of the subtleties of Islamic legislation, which demonstrates its precision, encompassing guidance, and care for women's affairs. The attention given to women in Islam is a testament to their esteemed status in the religion.

The verse concludes with a universal admonition: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ} [And Allah is [fully] acquainted with what you do] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:234). Allah's knowledge of your deeds necessitates caution regarding actions and intentions that contradict His commands. This also underscores the importance of ending advice, guidance, and education with reminders, as they have a profound impact on the soul. There is no harm in repeating such reminders, as they recur in the verses of the Qur'an.

{وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ عِلْمَ اللَّهِ أَنْكُمْ سَتَذَكَّرُونَهُنَّ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُؤَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ}

[There is no blame upon you for that to which you indirectly allude concerning a proposal to women or for what you conceal within yourselves. Allah knows that you will have them in mind. But do not promise them secretly except for saying a proper saying. And do not determine to undertake a marriage contract until the decree has reached its term. And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him. And know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235)

The Qur'anic discourse continues to clarify matters related to the waiting period of a widow: {وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ} [There is no blame upon you for that to which you indirectly allude concerning a proposal to women] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235). In this divine guidance, Allah Almighty provides direction on the sensitive issue of a woman in her waiting period following the death of her husband. This addresses all those who may wish to marry the widow, affirming that there is no sin for a man who desires to marry her if he expresses his intention indirectly, without making a direct proposal during the waiting period.

This guidance carries several benefits: it fosters modesty and reverence in society, respects the feelings of the widow, and honors the memory of the deceased husband. It allows the man to express his interest subtly, without making a clear declaration, so that the potential intention is understood without explicit confirmation. The term {التعريض} [indirect allusion] implies conveying the meaning symbolically or indirectly. This indicates that making a direct proposal to a woman in her waiting period is not permitted, as the wise Lawgiver has only allowed indirect allusion, thereby prohibiting explicit proposals during the waiting period. This reflects one of the principles of Islamic etiquette: using gentle language that carries profound meanings and avoiding expressions that do not consider the

situation or the various aspects of modesty. Indeed, Islam is a religion of modesty, respect, and ethics.

Another benefit is the consideration of psychological aspects in Islamic guidance. It permits indirect allusion for men who are interested in marrying the widow, while respecting her emotions, as well as the feelings of the deceased's family, her children (if any), and the community around her. It also honors the deceased by respecting the sanctity of his wife's waiting period. Thus, Allah's rulings take into account the human condition in even the most challenging situations. Scholars have also discussed the issue of indirect allusion to a woman in her revocable divorce (*ṭ alāq raj' ī*), concluding that it is not permissible because she is still considered to be in the position of a wife.

The verse also removes the sin from what remains hidden in the soul – those concealed desires and inclinations towards marrying a woman in her waiting period after her husband's death. This hidden desire is referred to in the phrase {أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ} [or what you conceal within yourselves] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235). Allah, the Exalted, has lifted the blame from anyone who wishes to marry the widow, whether through indirect allusion (*ta' rīd*) or by keeping the desire hidden (*iknān*), which means concealing it. Allah then addresses men involved in such matters, emphasizing His knowledge of their secrets and what they hide: {عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ} [Allah knows that you will have them in mind] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235). Allah has permitted this, considering the natural human condition – that you will remember the woman in her waiting period, either secretly in your hearts or openly on your tongues, with the desire for marriage. Therefore, Allah allowed indirect allusion out of His mercy, as the text implies that Allah's mercy towards you lifted the sin, knowing your natural state, and permitted both *ta' rīd* and *iknān*. This underscores the importance of strengthening one's faith with the understanding that Allah knows the innermost thoughts of the soul and that His comprehensive Shariah

considers these aspects, balancing them with all interests, and guiding them with perfect and noble etiquette.

The verse further establishes the rules and manners in Allah's Shariah by prohibiting secret promises: {وَلَا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا} [But do not promise them secretly] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235). A man should not promise a woman marriage secretly, which goes beyond indirect allusion to direct declaration, nor should he bind her with an oath or pledge not to marry anyone else. Such actions are prohibited. Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, explains that some of the Companions and scholars have said: "A man should not say to a woman in her waiting period, 'Marry me,' but may use indirect allusion if he wishes, and he should not take her pledge or oath in secrecy and concealment" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/125).

He also states that the Ummah (Islamic community) has unanimously agreed on the dislike of making promises to a woman during her waiting period, whether concerning herself, a father regarding his daughter, or a master regarding his female slave (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/126).

The verse makes an exception with the phrase {إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا} [except for saying a proper saying] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235), which refers to the permissible indirect allusion. In these divine instructions and rulings from the Almighty, there are guidelines that regulate and rectify societal matters, especially regarding the situation of a widow. Allah further clarifies and emphasizes the ruling on marriage contracts by stating: {وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ { حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ } [And do not determine to undertake a marriage contract until the decree has reached its term] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235). This means that the marriage contract should not be finalized until the waiting period has ended. Scholars have unanimously agreed that a marriage contract during the waiting period is invalid (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/294).

The phrase {حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ} [until the decree has reached its term] signifies the completion of the waiting period, with "the decree" referring to the prescribed time set for the waiting period. Allah has termed it a "decree" as it is established by the Book of Allah, as He says, {كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ} [a decree of Allah upon you] (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/127).

The verse concludes with a profound admonition to those addressed: {وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ} [And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235). It reminds the believers of Allah's knowledge of what is in their hearts, which means that if He knows what is hidden, He certainly knows their outward actions. This necessitates caution, as the verse advises: {فَاحْذَرُوهُ} [So beware of Him], which urges them to fear His punishment and to adhere strictly to His boundaries, not to transgress them. The emphasis on Allah's knowledge of what is in the soul serves as a reminder that His knowledge encompasses even the most hidden thoughts, which implies His awareness of all outward actions. The phrase {فَاحْذَرُوهُ} also underscores the necessity of avoiding His punishment in all its forms and degrees, instilling in the soul a fear of overstepping His boundaries.

The admonition ends with Allah's statement: {وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ} [And know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 235). Allah combines the message of warning with the assurance that one should not despair of His forgiveness and forbearance. His patience means He does not hasten to punish, giving the sinner the opportunity to seek forgiveness and repent for their mistakes and sins. There is no room for despair of His pardon and mercy. This, indeed, is part of His mercy towards His servants, teaching them, warning them, and instilling fear of transgressing His limits, while simultaneously preventing them from losing hope in His mercy. This highlights the importance of balancing between encouragement and warning in teaching and guiding others, ensuring that the preacher and educator do not cut off others from Allah's

mercy and forgiveness. His patience is a gift to the sinner, providing a chance to seek forgiveness and turn back from wrongdoing.

This serves as a reminder of the pedagogical value of balancing hope and fear, and the importance of not leading others to despair of Allah's mercy, as His forbearance is an opportunity for repentance and return to His grace.

{لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمْ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ قَدْرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدْرُهُ مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ}

[There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have not touched nor specified for them an obligation. But give them [a gift of] compensation; the wealthy according to his capability and the poor according to his capability - a provision according to what is acceptable, a duty upon the doers of good.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 236)

The Qur'anic discourse then transitions to another situation, a different case of divorce: {لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمْ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً} [There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have not touched nor specified for them an obligation] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 236). Allah, the Exalted, removes the sin from a man who divorces his wife after the marriage contract but before consummation. One of the benefits of this is that it allows for a change of heart about continuing the marriage before consummation, which is the meaning of {مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ} [you have not touched]. This avoidance of continuing the marriage may be due to countless reasons, and perhaps this situation is better and more beneficial for both parties than a divorce after consummation.

Since such a situation may cause emotional distress to the divorced woman, Allah commands that she be compensated if she has not been given a specified dowry {أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً} [nor specified for them an obligation]. This compensation is to be given by her husband according to his financial situation: {وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ قَدْرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدْرُهُ} [But give them [a

gift of] compensation; the wealthy according to his capability and the poor according to his capability] (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/295).

This reveals Allah's kindness in mending hearts that may be hurt by such situations and similar circumstances. The noble Sharia does not neglect the psychological aspects in its rulings, addressing them with gentle wisdom, as evident in every situation. It also shows Allah's kindness in entrusting the amount of compensation to the husband's financial capacity, so that he gives according to what Allah has provided him. There are two main categories mentioned: {المُوسِعِ} [the wealthy] and {المُقْتِرِ} [the poor]. The former refers to one who has ample means, and the latter refers to one with limited financial resources. Between these are varying degrees of wealth and financial constraints, referred to as {قَدْرُهُ} [his capability]. This demonstrates the meticulous nature of Qur'anic guidance, which has precisely defined the range of financial obligations for different individuals with specific terms that encompass the varying degrees of financial ability among people. This is a testament to the profound eloquence of the Qur'an, from which one can learn how to precisely articulate one's intentions and organize their expression.

Allah then further clarifies and emphasizes: {مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ} [a provision according to what is acceptable], meaning according to what is possible and to the extent of the rightful obligation (Ibn al-Jawzi, Zad al-Masir: 1/247).

The word {بِالْمَعْرُوفِ} [according to what is acceptable] serves as a measure that encompasses all aspects of ethics, generosity, and kindness, accommodating the differences in people's capacities and the varying degrees of wealth and resources among them—each according to their means. Allah then says {حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ} [a duty upon the doers of good], indicating that it is an obligation on those who are characterized by goodness. This directive also carries encouragement and motivation, as it implies that such actions are expected of those who are known for their

benevolence. Every Muslim aspires to be known as a doer of good, and no one desires to be stripped of this noble trait. This quality is encouraging, pushing individuals to embody it and motivating them to do good deeds. Consequently, it discourages those who lack this trait from acting, as it is a quality that everyone seeks to avoid being devoid of.

From an educational, motivational, and managerial perspective, and in every aspect of human endeavor, this highlights the importance of following the Qur'anic method in its unique and varied approaches to encouraging goodness. By aligning actions with these divine instructions, success can be achieved. An example is the story of Jubair ibn Mut'im (may Allah be pleased with him), who married a woman from Banu Nassar and divorced her before consummating the marriage. He sent her the full dowry, saying, "I am more entitled to be generous than she is" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/136).

A Muslim should reflect on the impact of this verse on the behavior of the noble Companion Jubair ibn Mut'im (may Allah be pleased with him) and his statement, "I am more entitled to be generous than she is," which suggests that the initiative for forgiveness may come from the divorced wife, who may waive her right.

Another benefit of this verse is the use of the phrase {لَمْ يَمَسُّوْهَا} [you have not touched], which is a discreet way of referring to marital relations. This choice of wording conveys the intended meaning while preserving the modesty of the woman, preventing any explicit mention that could embarrass her. This underscores the importance of verbal etiquette, careful selection of appropriate words that fit the situation and the audience, and the need to avoid provocative language or words that lack sufficient modesty, all while respecting the feelings of others in communication and social interaction.

{وَإِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عَقْدَةُ الزَّكَاحِ وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ}

[And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have already specified for them an obligation, then [give] half of what you specified – unless they forgo it or the one in whose hand is the marriage contract forgoes it. And to forgo it is nearer to righteousness. And do not forget graciousness between you. Indeed, Allah is Seeing of what you do.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 237)

The discourse transitions to explaining another situation involving divorce, as Allah says: {وَإِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ} [And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have already specified for them an obligation, then [give] half of what you specified] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 237). This verse outlines a different situation regarding the mahr (dowry) of the wife. If a man divorces his wife after the marriage contract but before consummation, meaning before intercourse, and he has already specified the mahr, he is obligated to give her half of the mahr. Scholars have provided detailed interpretations and legal rulings on this matter.

The precision in regulating and differentiating this case from the previous verse is noteworthy. In the previous verse, no mahr was specified, so a provision was made to compensate her: {فَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ} [But give them [a gift of] compensation]. However, in this verse, where the mahr has been specified, half of the mahr is obligated to console her. Yet, the wife is given the opportunity to forgo this right: {إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ} [unless they forgo it]. This allows the wife to generously waive her right, promoting mercy between the spouses, especially if the husband is in a difficult situation. The Shariah grants her the legal right to relinquish her half of the mahr.

Likewise, {أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عَقْدَةُ الزَّكَاحِ} [or the one in whose hand is the marriage contract forgoes it], which is the husband, may also forgo his right, giving

the full mahr to the wife. Scholars have detailed explanations of this, but it also suggests that the husband can waive the remaining half and give her the full mahr, while she may forgo the half that is due to her. Allah then encourages both spouses to choose forgiveness: {وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى} [And to forgo it is nearer to righteousness]. This encouragement invites both parties to initiate forgiveness and relinquishment of their rights, fostering good morals in their separation and strengthening the soul in generosity and kindness, even in the context of separation. This ethical behavior may influence others who observe and imitate such conduct.

The encouragement is linked to the powerful and effective trait of righteousness: {لِلتَّقْوَى} [to righteousness]. Drawing closer to the actions of the righteous is a lofty goal, as all believers aspire to attain taqwa. This emphasizes the educational importance of moral encouragement, nurturing ethical behavior, and the significance of forgiveness and relinquishment of rights to achieve taqwa, which brings the believer closer to Allah.

The verse further strengthens this encouragement with Allah's words: {وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ} [And do not forget graciousness between you]. This instructs not to forget the importance of showing kindness, whether the man completes the full mahr or the woman waives her half. How beautiful and profound is the methodology of our Lord, exalted be He! Additionally, the divine guidance to remember kindness serves as a reminder of the importance of recalling past good deeds. This can help overlook the current dispute and motivate one to show generosity with a gracious and noble spirit.

{حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ} (٢٣٨) فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَاتًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ (٢٣٩)

[Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient. And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember Allah as He has taught you that which you did not [previously] know.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 238-239)

The Qur'anic discourse then shifts to the matter of prayer, before returning to the subject of the widow whose husband has passed away. In this verse, Allah commands the believers to maintain their prayers: {حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ} [Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 238). The exhortation to maintain the performance of prayer is given in the form of a command. The term {حافظوا} "maintain" implies continuous observance, indicating the obligation to consistently perform the prayers without neglect. This underscores the great importance and high status of maintaining prayer, as well as the honor of those who observe it diligently. Those who comply with this command are undoubtedly granted a special status and noble rank by Allah's grace and generosity.

The verse specifically mentions "the middle prayer" despite it being included in the general term for prayers, highlighting its special status. It is said to be the 'Asr prayer, though there are other opinions, with some saying it is unspecified, much like Laylat al-Qadr, to encourage believers to exert themselves in all prayers. Imam Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, favored the opinion that its exact identity is deliberately left ambiguous, stating: "This is the correct view, insha'Allah, due to the conflicting evidence and lack of decisive proof, leaving the obligation to maintain all prayers and perform them at their proper times" (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/140).

This serves to motivate the Muslim to diligently observe all prayers, as commanded by Allah, so that the middle prayer is among those carefully maintained. It also suggests that one of these prayers holds a special status and honor from Allah, prompting the believer to strive in all of them to attain the additional reward associated with it.

Allah then describes the manner of standing in prayer: {وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ} [and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 238). This command instructs the worshipper to stand in prayer with obedience, humility, and submission before Allah, which entails refraining from speaking during prayer. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/140).

Zaid ibn Arqam (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "We used to speak during prayer. A man would talk to his companion beside him in prayer until the verse {وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ} [and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient] was revealed. Then we were commanded to be silent and refrained from talking"

These various indications and meanings of the term {قَانِتِينَ} are essential requirements of prayer, encompassing all that the worshipper should embody during prayer.

When Allah commanded that prayer be performed with humility and tranquility, which is the usual state for worshippers, He clarified in the following verse what should be done when fear arises. Allah says: {فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ} [And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 239). Fear here refers to any situation that causes alarm or distress. The verse leaves the cause of fear unspecified, making it general to encompass all types of fear. Allah made it clear that this act of worship, prayer, is not waived even in a state of fear. He permitted those in fear to perform it while walking or riding on animals or other modes of transportation, like cars or bikes, in whatever direction they can manage. This underscores the importance of performing prayer on time and not delaying it, even in situations of fear and distress. Therefore, a Muslim

must be cautious not to delay prayer without a compelling reason. If this allowance is given for those in fear, how much more for those in safety? Hence, Allah emphasizes this by saying in the rest of the verse: { فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ } فَإِذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ [But when you are secure, then remember Allah as He has taught you that which you did not [previously] know] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 239). When safety returns, Allah commands that prayer be performed fully, as He has taught them how to perform it when they are safe, including completing its bowing, prostration, standing, sitting, and humility.

This also signifies Allah's grace upon His servants by teaching them faith, worship, morality, and everything they have learned from this religion, which they were previously ignorant of. The phrase { فَإِذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ } [then remember Allah] in the verse is meant to encompass both prayer and general remembrance, such as expressions of gratitude, glorification, declaring His oneness, magnification, and praise. There are two opinions on this. (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm al-Tafsir*: 1/251)

Thus, just as He taught you what you were previously ignorant of regarding the goodness of the religion, remember Him with all forms of remembrance and their various types.

Among the benefits of this verse is the clear demonstration that the rulings of this religion are free from undue hardship and rigidity. Allah accepts the fulfillment of worship even when performed in its incomplete form due to genuine inability to perform it fully. Allah guided the believers on how to properly perform prayer during times of fear, teaching them what they did not know about its performance under such circumstances. This calls for gratitude to Allah and His remembrance in all forms. The verse also emphasizes that prayer is not waived even in a state of fear, and therefore, it is certainly not waived in other circumstances. Instead, it must be performed in a manner that is acceptable according to the guidance

provided by Allah and explained by His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) in his noble Sunnah.

This verse is a powerful and significant proof of the high status and importance of prayer, which obliges the servant not to be negligent in its observance. Rather, one should honor it, appreciate its value, and diligently maintain it, striving for humility and striving to perform it with complete devotion.

{وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (٢٤٠) وَلِلْمُطَلَّقاتِ مَتَاعٌ بِالمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ (٢٤١) كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (٢٤٢)}

[And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind – they (the wives) shall wait for four months and ten days. And when they have fulfilled their term, there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner. And Allah is Almighty and Wise. And for divorced women is a provision according to what is acceptable – a duty upon the righteous. Thus Allah makes clear to you His verses that you might use reason.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 240-242)

After the discourse shifts away from the matters of the divorced and widowed women to emphasize the obligation of maintaining and performing prayer, it returns to the topic of the widow and the command to treat her with kindness. This stylistic approach may be intended to draw attention to an important issue, where the narrative is interrupted due to the significance of the topic, ensuring that the listener or reader pays close attention. This indicates that when a speaker interrupts a discussion, it is only for something of great importance that necessitates explanation before continuing with the original subject. In this case, the subject of prayer, which is the pillar of the religion, took precedence.

Allah, the Exalted, says: {وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ ۖ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ} [And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind – they (the wives) shall wait for four months and ten days. And when they have fulfilled their term, there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 240).

This verse outlines the guidance for dealing with a woman whose husband has passed away, as Allah, the Exalted, prescribes for her to remain in her home for a full year, during which she is to be provided for, honored, and given all that she needs. This is to honor her and maintain her bond with her deceased husband, as Allah combines the obligatory waiting period of

four months and ten days with the completion of a full year of provision and comfort. This reflects the Islamic methodology's emphasis on moral and ethical aspects, preserving kindness and righteousness through honoring the deceased by caring for the widow and soothing her grief.

This guidance extends to emphasizing the importance of considering ethical and psychological aspects and not merely focusing on the end of the relationship. Instead, it encourages maintaining the goodness that existed until it concludes with kindness.

Allah, the Exalted, makes an exception for the widow who does not wish to complete the full year: {فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ} [But if they leave, there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 240). If she chooses to leave after completing her waiting period, she is free to do so, and there is no sin or blame upon the deceased's guardians for what she does with herself, such as adorning and beautifying herself within the limits of what is acceptable in the Shariah. This highlights the Islamic methodology in defining the boundaries of freedom, ensuring that it does not exceed the limits set by the noble Shariah, as individual freedom ends where the limits of Allah begin. This reflects how Islam preserves the rights of the individual as well as the rights of others, protecting them from potential harm and the consequences of others' actions. Additionally, it prevents the repercussions of exceeding the Shariah's boundaries from affecting others in society, in any form. Thus, Allah, the Exalted, safeguards the private rights of individuals as well as the rights between individuals and their community, across all types of relationships and varying degrees of influence.

The verse concludes with a reminder to those addressed specifically, and to everyone generally: {وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ} [And Allah is Almighty and Wise] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 240). This teaches and reminds them that He is Almighty, possessing all might, which includes complete power and comprehensive authority, and that He is Wise, with these rulings reflecting

His profound wisdom, as they are perfectly placed in their appropriate contexts.

After mentioning the provision for the widow, Allah mentions the provision for the divorced woman: {وَالْمُطَلَّاتِ مَتَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ} [And for divorced women is a provision according to what is acceptable] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 241). Every divorced woman is entitled to receive provision from her husband that is appropriate to his means and her circumstances. Allah then clarifies the ruling with His words: {حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ} [a duty upon the righteous] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 241). The word "حق" [right] signifies an obligation, meaning it is a required duty that the righteous fulfill. This indicates that those who are conscious of Allah (muttaqin) carry out what is due, and fulfilling one's obligations is evidence of taqwa.

Allah, the Exalted, then says: {كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ} [Thus Allah makes clear to you His verses that you might use reason] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 242). Allah favors His believing servants by clearly explaining to them these noble verses, which contain rulings that encompass the obligatory, recommended, prohibited, and disliked, along with the related manners and ethics. This is so that by implementing them, you may reach the completeness of reason and understanding.

This indicates that following Allah's commands leads to the attainment of complete human reasoning. Those who fulfill these commands are described as truly rational, possessing {عقل الرشيد} (mature intellect), while those who neglect them do not attain this description. {عقل الإدراك} (cognitive intellect) is the basic intellect that is responsible for understanding and distinguishing, which opposes madness or infancy – states where a person does not grasp the realities of things, and thus, the pen is lifted from them (i.e., they are not held accountable). Mature Intellect {عقل الرشيد}, however, goes beyond Cognitive Intellect {عقل الإدراك}; it is the intellect that allows a person to understand the nature of things, discern their types and sizes,

and differentiate between good and evil. It enables a person to recognize the truth and follow it, and to recognize falsehood and avoid it.

If someone recognizes the truth but does not follow it, or recognizes falsehood and follows it, such a person cannot be described as having Mature Intellect {عقل الرشيد}. The essence of Mature Intellect lies in using this intellect to engage in beneficial and upright actions. This is why people, metaphorically and not literally, might call someone "mad" if they clearly see what is good but do not pursue it. They use such expressions to criticize or highlight the irrationality of someone's actions because their behavior contradicts what is expected from a person with sound judgment.

{أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ (٢٤٣) وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (٢٤٤) مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (٢٤٥)}

[Have you not considered those who left their homes in many thousands, fearing death? Allah said to them, "Die"; then He restored them to life. Indeed, Allah is full of bounty to the people, but most of the people do not show gratitude. And fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah is Hearing and Knowing. Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan so He may multiply it for him many times over? And it is Allah who withholds and grants abundance, and to Him you will be returned.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 243-245)

Allah, the Exalted, addresses His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), describing a situation involving the Children of Israel: {أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ} [Have you not considered those who left their homes in many thousands, fearing death?] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 243). This address is directed to the Prophet (ﷺ), but it also includes the believers and anyone who hears Allah's words. When the Prophet (ﷺ) is addressed, the message typically includes those with him unless it is specifically designated only for him. The Qur'an addresses both mankind and jinn.

The phrase {أَلَمْ تَرَ} [Have you not considered?] is a rhetorical question that confirms a fact from Allah, indicating that the Prophet (ﷺ) and others should know about the people who fled their homes out of fear of death, whether due to a plague that had struck some of them or because of an enemy attack. One of the benefits of the phrase {أَلَمْ تَرَ} [Have you not learned?] is that it implies, "Has the news of those people not reached you?"

The phrase {أَلَمْ تَرَ} [Have you not considered?] can be understood as, "Have you not learned of those people's story?" When Allah, the Exalted, addresses His servant or His servants with {أَلَمْ تَرَ} [Have you not considered?], it conveys the truth of His message, as if the addressee had

witnessed it with their own eyes. The phrase {وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ} [and they were in thousands] means they were in repeated multiples of thousands, indicating a large number of people.

These were a people from the Children of Israel who fled their homes, where a deadly plague had spread, fearing that death would overtake them.

(The books of Tafsir mention that the fear of death due to the plague is what drove them out, as referenced in "Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim" by Ibn Kathir and "Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an" by Al-Qurtubi concerning this verse.)

As Allah, the Exalted, said: {حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ} [fearing death] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 243), meaning they tried to avoid death, but Allah decreed death upon them. This emphasizes to humanity that caution cannot prevent destiny. No matter how much one tries to escape Allah's decree, His will is inescapable for those whom He intends to enforce it upon. When a believer reflects on this, it brings about great peace and tranquility in facing the challenges of life, knowing that Allah's decree and will are bound to be fulfilled, and that causes alone do not prevent what Allah has ordained. Thus, when a believer takes precautions, they do so with the certainty that these measures are not effective by themselves but operate according to Allah's decree and will.

This applies in all aspects of life, such as in illness and its treatment, wealth and poverty – wealth does not prevent poverty, nor does poverty prevent wealth if Allah wills otherwise. Similarly, in every situation and matter of a person's life, Allah caused them to die by His power after they had fled their plague-stricken homes, but their departure did not save them from the death Allah had decreed for them. As Allah said: {فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا} [Allah said to them, "Die"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 243), so they all died by His command. And when Allah willed to bring them back to life, He revived

them, as He said: {ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ} [then He restored them to life] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 243). Thus, the entire matter is in Allah's hands.

This does not mean that one should abandon the means of protection from harm according to each situation, for Allah's guidance instructs to take precautions against harm and to seek what brings benefit, like jihad, which is taking the necessary means. However, this event that Allah mentioned serves to affirm to the believer that when Allah wills something, no preventive measure can thwart it. This reassurance allows the believer to confront frightening causes with confidence, taking necessary precautions while maintaining their faith in Allah, preserving the integrity of their belief, and ensuring their peace and tranquility.

Allah, the Exalted, then highlights His favor upon them and upon all His creation, as He says: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ} [Indeed, Allah is full of bounty to the people] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 243). Allah bestowed His favor upon them by reviving them after death, demonstrating His grace in warding off harm from them. If a Muslim reflects on their life's journey, they will find that Allah has averted many disliked things from them without them even taking preventive measures, either because they were unaware of the impending danger or due to Allah's protection without their knowledge.

There are countless instances where a calamity passed by someone or they passed by it without ever encountering it, or without being aware of its presence. How many times has a person interacted with someone suffering from an ailment without being affected, or has a dangerous object narrowly missed them without causing harm, while they were completely oblivious? Allah's protection was upon them, and had they moved even a blink earlier or later, they might have been struck by that harm. This obliges one to be grateful and praise Allah, yet many are heedless of giving thanks, as Allah says: {وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ} [but most of the people do not show gratitude] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 243), indicating that only a few are truly grateful to their Lord. This should motivate the believer to thank and praise Allah for

the blessings they are aware of and for those hidden from them, both apparent and unseen.

Another lesson from this event instills in the believer a courageous heart in the face of calamities and trials. It teaches them to handle these situations without panic that could weaken their strength and resolve, and without despair that could lead them to actions displeasing to Allah. The Companion Khalid ibn al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him), known as "the Sword of Allah," fought many battles at the forefront, yet he did not die from a spear thrust or a sword strike. He would say, "I have fought in many battles, and there is not a handspan on my body except that it bears a wound from a sword, a spear, or an arrow. Yet here I am, dying on my bed as a camel dies. So let the eyes of the cowards never sleep". (Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala*: 1/382)

This portrayal of the situation also serves to encourage the believer and strengthen their resolve and faith in moments of battle, where they confront and repel all forms of evil against Islam and Muslims. It encourages striving in the way of Allah, which is why the following verse commands fighting in the cause of Allah: {وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} [And fight in the way of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 244). Here, Allah commands fighting in His cause, instilling the principle of courage and the understanding that one should not flee from combat or jihad out of fear of death, as happened to those who were overtaken by death while fleeing from its causes, as mentioned in the previous story illustrated by the verse.

The phrase {فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} [in the way of Allah] emphasizes the importance of monotheism and sincerity to Allah alone, ensuring that the fight is for no other purpose than the cause of Allah. Imam Malik (may Allah have mercy on him) said regarding the "ways of Allah" that the paths of Allah are many, and there is no path except that one fights upon it, within it, or for it, and the greatest of these paths is the religion of Islam (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*: 3/154).

The phrase {فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} [in the way of Allah] indicates the path that leads to the pleasure of Allah, among which is jihad in His cause.

The verse concludes with a noble directive and a profound statement: {وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [And know that Allah is Hearing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 244). Allah commands that they acknowledge that He, the Exalted, hears and knows the intentions of every person and what they say concerning fighting or any other matter, for He hears it and knows it. In this Qur'anic context, there is a warning against neglecting the awareness that Allah encompasses His servants in hearing, knowledge, and power. The command to know that Allah is Hearing and Knowing implies the obligation to learn about His names and attributes, the honor that comes with such knowledge, and the goodness it brings to the one who understands them in their religion and worldly affairs. This necessitates taking care to learn and teach them.

Given that fighting in the cause of Allah requires financial resources to provide equipment, as well as necessities like food, drink, and clothing for the soldiers, Allah, the Exalted, encourages spending with a motivating approach. He says: {مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا} [Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan?] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 245). The encouragement and motivation are presented in the form of an inspiring question: "Who is the one who will lend to Allah?" This implies spending in the cause of Allah. The one who gives the loan is the servant, while the one who rewards this loan is the Lord, the Exalted. This spending by the servant is in the form of a loan, which will be returned, but the repayment here is different from the repayment among people, as it is a repayment from the Owner of all dominion.

The condition attached to this is that the loan should be {حَسَنًا} [goodly], meaning it should be given with a pure heart. The term {حَسَنًا} [goodly] encompasses all aspects of goodness in intention, sincerity, amount, and quality, as well as the generosity of a soul filled with faith, manners, and

ethics, opposed to anything that contradicts the characteristics and implications of kindness.

Allah then explains the extent of the reward for the spender, stating that He will {فَيُضَاعِفُهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً} [multiply it for him many times over]. This multiplication is not limited to double, triple, or even more; rather, it is multiplied repeatedly, in ways that only Allah, the Exalted, can count. This emphasizes the importance of generosity and liberality in giving, and that the borrower should be kind to the lender in terms of time, amount, gratitude, praise, and benevolence. This aligns with the generous and merciful way of Allah, the Most Gracious.

In the latter part of the verse, Allah conveys significant matters of belief and their impact on behavior and tranquility: {وَاللَّهُ يَفْضِلُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ} [And it is Allah who withholds and grants abundance, and to Him you will be returned] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 245). Provision is in the hand of Allah; He withholds it as He wills, as a test and trial, and He expands it for whomever He wills, also as a test and trial. This understanding empowers the believer with strong faith and reliance on their Lord, seeking His help in expanding their provision, its abundance, its blessings, and the ease of obtaining it. The believer's heart is content with what Allah has decreed, whether it is an expansion or restriction of provision, knowing that Allah decrees as He wills, and that goodness lies in what Allah decides. This results in increased tranquility and satisfaction with what Allah has given, in whatever measure He has given it.

This is reflected in their behavior—humility and generosity when Allah expands their provision, and patience without complaint when provision is restricted. The verse concludes with a powerful reminder: {وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ} [and to Him you will be returned], emphasizing and confirming the ultimate return to Allah after death, where each will be judged and rewarded according to their deeds. This reminder motivates the believer to strive for good and refrain from evil.

This highlights the importance for the preacher, educator, and advisor to engage with the noble Qur'anic meanings that encourage people toward goodness, distance them from evil, and nurture in them the qualities of virtue and noble character. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

{أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَأِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيِّ لَهُمْ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَهُ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَانَا ۖ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ }

[Have you not considered the assembly of the Children of Israel after Moses when they said to a prophet of theirs, "Send to us a king, and we will fight in the way of Allah"? He said, "Would you perhaps refrain from fighting if fighting was prescribed for you?" They said, "And why should we not fight in the cause of Allah when we have been driven out from our homes and from our children?" But when fighting was prescribed for them, they turned away, except for a few of them. And Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 246)

This is another story that sharpens the resolve of the believers to face their enemies. Allah, the Exalted, says: { أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَأِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى إِذْ قَالُوا { [لِنَبِيِّ لَهُمْ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ} [Have you not considered the assembly of the Children of Israel after Moses when they said to a prophet of theirs, "Send to us a king, and we will fight in the way of Allah"?] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 246).

Allah recounts to His Prophet (ﷺ), to the believers, and to all who receive and hear the Qur'an, the story of a group of the Children of Israel in the time after Moses (peace be upon him). This indicates that there were prophets whom Allah sent between Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them). They asked their prophet to appoint a leader for them, a commander under whom they could rally to lead the army with the purpose of fighting in the cause of Allah.

The Qur'anic text is presented in a way that captures attention, using a rhetorical question to recount what happened among a group of the Children of Israel. It is as if the event is described to the listeners in such a manner that they can almost see it unfold. Since it is narrated by the Creator of all things and their Sovereign, the account is an absolute truth, leaving no room for doubt. It is as though those hearing it witnessed the

event themselves. One of the benefits of the phrase {أَلَمْ تَرَ} [Have you not considered?] is that it can mean, "Has this knowledge not reached you?"

In their statement, "ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ" [Send to us a king, and we will fight in the way of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 246), the Children of Israel clearly articulated both the request and the goal behind it. Their request was for the appointment of a leader, with the objective of fighting in the way of Allah, highlighting the importance of having a commander or leader in warfare. This underscores the significance of leadership, where the led follow the leader, and the importance of uniting under a single commander, who should be well-versed in the task at hand to ensure the achievement of the goal. This principle is crucial not only in warfare but also in other professional, social, and administrative gatherings.

Furthermore, they specified the objective and the path they would collectively pursue, which is to fight in the way of Allah. Defining the goal is of utmost importance as it serves as the focal point around which the team, whether large or small, can rally. However, their prophet (peace be upon him) wanted to confirm their sincerity in this request, so he posed a question to test their commitment: "قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا" [He said, "Would you perhaps refrain from fighting if fighting was prescribed for you?"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 246). This indicates the importance of verifying the commitment to a cause and considering the potential outcomes before making a decision.

The phrase "هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ" [Would you perhaps] is a question of expectation, used here to gauge their likelihood of not fulfilling the command to fight if it were to be prescribed by Allah. It carries a tone of concern, implying the possibility that they might not fulfill their commitment if fighting were mandated: "أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا" [not to fight]. The prophet's (peace be upon him) mention of "إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ" [if fighting was prescribed for you] also demonstrates that he would not permit them to fight on his own accord but would seek permission for jihad from Allah: "إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ" [if fighting

was prescribed for you], indicating that the mandate comes from Allah, as the term "كُتِبَ" means "prescribed" or "ordained."

They responded by rejecting any reason for not fighting and affirming their desire to fight: "قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ" [They said, "And why should we not fight in the cause of Allah?"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 246). They removed any doubt about their willingness to fight for Allah's cause and presented a strong reason for their desire to fight, saying "وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَائِنَا" [when we have been driven out from our homes and from our children]. Their expulsion from their homes and separation from their children were compelling reasons to fight, removing any obstacle to appointing a king under whose command they could fight and unite their word and counsel.

This highlights the importance of verifying the reasons upon which decisions are based so that they are effective and sound. It also emphasizes the importance of having a single source of leadership around which people can unite, as seen in the necessity of appointing a leader whom they would follow and rally around.

Among the benefits we can draw from this passage is the structured approach to arranging speech: first, by negating the refusal through the absence of obstacles, and then by presenting the reasons or cause that justify the action. This meticulousness in organizing and structuring speech, with concise and effective expression, demonstrates the peak of eloquence.

However, when fighting was prescribed for them, as the verse states: { فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ } [But when fighting was prescribed for them, they turned away, except for a few of them] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 246), the result was contrary to what their prophet (peace be upon him) had secured from them. Many of them turned away, and only a few remained, who crossed the river, as will be mentioned later, insha'Allah. This could be seen as a purification process, removing those who were weak or

wavering, thereby strengthening the remaining few by the departure of the many who were weak.

This provides a lesson for the believers not to be like those who turned away, but rather to emulate those who remained steadfast, taking them as role models. It also teaches that the measure of truth is not in numbers, but in following the truth, even if the followers are few.

The verse concludes with the statement: {وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ} [And Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 246). This indicates that Allah is fully aware of the wrongdoer and his actions, which implies a warning to them. It also serves as a lesson to this Ummah to stand united with their Prophet (ﷺ) and not be like the wrongdoers who turned away from the battle after they had initially requested and desired it. This also signifies that the path of those who turned away from the battle is a path of unjust wrongdoing, and those who decide to refrain from fulfilling what Allah has commanded are indeed wrongdoers deserving Allah's punishment.

{وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا قَالُوا أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ}

[And their prophet said to them, "Indeed, Allah has sent to you Saul as a king." They said, "How can he have kingship over us while we are more worthy of kingship than him and he has not been given any measure of wealth?" He said, "Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah gives His sovereignty to whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing [in favor] and Knowing."] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 247)

Then another scene of obstinacy unfolds as their prophet tells them, {إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا} [Indeed, Allah has sent to you Saul as a king] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 247). This means that Allah has answered their request by appointing Saul as their king. However, their next act of stubbornness emerges, where they prioritize their own reasoning over divine command, displaying a limited understanding and judgment without knowledge: {قَالُوا} [They said, "How can he have kingship over us?"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 247). This is a form of objection, expressing their astonishment at the appointment and selection of Saul.

Their objections are then followed by their reasoning: {وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ} [while we are more worthy of kingship than him and he has not been given any measure of wealth] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 247). The first objection, {وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ} [while we are more worthy of kingship than him], is related to their perceived entitlement, believing that kingship should not leave their lineage. The term "أَحَقُّ" [more worthy] encompasses many connotations, including their belief that they were more deserving due to their lineage, wealth, status, and all the factors that might make someone feel they are more entitled than others.

This sense of entitlement blinds a person to Allah's decree, judgment, choice, and will. It also blinds them to the capabilities and virtues of others, stifling talents and destroying potential, and igniting arrogance.

The second objection they raised against his kingship was { وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ الْمَالِ } [and he has not been given any measure of wealth], indicating that Saul was not wealthy, and in their view, wealth was an essential criterion for leadership. This shows that human judgments are often based on factors that are flawed or superficial, focusing on appearances rather than completeness and perfection.

The misguided sense of entitlement often leads to arrogance, making a person believe that they are rightfully justified in their claims, even if these claims contradict the truth. Such misguided entitlement can lead to the oppression of those who are truly deserving, those endowed with the skills, abilities, and virtues that Allah has favored them with, which rightfully give them priority over others. This applies to all levels of administrative work and beyond.

Through their prophet, Allah responds to them with His words: { قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن يَشَاءُ } [He said, "Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah gives His sovereignty to whom He wills."] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 247). The first basis for Saul's preference, despite his poverty, is that Allah, the Exalted, has chosen him: { إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ } [Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you]. The term "istifa" (chosen) signifies the selection of the chosen one from among others, chosen for reasons that may not be apparent to or understood by any of the created beings, due to the veil of false entitlement clouding their judgment. The very fact that Allah has chosen someone is a compelling, decisive argument that settles the matter, yet Allah, the Exalted, clarifies additional bases for this selection: { وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ } [and has increased him abundantly in knowledge].

This indicates that knowledge, particularly the specialized knowledge relevant to one's duties, is a significant and critical factor. It emphasizes the importance of prioritizing those who possess knowledge in the specific area they are tasked with, as it is a cornerstone for success in all fields. Furthermore, because physical strength and soundness are essential in combat, Allah highlights this by stating: {وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ} [and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature], indicating the third foundation—physical completeness, strength, and soundness. These qualities are crucial for defending the truth, and physical perfection prevents anything that might hinder one from fulfilling their duties.

Allah then definitively settles the matter of Saul's selection and that of others by stating: {وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكُهُ مَن يَشَاءُ} [And Allah gives His sovereignty to whom He wills], as similarly stated in Surah Al-Imran: {قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي {الْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ} [Say, "O Allah, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will"] (Surah Al-Imran: 26). This statement cuts off all opinions and objections, signifying that no one should contest the rule given by Allah. It emphasizes that obedience and adherence to the appointed authority are obligatory, especially when that authority acts in ways that please Allah, as is the case in various administrative and leadership roles. There should be no dispute over the authority granted by Allah, and rather, efforts should be made to support and assist in achieving the collective good.

The verse further instructs not to judge leadership based on lineage or wealth, as each position of authority requires specific qualities—knowledge, mental, and physical completeness. Ignorance does not sustain leadership, management, or any societal affairs. Additionally, physical strength and completeness are indispensable in military matters.

The verse concludes with a profound reminder: {وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is all-Encompassing [in favor] and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 247). This

underscores that Allah, the Exalted, is vast in His knowledge, generosity, favor, and power, and He is fully aware of the conditions of His servants. It also implies that Allah is the One who has provided and expanded your provision and that He is fully knowledgeable about Saul, whom He has chosen to grant kingship among you. It further indicates that no one has the right to object to Allah's decree, as His attributes are perfect, encompassing vastness and knowledge in choosing and granting what He wills.

{وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ}

[And their prophet said to them, "Indeed, a sign of his kingship is that the chest will come to you in which is assurance from your Lord and a remnant of what the family of Moses and the family of Aaron had left, carried by the angels. Indeed, in that is a sign for you, if you are believers."] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 248)

Their prophet then explained to them the signs of his kingship, as Allah says: {وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ۚ} [And their prophet said to them, "Indeed, a sign of his kingship is that the chest will come to you in which is assurance from your Lord and a remnant of what the family of Moses and the family of Aaron had left, carried by the angels"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 248).

This emphasizes the importance of providing evidence to affirm truths and establish proof, especially when dealing with the obstinate, as it serves to compel them to accept the truth, which strengthens resolve. It also acts as a means to unify the community and achieve a cohesive social structure. Furthermore, it plays a significant role in educational and outreach efforts, as well as in executing administrative and leadership tasks, where it might be necessary to prove the validity of an issue or to select the best alternatives to be implemented.

The Qur'anic passage presents this evidence and sign, demonstrating the truth and reality: {إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ ۚ} [Indeed, a sign of his kingship is that the chest will come to you]. The first sign is that the chest, which was taken from them, would be returned to them: {أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ ۚ} [that the chest will come to you]. The second sign is that it would contain {سَكِينَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ} [assurance from your Lord], meaning tranquility and mercy. The virtue of this blessing of tranquility is that it instills strength, contentment, and happiness in the heart, leading to steadfastness, increased faith, and the absence of anxiety. Allah has bestowed this tranquility upon His

Messenger and the believers, as mentioned in Surah Al-Fath: {هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ} {السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ} [He it is Who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers so that they may add faith to their faith] (Surah Al-Fath: 4), and in another verse: {فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ} {وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى} [Then Allah sent down His tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the believers and imposed upon them the word of righteousness] (Surah Al-Fath: 26). It is indeed a great blessing.

The phrase {سَكِينَةً مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ} [assurance from your Lord] signifies that this tranquility is a favor directly bestowed by Allah upon them. The third sign mentioned is {وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ} [a remnant of what the family of Moses and the family of Aaron had left], which included items such as the staff of Moses and the staff of Aaron, the Torah, and the garments of Moses and Aaron.

The fourth sign is that {تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ} [it will be carried by the angels]. Ibn Abbas mentioned that the angels brought the chest, carrying it between the heavens and the earth until they placed it before Saul with the people watching. As-Suddi said that the chest was found in the house of Saul, leading the people to believe in the prophecy of Shammil (Samuel) and to obey Saul. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/309)

This indicates that Allah's power is immense, and His signs and proofs are magnificent and evident at all times. Their prophet pointed them to this clear and miraculous sign, which necessitated their belief in him and in Saul as their king. Allah says: {إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ} [Indeed, in that is a sign for you, if you are believers] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 248). This implies that the signs obligate belief, and that those who turn away from belief after witnessing the signs are indeed stubborn, obstinate rejecters of the truth.

{فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا
مَنِ اعْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ
بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّلَافُو اللَّهِ كَم مِّنْ فِتْنَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِتْنَةُ كَثِيرَةٍ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ
الصَّابِرِينَ}

[And when Saul went forth with the soldiers, he said, "Indeed, Allah will be testing you with a river. So whoever drinks from it is not of me, and whoever does not taste it is indeed of me, excepting one who takes from it in the hollow of his hand." But they drank from it, except a [very] few of them. Then when he had crossed it along with those who believed with him, they said, "There is no power for us today against Goliath and his soldiers." But those who were certain that they would meet Allah said, "How many a small company has overcome a large company by permission of Allah. And Allah is with the patient."] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249)

The verses then transition to another scene from the story of Saul and his soldiers, as Allah says: {فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ} [And when Saul went forth with the soldiers, he said, "Indeed, Allah will be testing you with a river"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249). This verse outlines the first course of the army as they separated from their homes, heading towards the enemy under the leadership of their king, Saul. He informed them of the trial and test that awaited them—a river—indicating that Allah would test them through this water: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ} [Indeed, Allah will be testing you with a river].

He then explained to them what was expected: {فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي} [So whoever drinks from it is not of me, and whoever does not taste it is indeed of me] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249). This signifies that this was a test to determine their strength of will, patience, and endurance. Those who drank from the river would demonstrate a weaker will, succumbing to their immediate desires, making them more prone to disobedience in times of hardship. On the other hand, those who refrained from drinking would show stronger self-control and the ability to endure difficulties.

The consequence was clear: those who drank from the water were not to be considered part of Saul's company: {فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي} [is not of me]. This highlights that companionship forms a unified group, like a single body, and those who diverge from the group are effectively severed from this collective body.

Those who did not drink were considered true companions, fully integrated into the group: {فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي} [is indeed of me]. The term {يَطْعُمُهُ} [taste it] refers to taking even a small amount. However, there was an exception for those who took only a handful: {إِلَّا مَنِ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ} [excepting one who takes from it in the hollow of his hand]. The act of "اغتراف" (taking with the hand) refers to drawing something with the hand or a tool, as is the case with a ladle or scoop. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/165)

The benefits of this scenario highlight that Allah decrees as He wills, and it is incumbent upon the believer to obey Allah. It also underscores the importance of trials and tests, as they are essential to various tasks and responsibilities. Through trials, the righteous are distinguished from the unrighteous, and the differences in abilities are revealed, qualifying some while disqualifying others. Leaders must test, monitor, and scrutinize matters, as this strengthens management across all sectors and at every level, thereby reinforcing both public and private interests. Every group of people exhibits varying degrees of faith, intellect, and obedience to commands and prohibitions.

The phrase {فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي} [So whoever drinks from it is not of me, and whoever does not taste it is indeed of me] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249) indicates decisiveness and clarity about what is required, as well as the decisions that stem from these requirements. It also provides encouragement suited to the situation, as the phrases {لَيْسَ مِنِّي} [is not of me] and {مِنِّي} [is indeed of me] encourage the pursuit of being among the righteous and warn against separating from them due to the temptations one might face.

This highlights the importance of patience and restraint in the face of temptations, demonstrating that faith is a guiding force for human behavior, directing it towards righteousness even in the most challenging circumstances, including confronting desires. This emphasizes the significance of faith-based education in building a strong nation, a strong state, and a disciplined society that upholds rights.

Moreover, this illustrates that trials and testing are intrinsic to human life, and that Allah tests individuals, even those who are on the path of obedience. Though only a few accepted the call to battle, their first steps involved a trial, teaching Muslims that trials do not imply Allah's displeasure, but are part of His divine plan for people in this worldly life. Believers should not view those undergoing trials as being punished or disliked by Allah. Instead, they should prepare themselves for the possibility of being tested by Allah, even while they are on the path of righteousness, and they should seek Allah's protection and well-being.

After they reached the river, the process of selection and distinction began, as Allah says: { فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ } [But they drank from it, except a [very] few of them] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249). This indicates that the majority drank, highlighting that being in the majority does not always equate to being correct. The truth lies with those who follow guidance, even if they are few. The few who did not drink were those who remained steadfast.

Allah then informs us of their crossing and leaving the river: { فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ } { وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ } [Then when he had crossed it along with those who believed with him] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249). This leads to another significant moment, where further testing and examination of the army's faith takes place as they confront their enemy, Goliath. Allah says: { قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ } { بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ } [They said, "There is no power for us today against Goliath and his soldiers"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249), indicating that the enemy's numbers were overwhelming, astonishing Saul's soldiers. Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned that four thousand men crossed

with Saul, but when they saw Goliath and his soldiers, who numbered one hundred thousand, three thousand six hundred and eighty-eight of them turned back (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/166).

At this juncture, the army was divided into two groups: the first group said, { لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِغَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ } [There is no power for us today against Goliath and his soldiers], while the second group said, { قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهِ } [But those who were certain that they would meet Allah said, "How many a small company has overcome a large company by permission of Allah"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249). The second group had reached a level of faith that made them certain that victory comes from Allah. Even if they were killed, they believed they would meet Allah as martyrs, as the term "ظن" here means certainty, i.e., they were sure (Al-Shawkani, Fath al-Qadir: 1/265).

This shows that faith is the source of steadfastness, while a lack of faith leads to doubt, which in turn causes fear—fear of large numbers, fear of death, fear of failure, and fear of taking bold steps. On the other hand, faith provides strength for steadfastness, courage, doing good, giving generously, and taking initiative. The phrase { يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهِ } [those who were certain that they would meet Allah] indicates their belief in the afterlife, their certainty that they would meet Allah, and their faith that He would reward them for fighting in His cause.

This holds military, educational, outreach, professional, and administrative significance, emphasizing the importance of faith-based education, which makes believers strong, unyielding, unbreakable, and unwavering in the face of fears and temptations.

Their deep understanding and strong faith led them to believe that victory does not come from numbers but from Allah's support for the one who is destined to win. Allah says about them: { قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهِ } [But those who were certain that they would meet Allah said, "How many a small company has overcome a large company by

permission of Allah"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249). They sought refuge in Allah and firmly believed in the victory granted by the Almighty, as is the belief of the true believer that triumph and victory come with Allah's help.

The phrase {كَمْ مِّن فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ} [How many a small company] implies that the victories of the small group over the larger one occurred many times, not just once or twice, but numerous times, and all of this was {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah]. This ties victory to the will of Allah, reinforcing the correct understanding and belief that everything happens by the will of Allah.

The expression {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah] provides the believer with immense spiritual and practical strength. Through it, they place their trust in Allah and accept the outcome of Allah's decree. When they take action, they believe they will succeed {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah]. If something does not go as planned, they acknowledge, "It was not willed by Allah." If they hesitate in something, they strengthen themselves by saying {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah]. If they are afraid, they overcome their fear {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah]. If they feel abandoned by others, they find peace in knowing that everything happens {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah]. When they see the potential for good, they say {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah], and when success is achieved, they say, "Alhamdulillah, it happened {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah]." Thus, {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah] becomes the strength that fills the heart in every moment and in every aspect of life.

They also said, {وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ} [And Allah is with the patient] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249), affirming what they knew: that Allah supports and aids the patient. He is with them, providing assistance, victory, and support. This demonstrates that patience is one of the means by which a believer gains Allah's support in fulfilling needs, relieving distress, and overcoming challenges in life.

The phrase {وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ} [And Allah is with the patient] is a principle that believers rely on to fulfill their needs and overcome difficulties and trials. When faced with hardship, they apply this principle to find strength, knowing that {وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ} [And Allah is with the patient]. When embarking on a task, they seek assistance through patience, as every task requires patience. If they struggle with an act of obedience, they remember that {وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ} [And Allah is with the patient]. If they are tempted by a wrongful desire, they use this principle to resist it. It is a source of strength for those who remember and act according to it, ensuring that Allah is with them in whatever they face, whether it is repelling harm, seeking good, relieving sorrow, dispelling grief, overcoming laziness, or overcoming weakness.

{وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ}

[And when they went forth to face Goliath and his soldiers, they said, "Our Lord, pour upon us patience and plant firmly our feet and give us victory over the disbelieving people."] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 250)

The Quranic narrative then shifts to the scene of the confrontation between Saul (Talut) and Goliath (Jalut): {وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ} [And when they went forth to face Goliath and his soldiers] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 250). This marks the beginning of the encounter, as Saul's soldiers appeared on the battlefield to confront Goliath, the leader of the giants, and his forces. In this moment, they sought help from Allah, who, in His grace, guided them to remember Him when faced with the overwhelming sight of Goliath and his army.

They said: {رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ} [Our Lord, pour upon us patience, and plant firmly our feet, and give us victory over the disbelieving people] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 250). Their first supplication was {رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا} [Our Lord, pour upon us patience], as facing the enemy requires patience, just as every challenge in life requires patience. This prayer indicates that a believer asks Allah for patience, recognizing that

patience is not solely a product of one's own strength or self-reliance but is a blessing granted by Allah. They asked Allah to grant them patience, signifying that a believer does not rely on their own resolve but turns to Allah for strength in all pursuits.

Next, they prayed for steadfastness: {وَوَثِّبْتَ أَقْدَامَنَا} [and plant firmly our feet]. Steadfastness in the face of overwhelming challenges is precious and difficult to achieve without Allah's support. Standing firm and not fleeing from the enemy in battle or other situations requires a strong will that Allah bestows upon His servants. No one can remain steadfast without Allah's aid, which strengthens both the heart and the body amidst the clashing of swords.

Finally, they asked for victory: {وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ} [and give us victory over the disbelieving people]. They sought victory from Allah over these disbelievers, teaching the believer that all victory comes from Allah in every circumstance, including on the battlefield. Therefore, a believer must seek victory from Allah and not rely solely on their own strength and abilities, lest they falter in the moment of trial. Instead, they should place their trust in Allah's power and assistance.

This emphasizes the importance of supplication in every situation, at every stage, and at every moment. There is no victory without Allah, no steadfastness without Allah, no patience without Allah, no good is attained without Allah, and no harm is averted without Allah.

{فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ (٢٥١) تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (٢٥٢)}

[So they defeated them by permission of Allah, and David killed Goliath, and Allah gave him the kingship and wisdom and taught him of that which He willed. And if it were not for Allah checking [some] people by means of others, the earth would have been corrupted, but Allah is full of bounty to the worlds. These are the verses of Allah which We recite to you, [O Muhammad], in truth. And indeed, you are among the messengers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 251-252)

The scene then shifts to the outcome of the battle between the forces of faith and the forces of disbelief. Allah, the Exalted, declares the result, stating, {فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [So they defeated them by permission of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 251). The Quran immediately announces the defeat of disbelief. However, their victory was not due to the strength of Saul's (Talut) army, as their forces were not equal to the might of Goliath's (Jalut) army, neither in numbers nor in equipment. Instead, their victory was {بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [by permission of Allah], as the verse emphasizes, {فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ} [So they defeated them by permission of Allah]. This victory was granted because they relied on Allah, the Mighty and Powerful, for their triumph, as they had expressed in the previous verse, {قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهِ كَمْ مِّنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ} [But those who were certain that they would meet Allah said, "How many a small company has overcome a large company by permission of Allah"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249). The One who granted victory was Allah, the Almighty, who is the true source of all power.

Then Allah reveals and clarifies the identity of the valiant man who killed Goliath, as He says: {وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ} [And David killed Goliath] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 251). David emerged from Saul's (Talut) army and killed Goliath. Allah, the Exalted, then graciously bestows upon David, saying: {وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ} [And Allah gave him the kingship and wisdom] (Surah Al-

Baqarah: 251). Allah favored David by granting him kingship after Saul. He also endowed him with {الْحِكْمَةَ} [wisdom], which is interpreted as prophethood after the Prophet Samuel. Allah, in His grace, combined kingship and prophethood for David. Furthermore, Allah blessed him, as He says: {وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ} [and taught him of that which He willed] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 251), meaning the specific knowledge that Allah chose for him. This emphasizes that Allah alone bestows kingship upon whomever He wills among His servants, as He prepared both kingship and prophethood for David and increased him with His grace from the knowledge He granted him (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/310).

Allah then explains His wisdom in repelling evil, as He says: {وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ {بَعْضُهُمْ يَبْعُضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ} [And if it were not for Allah checking [some] people by means of others, the earth would have been corrupted] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 251). If it were not for Allah's intervention in repelling one group of people by means of another, as He protected the Israelites through Saul and the bravery of David, they would have perished (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/310).

This indicates that Allah's profound wisdom lies in allowing one group to overpower another to prevent harm from afflicting others. Some may recognize this blessing, while others may not be aware of it. This requires Muslims to reflect on the events and struggles they witness, and to consider what happens to the Muslim community and the world at large. These conflicts and struggles may be a means by which Allah prevents a great harm from befalling another group. The verse also states the reason for this repelling: {الْفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ} [the earth would have been corrupted]. This repelling is necessary for the preservation of the righteous and to prevent the corrupt and oppressive from causing widespread ruin. The verse teaches that the earth's corruption is often due to the actions of its inhabitants and that its preservation relies on the presence and efforts of the righteous. The ongoing struggle between truth and falsehood is a

means of safeguarding the world from becoming overrun by corruption and evil.

Praise and thanks be to Allah, who protects the righteous through the divine method of repelling evil. If one were to reflect upon this divine wisdom throughout all aspects of life, they would find its manifestations and truths in various circumstances and events, achieving benefits and preventing harms and calamities in different areas of life such as trade, healing, sustenance, and more. This one comes to ward off harm from another, or to bring unexpected good to someone else, preparing circumstances that one never imagined, so that they receive unexpected blessings from Allah. It may be that someone arrives just in time to prevent harm from befalling another. Glory be to Allah, who possesses profound wisdom in His governance and choices. All of this is from the grace and mercy of Allah, as stated in the conclusion of the verse: { وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَىٰ ٱلْعَالَمِينَ } [But Allah is full of bounty to the worlds] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 251). The bounty of Allah upon the worlds is vast and great if one contemplates it. This understanding requires several actions, including reliance upon Allah and seeking His help in all matters, for He repels with His profound wisdom, unwavering will, supreme authority, and overpowering capability. It also necessitates reflection from the believer on their own affairs and the state of societies, recognizing how Allah manages the affairs of the worlds by repelling people from one another to prevent the earth from being corrupted by the overwhelming power and abundance of the corrupt and the destruction of the few righteous.

The verse emphasizes that Allah's grace extends to all His creation: { وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَىٰ ٱلْعَالَمِينَ } [But Allah is full of bounty to the worlds] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 251). Then Allah clarifies the purpose behind recounting these events: { ٱلَٰٓءَاتِ ٱللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ } [These are the verses of Allah which We recite to you, [O Muhammad], in truth] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 252). These are the verses that We recite to you, O Muhammad, with truth. They serve to affirm your prophethood: { وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ } [And indeed, you, [O

Muhammad], are from among the messengers] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 252). This responds to anyone who might say to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "You are not a messenger." These events, which no one but those involved knew after Allah, were conveyed by the unlettered Prophet, who could neither read nor write.

From this story, it becomes evident that it serves as a means of guidance, education, and miraculous proof in its wording and content. It contains lessons, wisdom, and a demonstration of Allah's immense power and His divine laws in managing His creation. It highlights that He is the Dominant over His servants, which requires the believers to utilize the content of the Qur'an in educational, preaching, organizational, planning, and legislative methodologies due to its profound teachings that guide to what is most upright in every aspect and domain of life.

{تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ ۚ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ ۖ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَفْتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَلَكِنْ اخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ آمَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَفَرَ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَفْتَنَّا لَهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُفَعِّلُ مَا يُرِيدُ}

[Those messengers - some of them We caused to exceed others. Among them were those to whom Allah spoke, and He raised some of them in degree. And We gave Jesus, the Son of Mary, clear proofs, and We supported him with the Pure Spirit. If Allah had willed, those [generations] succeeding them would not have fought each other after the clear proofs had come to them. But they differed, and some of them believed and some of them disbelieved. And if Allah had willed, they would not have fought each other, but Allah does what He intends.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 253)

The Quranic context then transitions to explaining the distinction among the messengers. Allah says, {تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ} [These messengers - We have exalted some of them above others] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:253). This indicates that the distinction and elevation among the messengers is determined by Allah alone. The preference is not by their own merit but by the divine wisdom and favor bestowed by Allah, as He states, {فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ} [We have exalted some of them above others] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:253), emphasizing that this favor is attributed to Allah.

This teaches us that the rank and status of the prophets are decreed by Allah, and it is not for any of His creation to dispute or question. The believers are instructed to affirm their belief in all the prophets without indulging in comparisons, as emphasized in the hadith where the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "Do not give superiority to any prophet over another" (Al-Bukhari, 4/277, Hadith 6916).

Furthermore, Allah highlights certain attributes given to specific prophets as signs of their distinction. For instance, He says, {مِنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ} [Among them were those to whom Allah spoke] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:253), referring to Prophet Musa (Moses), who was honored with direct communication

from Allah, earning him the title "Kalim Allah" (The One to Whom Allah Spoke). Additionally, He says, {وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ} [and He raised some of them in degrees] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:253), indicating the varying levels of honor and closeness to Allah granted to different prophets. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) witnessed this in the event of Isra and Mi'raj when he saw the prophets at different levels of the heavens (Al-Bukhari, 1/132, Hadith 349).

Moreover, Allah mentions Jesus (Isa), son of Mary, saying, {وَأَتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ {وَالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ} [And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the Holy Spirit] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:253). Allah granted Jesus (Isa) miraculous signs as evidence of his prophethood and supported him with the Holy Spirit, referring to the angel Gabriel (Jibril). Other examples of the distinct favors include Ibrahim (Abraham) being named the friend of Allah, Musa as the one who spoke directly to Allah, Dawud (David) being granted kingship and wisdom, and Solomon (Sulaiman) being given the ability to understand the language of birds and control over the jinn.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was granted unparalleled miracles and was chosen as the final messenger for all of humanity and jinn. Among his miracles were the multiplication of food, the flowing of water from his fingers, and victory granted through fear cast in the hearts of his enemies. These distinctions are all from Allah, highlighting that any excellence or virtue granted to any individual is a divine favor, not something earned by human effort alone.

This understanding fosters humility among believers, reminding them that any distinction or advantage they hold over others is a gift from Allah and should be met with gratitude rather than pride or arrogance. It also emphasizes the importance of recognizing and appreciating Allah's blessings in all aspects of life.

Whenever Allah sent a messenger to a people, it was incumbent upon them to believe in him and obey his guidance, as Allah manifested clear signs and miracles through His prophets. However, most of these people disbelieved and deviated from the path. This deviation led to disputes and ultimately to divisions, where some chose faith while others fell into disbelief, resulting in conflict and warfare among them. Allah says, { وَلَوْ شَاءَ { اللَّهُ مَا أَقْتَلْنَا الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ } [And if Allah had willed, those [generations] succeeding them would not have fought each other after the clear proofs had come to them] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:253). This verse underscores that if Allah had willed, they would not have fought after the clear proofs were brought to them by the noble messengers. This does not fall outside Allah's dominion or power, for His will and authority are absolute.

The verse also emphasizes that Allah is free from any deficiency, affirming His complete power and will. However, due to their differences and refusal to follow the appointed prophet, conflict arose. Allah says, { وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ { يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ } [But Allah does what He intends] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:253), indicating that Allah's will and decree are beyond question. He has the power to prevent any event, including warfare, but He allows what occurs to fulfill His wisdom and purpose.

This teaches us the dangerous consequences of division within the faith, as it leads to enmity and conflict. It also warns against the fragmentation of the faith, which can lead to dangerous ideologies such as takfir (excommunication), where individuals or groups may unjustly declare others outside the fold of Islam. Allah's will is ultimate, and nothing happens outside His knowledge and decree. If He had willed for events to unfold differently, they would have, but everything occurs according to His divine wisdom and plan.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

[O you who have believed, spend from that which We have provided for you before there comes a Day in which there is no exchange and no friendship and no intercession. And the disbelievers - they are the wrongdoers.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:254)

The Quranic context then transitions to encouraging spending in charity. Allah says, {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ} [O you who have believed, spend from that which We have provided for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:254). This verse begins with a call to the believers, emphasizing the importance of their attention to what follows, as it concerns their afterlife. By addressing them with the honorable title of "believers" {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا}, Allah acknowledges their faith, which is a great blessing in itself. This serves to draw their attention and teach them what is beneficial for them. From an educational perspective, it highlights the importance of addressing the learner or the invited with the best possible title. If Allah addresses His servants with such a high rank, how should one human address another?

Allah then encourages them to spend in charity using a threefold approach: encouragement, command, and incentivized warning. The encouragement is in the form of addressing them as believers {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا}, the command is in His statement {أَنْفِقُوا} [spend], which strengthens the believers' will to fulfill their obligation by spending from what they have. This implies that some obligations need to be presented with a command after initial encouragement and honor. The verse thus combines motivational encouragement {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} with a direct command {أَنْفِقُوا}, followed by an explanation of the incentive for spending, {مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ} [before a Day comes in which there will be no exchange, nor any friendship, nor intercession] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:254).

This command to spend does not demand all that a believer possesses but only a portion of what they have been provided {مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ}, showcasing

Allah's kindness, wisdom, and mercy. It also teaches that whatever provision a person has is indeed from Allah's bounty, as He says {مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ} [from that which We have provided for you], attributing all sustenance to Himself. The phrase {مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ} also implies that not everything provided needs to be spent, only a portion. Additionally, in His kindness, Allah does not specify an amount, leaving it to the individual's discretion based on their generosity, need, and assessment of the situation. The phrase {مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ} encompasses all forms of provision, not limited to a specific type, including knowledge, wealth, food, clothing, livestock, physical effort, or status. All these and more are provisions from Allah's grace.

Exalted is He whose words encompass His intent with the most eloquent expression. The phrase {مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ} [from that which We have provided for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:254) encapsulates numerous benefits and meanings, touching on the diversity and quantity of provision, and the consideration of the giver's circumstances and the context of the giving. Glory be to the One who provides. His speech combines decisive clarity, the beauty of expression, and the greatness of rhetorical, invitational, and educational methods. The verse inspires the believer to spend generously by reminding them of the Day of Reckoning {مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ} [before a Day comes in which there will be no exchange, nor any friendship, nor intercession] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:254). On this Day, the ability to buy anything that one could in this world to secure what is needed in the Hereafter, such as good deeds, ranks, and gardens, or to avert punishment and distance oneself from the Fire, will be absent, as there will be no selling at all {لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ}. Similarly, friendship that could be beneficial will cease {وَلَا خُلَّةٌ}, and no one will intercede for another unless granted permission by Allah {وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ}. Thus, the opportunities to benefit in the Hereafter from worldly matters will end on the Day of Judgment, except for what the believer has prepared for it during their worldly life. This serves as an exhortation to seize the opportunity, with a reminder and

encouraging warning, to make the most of life and the chance to engage in beneficial exchanges and trades in this world. Ultimately, the beneficiary of this is the believing spender, who will find the fruits of their charity before them in the Hereafter, as Allah raises their ranks and erases their sins. This divine command highlights the importance and virtue of spending in charity for the believer's benefit in the Hereafter. It also underscores Islam's emphasis on social bonds through charity, attending to the needs of others, and maintaining connections through giving in every possible way a believer can. The verse concludes by describing the state of the disbeliever: {وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ} [and the disbelievers - they are the wrongdoers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:254), which confines ultimate injustice to the disbelievers, for there is none more unjust than one who meets Allah as a disbeliever, having wronged themselves by their transgression and disbelief. This serves as a warning to the believer not to follow the path of the unjust disbelievers.

{اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ}

[Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before them and what will be after them, and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255)

Then comes Ayat al-Kursi, which is the greatest verse in the Book of Allah, as mentioned in the Hadith. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked Ubayy ibn Ka'b, "Which verse in the Book of Allah is the greatest?" Ubayy replied, "Allah and His Messenger know best." The Prophet repeated the question several times until Ubayy answered, "Ayat al-Kursi." The Prophet then said, "Rejoice in this knowledge, O Abu al-Mundhir" (Muslim, 1/556, Hadith 810).

The majestic Ayat al-Kursi begins with Allah's words {اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ} [Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of existence]. The verse starts with the divine name "Allah," followed by the affirmation of His Oneness, indicating that He alone is the deity, and there is no god besides Him. The phrase {لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ} negates the divinity of anything other than Him, signifying that no one is rightfully worshipped except Him, and that anything else is beneath Him, thus, none should be worshipped besides Him. This implies that anyone who worships other than Allah has disbelieved in their Lord and gone against His command. The phrase {لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ} is a declaration of exclusive worship to Him alone, emphasizing that there is no god to be worshiped in the heavens or on earth except Him, the Blessed and Exalted.

He is {الْحَيُّ} [the Ever-Living], while all others will die. This restricts the perfect, eternal life to Him alone. Thus, every being worshiped besides Allah will eventually die if they are living beings, and if they are inanimate objects, they will perish and cease to exist. There is no life without death, and no existence without eventual disappearance, except for Allah, the Exalted.

He is {الْقَيُّومُ} [the Sustainer of existence], who is self-sustaining and independent of all others. This signifies that everything else is dependent on Him for their existence, from the beginning to the end, in growth, movement, life, death, annihilation, resurrection, sustenance, health, and in every aspect of their being, both outward and inward. Thus, He is the Creator and Sustainer of every created being, providing them with everything they need to exist.

He, the Blessed and Exalted, is also {لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ} [Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep]. He neither slumbers nor sleeps, and this is among the attributes of strength, greatness, and perfection, for one who sleeps or dozes is subject to weakness, fatigue, and exhaustion. These are attributes of deficiency found in His creatures, which indicates the need of the created for the Creator, whose greatness and majesty prevent Him from slumber or sleep. Glory be to Allah, the Almighty. How, then, can a creature turn to another creature like itself, deficient in will, subject to these shortcomings, and forsake the worship of the One with perfect will?

This magnificent verse further clarifies His supreme dominion: {لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ} [To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth]. Everything in the universe is His possession, signifying that all beings are His servants. Servants are obligated to obey their Master, and none has the right to act independently of the Sovereign Owner, the Exalted. Thus, He holds absolute authority over His dominion, directing it as He wills. This implies that the owned are entirely dependent on their Owner for everything—from their existence to their sustenance,

health, and livelihood, through their journey from life to death, and then to resurrection and revival.

The verse further illustrates Allah's greatness in His supreme authority over His servants: {مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ} [Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission?]. This statement is presented in the form of a rhetorical question, which emphasizes Allah's majesty and grandeur. It suggests that no one dares to intercede for anyone before Him without His permission. This underscores His sovereignty, power, and might, and His overwhelming authority and reverence. It indicates that the influence of even the most honorable intercessors diminishes in His presence, regardless of their status in the world, unless He wills and grants permission. This means that the status of His servants does not benefit them in any way without His permission.

The verse then reveals the vastness of His knowledge, which encompasses all things: {يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ} [He knows what is before them and what will be after them]. His knowledge encompasses everything about His creation's future {مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ}, while the creature knows nothing about its own future, but Allah, the Exalted, knows all that will happen to each creature. Likewise, His knowledge embraces all that has passed {وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ}, while the creature forgets much of its own past. As for all of His creation, they do not comprehend anything of His knowledge except what He wills {وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ} [And they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills]. What the creatures know is but a small part of what Allah has allowed them to know. This emphasizes the servant's dependence on Allah's knowledge for preservation, understanding, thinking, teaching, and learning. This necessitates that the servant seek knowledge from Allah, the Exalted, and turn to Him for understanding and insight. When one learns something, it is necessary to attribute success and knowledge to Allah, by saying, "Allah enabled me to understand this, interpret this, memorize this, and derive this." Without

Allah's grace and generosity, one would not achieve anything in any science, profession, trade, or other fields of knowledge.

The verse indicates that human knowledge is limited to what Allah has taught, as the angels said earlier in this Surah, { سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ } [Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:32). In the phrase { إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ } [except for what He wills], it is understood that the degree and type of knowledge varies among His servants. Allah wills a certain amount and type of knowledge for one person and another amount and type for someone else. This variation in knowledge among people has led to a situation where they depend on one another, requiring consultation and advice. Thus, you may hear one person differ from another, or find one excelling over another in the same matter. Sometimes, you may find knowledge with the young that is absent in the elderly, or with a beginner that surpasses what is known by those who are more advanced. This is reflected in the saying, "You may find in the river what you do not find in the sea."

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) would consult his companions (may Allah be pleased with them), and they would consult one another. The Prophet (ﷺ) took the advice of some of his companions, such as on the day of Uhud, when deciding whether to face the enemy outside the city or within it.

The magnificent verse then illustrates the grandeur of His Throne, signifying the immense greatness of Allah, the Exalted: { وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ } [His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255). It declares that He preserves them { وَلَا يَبُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا } [and their preservation tires Him not], meaning that preserving them neither weakens nor burdens Him due to His perfection, strength, and power. His absolute mastery has ordained a precise system for everything, where nothing proceeds or lags except by His command, the Exalted. The One who is not burdened by preserving the vast creation will not be burdened by anything

else. This underscores the creature's dependence on Allah's protection, which necessitates that a Muslim continuously supplicates for Allah's preservation in every moment – asking for protection from harm, the evils of jinn and humankind, and safeguarding one's self, wealth, religion, intellect, family, and all matters of life. Hence, the blessed Sunnah includes prayers and supplications for protection at sleep, in the morning, and in the evening. How direly the servant needs the protection of their Lord, the Exalted!

The majestic verse concludes with Allah's words: {وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ} [And He is the Most High, the Most Great] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255). It clarifies that He is exalted above all His creation, and everything is beneath Him, the Exalted. He is exalted in position and rank, by His names, attributes, power, and encompassing knowledge, and everything is subjugated and submissive to Him, the Exalted. Additionally, He is {الْعَظِيمُ} [the Most Great], encompassing all attributes of greatness, strength, and power. This highlights the servant's need for Allah's greatness and power, compelling them to seek refuge in Him in all matters, and to never challenge Allah's grandeur and majesty, for the servant is weak, while the Creator is supremely great, glorified be He.

{لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (٢٥٦) اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٢٥٧)}

[There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has certainly grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing. Allah is the ally of those who believe. He brings them out from darknesses into the light. And those who disbelieve - their allies are Taghut. They take them out of the light into darknesses. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:256-257).

The noble Quranic context shifts to explain the essence of the divine method in inviting people to Islam, highlighting that the acceptance of Islam and entering into it should be based on awareness. Allah Almighty says: {لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ} [There is no compulsion in religion] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 256). The verse begins with the directive that prohibits coercion on anyone to enter or embrace Islam. This prohibition is due to the existence of reasons that naturally compel each individual to voluntarily enter Islam, as "the right path has become distinct from the wrong" {قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ} [الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ]. Al-Raghib al-Asfahani states that "righteousness (الرشد) is the opposite of deviation (الغي), and it signifies guidance" (Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, Mufradat Alfaz al-Quran, 196). Deviation, on the other hand, is ignorance rooted in false belief (Ibid, 369).

The noble verse clarifies that ignorance, which prevented people from entering Islam, has come to an end, as the religion of Allah has become clear and evident to everyone. It is now recognized as the religion revealed by Allah, given the overwhelming evidence and proofs that eliminate any doubt or ignorance about it, and ignorance about what opposes it, such as polytheism and disbelief. Thus, righteousness has become clear from deviation {قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ}.

In the verse {قَدْ نَبَّيْنَا الرُّشْدَ مِنَ الْغَيِّ} [the right path has become distinct from the wrong] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 256), there is an indication that when righteousness emerges, it exposes the corruption of what is false. This enlightenment of the truth for others implies that a righteous example, firmly adhering to the path of Islam, reveals to the corrupt the error of their ways. Reality thus speaks louder than words. The context of the verse {لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ} [There is no compulsion in religion] establishes it as a foundational principle in Islamic outreach, emphasizing that a Muslim must clarify the truth of Islam through both speech and action, without forcing anyone. The essence of Islam, with its comprehensive methodology and evidence, inherently points to its divine origin, as it encompasses clear proofs, arguments, ethical and social frameworks, and legislations in worship, creed, and dealings, covering all its content and substance. Thus, calling to this religion through clarification and explanation suffices to invite others to it willingly, with love and desire.

Allah Almighty then outlines the path to salvation: {فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ} [Whoever disbelieves in false gods and believes in Allah has certainly grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 256). The first step on this path is to disbelieve in everything worshipped besides Allah {فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ}, as all other objects of worship are false gods. The second step is to believe in Allah {وَيُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ}. Faith in Allah is a mighty handhold, as it necessitates submission to His law, leading to the result that the believer has grasped the most trustworthy handhold {فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا}. Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "This means that one has clung to the strongest part of the religion, likened to the most trustworthy handhold that does not break. It is firm, robust, and its binding is strong and unbreakable." Mujahid said, "The most trustworthy handhold means faith." Al-Suddi said, "It is Islam." Sa'id ibn Jubayr and Al-Dhahhak said, "It

means "There is no god but Allah." Anas ibn Malik said, "The most trustworthy handhold is the Quran." Salim ibn Abi Al-Ja'd said, "It is love for Allah and hatred for the sake of Allah." All these interpretations are correct and do not contradict each other (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/319).

This demonstrates the magnificence of Allah's speech, as His words encompass multiple meanings and all of His intended messages. The phrase {بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ} [the most trustworthy handhold] contains all these connotations. Glory be to Him whose words encompass His intent with the most eloquent expression and in the greatest words, elevating the significance of the expressions as they contain the words of the Lord of the worlds. Praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds. The verse then concludes with profound knowledge, teaching, and admonition: {وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is Hearing and Knowing], emphasizing that He hears the words of His servants and knows their deeds. This awareness encourages the servant to be mindful of Allah's attributes, which necessitate vigilance in avoiding His disobedience and adhering to His commands, as Allah hears and knows all, wherever and however one may be. This awareness motivates the believer to remain steadfast on the right path, ensuring they receive Allah's mercy, generous gifts, and benevolence, exalted and blessed be He.

Then Allah Almighty clarifies His method and care for His faithful believers, as well as the method of the false gods (ṭ awāghīt) with their disbelieving followers, so that a person may recognize the divergent paths and understand the direction each one leads. Allah is the Protector of those who believe; He brings them out of darkness into light. Allah demonstrates that He is the guardian of the believers, guiding, supporting, and enabling them, so much so that He leads them out of every darkness – whether of disbelief, polytheism, ignorance, or evil – into the light of Islam, with its guidance, creed, ethics, and legislation, ultimately guiding them to the Gardens of Paradise.

As for those who disbelieve, their protectors are the false gods they worship besides Allah. As He, the Almighty, says: { وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَائُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ } [And those who disbelieve – their allies are Tāghūt, who bring them out of light into darkness] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 257). Through this comparison, Allah Almighty elucidates the condition of the disbelievers and their allies – those who are worshiped besides Allah. They stand in stark contrast to the believers in Allah, for their false gods lead them away from the light of Islam, its guidance, and its tranquility, dragging them into the darkness of disbelief and the misery that leads to greater suffering and punishment on the Day of Judgment. Their fate is the Fire, { أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ } [They are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 257). This signifies that the destiny of the disbeliever is eternal residence in the Fire, and that no religion saves except the religion of Allah, blessed and exalted be He.

This also implies that the religion of Allah is a light in its complete legislation, leading to the light and bliss of the Hereafter, while disbelief is darkness, leading to more darkness and painful punishment. The believers live in great light, while the disbelievers dwell in profound darkness, whether in thought, soul, or life. Even if the pleasures of this world appear among them and upon them, their souls still suffer from misery and depression. The context, method, and implications of this noble verse highlight the importance of education, persuasion, da'wah (calling to Islam), and guidance through comparison of opposites. This comparative clarity sheds light on the true nature of both matters, presenting them plainly before the observer. In this comparison, there is an intellectual stimulation towards thinking, scrutinizing, and reflecting, as it leads the addressed person from evident knowledge to the reality of truths, dispelling ignorance and establishing knowledge that removes all doubt.

In the phrase { اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا } [Allah is the Protector of those who believe], there is both encouragement and motivation. The truth is that Allah, by His

grace, takes charge of the believers, granting them a noble and exalted status. This status means that Allah Himself becomes the guardian of the believer, with His strength, protection, guidance, authority, mercy, and generous gifts. Practically, this underscores the importance of support through advocacy and reinforcement, as assistance is one of the motivators that drives a person towards performance and away from hesitation and defeat. Whether in repelling harm or bringing benefit, in managing individuals or organizations, or in any other area, cooperation is a means by which good is achieved, by the permission of Allah Almighty.

{أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ}

[Have you not considered the one who argued with Abraham about his Lord [merely] because Allah had given him kingship? When Abraham said, "My Lord is the one who gives life and causes death," he said, "I give life and cause death." Abraham said, "Indeed, Allah brings up the sun from the east, so bring it up from the west." So the disbeliever was overwhelmed [by astonishment], and Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 258)

The noble Quranic context transitions to the story of what happened to Ibrahim, the close friend of Allah, in his encounter with a tyrannical and stubborn king. Allah Almighty says: { أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ { الْمُلْكَ } [Have you not considered the one who argued with Abraham about his Lord [merely] because Allah had given him kingship?] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 258). The Quranic text comes in a captivating and attention-grabbing style, using a rhetorical question to affirm what occurred with Ibrahim, who was challenged by that king regarding the existence of Allah, exalted be He. The king denied the existence of any lord other than himself. This event is described in the Quran as if you had seen it, making the truth of this matter undeniable and certain. Allah places the audience in the

position of one who has witnessed and seen for themselves what He has conveyed. The phrase {أَلَمْ تَرَ} carries the meaning of "Has this not come to your knowledge?" This attention-grabbing style is intended to make everyone who hears the Quran aware of its significant narratives, so that the arguments and dialogues presented serve as clear proof, as in the debate between Ibrahim, the friend of Allah, peace be upon him, and this arrogant king.

Among the lessons to be drawn is that Allah attributes the granting of kingship to Himself: {أَنَّ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ} [because Allah had given him kingship]. This implies that whatever a person possesses, whether little or much, is a gift from Allah, granted by His wisdom and for reasons He alone knows, as He is All-Knowing, All-Wise. It also indicates that Allah gives to whom He wills, even to sinners and disbelievers, according to His wisdom and power. Furthermore, it suggests that Allah's giving is not necessarily an indication of His pleasure with the one who receives, and withholding does not imply His displeasure. Rather, Allah gives and withholds according to His wisdom.

Allah, exalted be He, draws attention to this man to whom He gave kingship. According to the books of tafsir, he was the king of Babylon, Nimrod, son of Canaan. Mujahid said, "The rulers of the world, of both its eastern and western parts, were four: two believers and two disbelievers. The two believers were Sulayman bin Dawud (Solomon son of David) and Dhul-Qarnayn, and the two disbelievers were Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar." And Allah knows best (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/320).

This king not only denied the existence of any lord besides himself but was also characterized by an extreme level of arrogance and hubris. His immense power and authority led him to claim divinity, asserting that he alone was the lord, and there was no other god. This scenario highlights the danger of excessive pride and delusion resulting from the bounties

Allah bestows upon His servant. Such pride can lead a person to the point of claiming for themselves what is not truly theirs, a claim that Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) decisively refuted when he said: { رَبِّي الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ } [My Lord is the one who gives life and causes death]. Ibrahim denied Nimrod's claim of lordship and affirmed that his Lord is the Creator, the one who alone has the power to give life and cause death, mentioning one of the most evident aspects of Allah's dominion. In response, the king arrogantly claimed, "I give life and cause death," implying that he could kill whom he wished and spare whom he wished. This response was a cunning attempt to divert from the true essence of the argument, possibly out of obstinacy and defiance. This indicates that some people, through their cunning and deceit, can mislead those of weaker intellect and thought, making it crucial for a debater to be vigilant and seek Allah's assistance.

Allah, exalted be He, aided His friend Ibrahim to shift to another argument that the king could not evade or obscure. Allah says regarding Ibrahim (peace be upon him): { فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ } [Indeed, Allah brings up the sun from the east, so bring it up from the west] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 258). This was a challenge and a demand that the king could not distort or manipulate. The verse continues: { فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ } [So the disbeliever was overwhelmed]. His argument was completely shattered, and he was left speechless, unable to respond, for he could not alter the rising and setting of the sun, a phenomenon witnessed by all people.

The verse then concludes with the result for every oppressor: { وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ } [And Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people]. This indicates that Allah does not inspire or grant guidance and proof to the oppressor, who is devoid of such evidence in the first place. Thus, he is not aided with guidance and success in what eludes him. The absence of Allah's guidance to the oppressor serves as a warning against all forms of oppression. Even if an oppressor might temporarily triumph in his wrongdoing and tyranny, Allah, exalted be He, will not guide him, and he will be forsaken at critical

moments, making the pain of defeat much harsher than the sweetness of temporary victory. Those who reflect on the outcomes of oppressors, at all levels, will find this evident before them. We ask Allah, in His mercy, to keep us away from oppression and to keep oppression away from us.

{أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانْظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۖ وَانْظُرْ إِلَى جِمَازِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَانْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا ۖ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ}

[Or [consider such an example] as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, "How will Allah bring this to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years; then He revived him. He said, "How long have you remained?" The man said, "I have remained a day or part of a day." He said, "Rather, you have remained one hundred years. Look at your food and your drink; it has not changed with time. And look at your donkey; and We will make you a sign for the people. And look at the bones [of the donkey] – how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh." And when it became clear to him, he said, "I know that Allah is over all things competent."]
(Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 259)

This is another example, connected to the previous one where Allah exposed the tyrannical king and supported His friend Ibrahim (peace be upon him) with decisive arguments and proofs. In this example, Allah Almighty says: {أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا} [Or [consider such an example] as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 259). The verse invites reflection on both the one who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord and this man who passed by a village that had been deserted and was now in ruins, {خَاوِيَةٌ} – meaning empty and collapsing {عُرُوشِهَا} – with its roofs fallen down. The roofs

and walls had collapsed, and the man stood there, bewildered, contemplating the state of its inhabitants, its destruction, and the difficulty of its revival after it had once been thriving, bustling with people, filled with buildings, developments, commerce, and life. Now it had become a desolate ruin. This reflection led him to doubt the possibility of resurrection: {قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَٰذَا اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا} [He said, "How will Allah bring this to life after its death?"].

The man's question, {أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَٰذَا اللَّهُ} [How will Allah bring this to life?], indicates that he believed in Allah, unlike Nimrod, but he doubted Allah's ability to resurrect after death. He expressed this doubt out of skepticism and a sense of improbability.

{فَأَمَّا تَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةً عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ} [So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years; then He revived him] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 259). When he stood up, fully restored, Allah, through an angel, said to him, {قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ} [He said, "How long have you remained?"]. This question prompted him to think and reflect on his past and present. Allah did not immediately inform him of what had happened but instead began with a question. The benefits of this approach include awakening his attention, making him realize his inability to answer, and highlighting the limitations of his knowledge about himself and his own condition. Through this, he would come to understand Allah's power over resurrection and the ease with which Allah can accomplish such matters. It also illustrates that the creature's weakness cannot be compared to the Creator's power, for the Creator, exalted be He, is great and capable, while the creature is weak and helpless in every matter and in every aspect, except by Allah's guidance, assistance, and kindness.

Thus, his answer to the angel reflected his limited understanding: {قَالَ لَبِثْتُ} [The man said, "I have remained a day or part of a day"]. In his estimation, the period of his death seemed to have been no more than a day, or even part of a day. This limited perception demonstrates the tremendous power of Allah and His complete knowledge. Then comes the

divine response, the gravity of which would be immense for him: { قَالَ بَلْ لَيْسَتْ } [He said, "Rather, you have remained one hundred years"]. Undoubtedly, the impact of this news on him would be profound.

Allah continues to clarify the matter to him so that he may take heed, and others after him may also be warned of Allah's power over resurrection and recompense. Allah says: { فَانْظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ } [Look at your food and your drink; it has not changed with time]. Allah draws his attention to the tangible reality of his food, which had not changed despite the long passage of time. This indicates that the laws of change are in Allah's hands; if Allah wills something to remain unchanged over time, it remains as He wills, just as our Lord, exalted be He, desires. Similarly, He can change other things, causing them to decay as He wills, for He is the Almighty, the Most Generous.

Then Allah directs his attention to his donkey: { وَانْظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ } [And look at your donkey]. The donkey had decomposed and perished, leaving nothing but bones, which clearly signified death and decay, serving as undeniable evidence before his eyes. Allah then commanded him to observe how He would revive the donkey right in front of him. The food had not changed, despite its natural tendency to spoil and decay over time due to heat, sunlight, and the passage of time. On the other hand, the donkey, which could have lived for many years, had decayed. This contrast in Allah's decree defied human expectations and perceptions, emphasizing His immense power, even in altering natural laws and the established order that He created for the universe's function.

Allah then explains that what occurred was meant to serve as a lesson and a sign for those who come after him: { وَلَنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ } [And We will make you a sign for the people], so that he would be a sign for the people, demonstrating Allah's power to resurrect, bring back to life, and restore after death.

Next, Allah Almighty draws the man's attention to how the process of revival takes place with his donkey, after he had seen it decayed and disintegrated: {وَانْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنْشِرُهَا} [And look at the bones—how We raise them]. "Nushuruha" refers to the lifting and assembling of the bones, connecting them to each other after they had been scattered and displaced. The bones are reorganized just as they once were: {ثُمَّ نَكْسُوها لَحْمًا} [then We cover them with flesh]. Then, Allah clothes the bones with flesh, bringing them back to life.

When he witnessed this revival, he declared: {قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ} [He said, "I know that Allah is over all things competent"]. His experience of observing both death and the process of resurrection led him to a firm realization of this undeniable truth. He acknowledged Allah's power over all things, not just resurrection. He did not merely affirm Allah's ability to revive the dead but extended his certainty and faith to Allah's omnipotence over everything. This indicates that understanding Allah's power in one aspect extends to recognizing His authority over other aspects as well. Just as Allah can revive the earth with rain after it has died, so too can He resurrect and bring the dead back to life. Indeed, Allah is capable of all things.

This teaches an important lesson in education and da'wah (Islamic outreach)—the significance of drawing attention to the signs of Allah in His creation, which some people might overlook. These signs lead the servant to a certainty that Allah is the Creator, Sustainer, and Owner of all things, and that everything in the natural world aligns harmoniously with the signs found in the Quran.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ قَالَ أُولَٰمُ تُؤْمِنُ ۖ قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي ۖ قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا ۚ وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

[And [mention] when Ibrahim said, "My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead." [Allah] said, "Have you not believed?" He said, "Yes, but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied." [Allah] said, "Take four birds and commit them to yourself. Then [after slaughtering them], put on each hill a portion of them; then call them – they will come [flying] to you in haste. And know that Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 260)

The narrative then shifts to another instance of resurrection, this time involving Ibrahim, the close friend of Allah (peace be upon him). Allah Almighty says: {وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ} [And [mention] when Ibrahim said, "My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 260). Ibrahim (peace be upon him) asked Allah to show him how He revives the dead. In response, Allah asked him, {أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنُ} [Have you not believed?]. This question from Allah to Ibrahim (peace be upon him) is significant. Ibrahim replied, {بَلَىٰ} [Yes], affirming his belief and knowledge that Allah is capable of resurrecting the dead. By beginning his response with "Yes," any doubt about Ibrahim's faith is removed, preventing anyone from questioning his belief. If Allah had shown Ibrahim the process of resurrection without asking him this question and without affirming his faith, there could have been misconceptions about the reason for Ibrahim's request and the strength of his belief.

When Ibrahim said {بَلَىٰ} [Yes], he meant, "I have already known and believed that You are capable of that." But he added, {وَلَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي} [but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied], meaning he sought this demonstration so that his heart would be further assured by adding the

evidence of direct observation to his faith (Al-Shawkani, Fath al-Qadir: 1/281).

Allah responded to Ibrahim's request, saying: {فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ} [Take four birds], without specifying the type of birds, allowing Ibrahim to choose from any available species. {فَصْرُوهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ} [Then commit them to yourself], meaning to bring them close, slaughter them, and tear them into pieces. Then, {ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلَى كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا} [put on each hill a portion of them]. This divine command shows the miraculous nature of the event, with precise instructions for Ibrahim (peace be upon him) to cut the birds into pieces, dispersing the parts across the surrounding hills, thus separating the pieces far apart. Then Allah said: {ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا} [Then call them; they will come to you in haste]. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) called the birds, and they came to him swiftly. The speed with which they responded adds to the miraculous nature of the event, demonstrating that not only was life restored to the dismembered birds, but they also returned quickly at his call, a process that unfolded in the blink of an eye.

Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Ibrahim (peace be upon him) held the birds' heads in his hands. Then, as commanded by Allah, he called the birds, and they began to reassemble: feathers flew to feathers, blood to blood, and flesh to flesh. The parts of each bird connected and formed a complete bird, each returning to its original state. The birds then approached Ibrahim, walking briskly, making the vision he requested even more powerful and vivid. Each bird came to claim its head, which Ibrahim held in his hands. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/323)

The verse concludes by emphasizing Allah's attributes of might and wisdom: {وَاعْلَمَنَّ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ} [And know that Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise] (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 260). The word {وَاعْلَمَنَّ} [And know] indicates a command to gain this knowledge, underscoring the importance for a Muslim to understand that Allah is both Mighty and Wise. This highlights the virtue of knowing Allah's names and attributes, as such

knowledge strengthens faith, inspires all good deeds, and wards off all evil. It also signifies the importance and even the obligation of learning what makes one realize that Allah is Mighty and Wise, which can be achieved by reflecting on Allah's cosmic and legislative signs.

The attribute of {الْعَزِيزُ} [Al-'Aziz, the Mighty] means that nothing can overpower Him, and nothing can resist His will; everything submits to Him willingly. Whatever He wills comes to pass without opposition, for He is dominant over all things. He is {الْحَكِيمُ} [Wise] in His words, actions, legislation, and decree. The term {الْعِزَّةُ} [Al-'Izzah, the Might] encompasses complete power and overwhelming capability; He is always victorious in His affairs. The term {الْحَكِيمُ} [Al-Hakim, the Wise] refers to the One who perfects things and places them in their proper order (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/323) and (Ibn al-Jawzi, Zad al-Masir fi 'Ilm at-Tafsir: 1/50).

Wisdom implies putting things in their rightful place; thus, Allah is wise in His legislation and command. This understanding requires believers to internalize these meanings of His attributes, as they invoke reverence, fear, compliance, and guidance, leading to obedience to Allah Almighty.

{مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ}

[The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] that sprouts seven ears; in every ear is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 261)

The Quranic context then transitions to encourage spending in the way of Allah: {مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] that sprouts seven ears; in every ear is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 261).

Allah Almighty begins this noble verse by presenting a metaphor that brings the meaning closer to the recipients of the Quran, specifically addressing the believers, as spending is only accepted with faith. Allah compares the one who spends his wealth in His cause to a seed that produces multiple ears, each filled with numerous grains. Ibn Kathir (RA) said: "This metaphor is more impactful than merely stating the number seven hundred, as it alludes to the fact that righteous deeds are prepared by Allah for their doers, just as crops are prepared for those who plant them in fertile soil." The Sunnah has also mentioned the multiplication of a good deed up to seven hundred times (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/324).

The verse emphasizes the necessity of sincerity for the spending to be beneficial, as Allah says {يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} [spend their wealth in the way of Allah], restricting it to the cause of Allah, which encompasses two conditions: first, that the expenditure should be in obedience to Allah, and

second, that it should be done purely for His sake, without any showing off or seeking personal gain.

The verse also highlights the scope of spending {فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} [in the way of Allah]. Ibn Sa'di (RA) explained that this includes spending on promoting beneficial knowledge, preparing for jihad, equipping fighters, and all charitable projects that benefit Muslims, with spending on the needy, the poor, and the destitute coming next (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/209).

This indicates the virtue, significance, and great reward of spending in the way of Allah. One of its virtues is the multiplication of rewards for the giver, with a tremendous reward that cannot be counted or limited, as Allah says: {وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ} [And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills]. The multiplication is not specified, meaning it could exceed seven hundred times, indicating Allah's immense generosity. Some scholars have stated that this implies that Allah multiplies the reward beyond seven hundred times for whom He wills. (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/198)

The verse illustrates the boundless generosity of Allah towards whomever He wills. This serves as both encouragement and praise for those who spend in the way of Allah, as the reward and its multiplication are a form of commendation and incentive for doing good. Allah then reinforces this with the mention of His majestic attributes, {وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 261). He is vast in His gifts, His bounty, His knowledge, and His power. None of His creation can encompass His vastness, and only He knows the true extent of His greatness.

This has important implications both educationally and administratively. It highlights the importance of encouraging good deeds and striving to maximize the potential for good, as well as the value of encouragement in professional and administrative settings. Encouragement is one of the most

effective ways to bring out the best in people, as human nature is inclined to love rewards, praise, and encouragement.

The example of the grain spike also emphasizes the virtue of agriculture, as it brings about benefits for Allah's creatures, providing them with the food they need. Imam Al-Qurtubi (RA) said: "This verse is evidence that cultivating crops is among the noblest occupations and the best ways for people to earn a livelihood, which is why Allah used it as a metaphor" (Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*: 3/198).

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person, or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift for him" (Sahih al-Bukhari: 2320).

In the metaphor of the grain spike, we learn how to convey meaning and imagery to the learner, and how to select an appropriate analogy that aligns with the subject, in terms of image, type, quantity, and similarity in significance. This broadens the mind and truthful imagination to grasp the intended meaning, stimulating thought towards goodness and success.

{الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتَّبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٢٦٢) قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعُهَا أَذًى ۖ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ}

[Those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah and do not follow up their spending with reminders of their generosity or [hurtful] words – they will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. A kind word and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury. And Allah is Free of need and Forbearing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 262-263)

The following verse emphasizes the etiquette of spending, as Allah says: {الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتَّبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى} [Those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah and do not follow up their spending with reminders of their generosity or [hurtful] words] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 262). This verse reinforces the importance of spending in Allah's cause, mentioned again here to emphasize the moral conduct required in such spending. It specifies that one should not mar their act of giving by following it up with reminders of their generosity or by causing harm to the recipient. {مَنًّا} refers to mentioning what has been spent in a boastful or condescending manner, which can hurt the recipient's feelings, diminish their dignity, and remind them of their poverty and need. This highlights the ethical and compassionate nature of Islam, which promotes kindness, mercy, and the protection of others' dignity.

The severity of boasting about one's charity is such that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) warned in a hadith: "Three people Allah will not look at on the Day of Judgment, nor will He purify them, and they will have a painful punishment: We asked, 'Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?' He said: 'The one who boasts about what he gives, the one who lets his garment hang below the ankles out of pride, and the one who sells his goods by swearing a false oath.'" (Tirmidhi: 1211).

This warning of punishment indicates that refraining from causing harm, even if it means withholding charity, is better than giving with harm. This concept carries numerous lessons for those who contemplate it.

The second moral conduct mentioned by Allah is more comprehensive than just avoiding boasting; it includes avoiding any form of harm: { ثُمَّ لَا } [and do not follow up their spending with reminders of their generosity or [hurtful] words]. Harm encompasses anything that could distress or hurt the recipient, whether physically or emotionally. This includes boasting, which is singled out for mention because of its particularly harmful impact. In the eloquence of this expression, we learn that a specific cause or reason may necessitate highlighting a particular issue, even though it is already included within a broader context. This draws special attention to the particular issue's importance, seriousness, or any other intended purpose in the discourse.

Whoever embodies these Islamic morals and etiquettes in spending, as intended by Allah, is given glad tidings from Allah: { لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ } [they will have their reward with their Lord] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 262). This reward is beyond anyone's estimation, except Allah Almighty, because His reward is immense, especially as it is described with the phrase { عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ } [with their Lord]. This signifies a great assurance from a Most Generous Lord.

Moreover, they are granted the glad tidings of security, as Allah says: { وَلَا } [there will be no fear concerning them]. Allah removes any fear from them regarding what lies ahead in their future, for fear is associated with the unknown. The third glad tidings is: { وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ } [nor will they grieve]. Allah absolves them from grief and sorrow over what has passed, for grief is tied to the past. In this way, they are enveloped in happiness, free from worry and sorrow, while being blessed with a great reward from Allah. This indicates that worry and sorrow are the primary causes of human misery. We ask Allah to protect us and all Muslims from them.

Allah then clarifies the correct preference between speaking kindly without spending and causing harm through charity: { قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ { يَتَّبِعُهَا أَذَى [A kind word and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 263). This suggests that a kind word, a prayer for a fellow Muslim, or forgiveness of a wrong is better and more virtuous than charity accompanied by harm from the giver towards the recipient. This comparison teaches the listener the correct ethical methodology for guiding and nurturing oneself with Islamic morals in interactions with others: speaking a kind word without giving is better than giving accompanied by any form of harm.

In this comparison, there is a lesson for the Muslim on the methodology of prioritizing deeds and understanding the significance of manners and ethics in elevating the value of actions. It also highlights the importance of kind words and forgiveness { وَمَغْفِرَةٌ } [and forgiveness], as well as the severity of causing harm, even when coupled with spending, which a Muslim extracts from what they own, often with great self-discipline. Extracting from one's wealth is challenging, except for those whom Allah has blessed with generosity and a natural disposition towards charity.

The verse concludes with a reminder, highlighting two of Allah's attributes: { وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ } [And Allah is Free of need and Forbearing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 263). Allah is self-sufficient, needing none of His creation, and He is rich in His absolute grace and power. He is also forbearing towards His servants, not hastening to punish them, but rather forgiving, overlooking, and pardoning them due to His vast and noble forbearance.

When a believer reflects on these divine attributes, it guides their heart to submit to their Lord according to the knowledge of His magnificent attributes and noble names. This understanding compels the believer to give generously, knowing that the One they are spending for is the Rich, the Generous, who rewards the giver with immense generosity. This awareness also instills hope in the heart when giving, because the one who

spends for His sake is giving to the Rich and Forbearing. It encourages decisiveness and removes hesitation in spending, knowing that the one who spends for His sake is giving to the Rich and Generous. It prompts haste in giving, as the one who spends for His sake is giving to the Rich, Forbearing, and Generous. Finally, it alleviates any fear of poverty, knowing that the one who spends for His sake is giving to the Rich and Generous.

إِنَّمَا إِلَهُ الْإِنسَانِ فَتُؤْتَىٰ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ (٢٦٤) وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلَّ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ (٢٦٥) أَيَوَّدُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنَّ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ لَهُ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۚ وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَةٌ ضِعْفَاءُ فَاصْبَابُهَا ۖ إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ

[O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders or injury as does one who spends his wealth [only] to be seen by the people and does not believe in Allah and the Last Day. His example is like that of a [large] smooth stone upon which is dust, and then a downpour strikes it, leaving it bare. They are unable [to keep] anything of what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people. And the example of those who spend their wealth seeking means to the approval of Allah and assuring [reward for] themselves is like a garden on high ground which is hit by a downpour - so it yields its fruit in double. And [even] if it is not hit by a downpour, then a drizzle [is sufficient]. And Allah, of what you do, is Seeing. Would one of you like to have a garden of palm trees and grapevines underneath which rivers flow, in which he has from every fruit? But he is afflicted with old age, and has weak offspring, and it is hit by a whirlwind containing fire and is burned. Thus does Allah make clear to you [His] verses that you might give thought.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 264-266)

The Quranic context continues to emphasize the etiquette and virtues of charity, spending in the way of Allah, its great rewards, and what nullifies and corrupts it. Allah Almighty says: {إِنَّمَا إِلَهُ الْإِنسَانِ فَتُؤْتَىٰ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ} [O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders or injury] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 264). The verse begins with a call from Allah to the believers. This address and calling them by their faith from the Creator, exalted be He, is a great honor for the believers, affirming their faith from Allah Himself. What greater blessing could there be than this

noble acknowledgment and this heart-touching call for those who understand its meaning and significance? All of this is to draw their attention and teach them what benefits them.

From an educational perspective, this shows the importance of addressing the learner or the one being invited in the best possible manner. If this is how Allah addresses His servants with such a noble rank, then how should a servant address another servant?

Allah then warns believers for the third time against nullifying their charities with actions that corrupt them so that they do not invalidate their efforts by doing what harms rather than benefits them, thus losing the great reward. The repetition of this prohibition three times indicates its severe danger to the believer, serving as a stern warning and teaching for every believer. This is part of Allah's mercy towards His believing servants, whether the giver or the receiver. It ensures that the giver does not lose the reward for their charity and that the receiver is not harmed by what they receive. It preserves love and maintains the brotherhood of Islam among Muslims.

Allah likens those who follow their charity with reminders and harm to the hypocrite: {كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ} [as does one who spends his wealth [only] to be seen by the people and does not believe in Allah and the Last Day] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 264). Whoever follows their charity with reminders and harm is like someone who combines the ugliness of hypocrisy with the ugliness of disbelief in the Last Day. The former relates to this world, which is hypocrisy, while the latter relates to the Hereafter, which is disbelief in the Last Day. This implies that anyone possessing these two traits has nullified their deed by resembling the actions of the hypocrite, who lacks sincerity to Allah, and the one who does not believe in the Last Day, which causes them to spend only for fame and showing off without any concern for the Hereafter.

Belief in the Last Day instills fear of Allah, prompting one to dedicate their deeds to Allah alone, in preparation for that day.

This teaches a valuable lesson in education, guidance, and da'wah (Islamic outreach) about the importance of using analogies and metaphors. Such methods effectively clarify the intended meaning and convey the message to the audience in the simplest and most understandable manner.

Allah Almighty further emphasizes the danger of following charity with reminders and harm through another analogy, to clarify and reinforce what He has forbidden. He says: {فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا ۖ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا} [His example is like that of a [large] smooth stone upon which is dust, and then a downpour strikes it, leaving it bare. They are unable [to keep] anything of what they have earned] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 264). Allah likens such charity, which is tainted with harm, to a {صَفْوَانٍ}—a smooth rock—upon which there is dust. Then, when a heavy rain {وَابِلٌ} strikes it, it leaves the rock bare, as if there was never any dust on it. Similarly, charitable deeds that are followed by harm are nullified, corrupted, and erased before Allah due to the harm, boasting, hypocrisy, arrogance, and all kinds of injury that may accompany them. They become as if they never existed in the sight of Allah. Consequently, there is no reward or benefit from them, and the giver gains nothing from their charity.

Allah then explains the outcome for such a person: {لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا} [They are unable [to keep] anything of what they have earned], meaning they cannot benefit from what they have given in charity. Their efforts are wasted, and they cannot retrieve the reward that could have been theirs. {وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ} [And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people]. Allah does not guide disbelievers, nor does He grant them success in achieving goodness because of their disbelief in Him. This serves as a warning against disbelief and its consequences.

Allah then presents the second type of person, one who is sincere to Allah and adheres to the etiquettes of spending in the way of Allah: { وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ } [And the example of those who spend their wealth seeking means to the approval of Allah and assuring [reward for] themselves is like a garden on high ground which is hit by a downpour - so it yields its fruit in double] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 265). The verse begins with the word { مَثَلٌ } [example], which captures the listener's attention to the analogy, its purpose, and its content. This analogy illustrates Allah's intention through its depiction and meaning, which conveys the message clearly to the listener.

Those who spend their wealth seeking Allah's pleasure { اِتَّبَعَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ } and { وَتَثْبِيئًا مِّنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ } [assuring themselves]—meaning they are certain and confident that Allah will reward them abundantly for it (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/326).

Their motivations and reasons for spending in various ways of charity are solely driven by seeking Allah's pleasure and ensuring a reward from Him. This affirms that their actions are free from any form of ostentation, harm, or hypocrisy, as these reasons prevent the believer from boasting, harming, or showing off. These believers, with their sincere and confident approach to spending, are like a garden on high ground { كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ } [like a garden on high ground] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 265). This garden receives heavy rain, which waters it abundantly, causing it to yield twice as much fruit as other gardens and trees. Even if it does not receive heavy rain, it will still benefit from the dew { فَإِنْ لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ } [if it is not hit by a downpour, then a drizzle (is sufficient)]. This dew or light rain will be enough to satisfy its need for watering, allowing it to produce fruit and crops. Similarly, the deeds of a believer never go to waste; rather, Allah accepts and multiplies them, purifying them according to each person's effort. As Allah says: { وَاللَّهُ } [And Allah, of what you do, is Seeing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 265), meaning that none of His servants' deeds are hidden from Him.

The phrase {كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ} [like a garden on high ground] indicates that this act of charity is elevated in its rank and position compared to other deeds. Just as the garden thrives on a high elevation, untouched by harm or deficiency, so too does the believer's charity, free from any form of injury or offense. This metaphor also reflects the beauty of charity, similar to the beauty of a lush garden, with its delightful scenery, pleasing fragrances, and abundant presence. Just as the garden produces various fruits and foods, charity also manifests in diverse forms of giving and various types of rewards, such as protecting the giver from harm, forgiving sins, raising ranks, and granting immense reward.

Furthermore, just as a garden provides goodness to others through its fruits, so too does the giver of charity benefit others, including people, animals, and all forms of good causes.

In this metaphor, there is a clear indication of Islam's attention to effective methods that convey knowledge to the recipient in the best and most precise educational and pedagogical ways. It also teaches believers the methodology of using such an approach in their practice, intent, and selection of what to be compared, both in its content and form. This method solidifies noble meanings in the minds of the recipients, as well as the ethics and manners, and expands the imagination of the learner. The Quran is indeed a comprehensive school.

The Quranic context continues to teach and guide the believers, instilling these faith-based concepts in their hearts through various means of instruction and clarification. This ensures that their actions remain pure and aligned with the correct path as ordained by Allah. Allah addresses His believing servants, saying: {أَيَوَدُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ} [Would one of you like to have a garden of palm trees and grapevines underneath which rivers flow, in which he has from every fruit? But he is

afflicted with old age, and has weak offspring, and it is hit by a whirlwind containing fire and is burned.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 266).

This verse provides divine guidance and instruction to every believer who spends in charity, illustrating the profound implications of the verse. The educational discourse begins with a rhetorical question designed to provoke thought and reflection, emphasizing the improbability of the believer's state being likened to this example. The example begins with the question {أَيُّودُ} [Would one of you like], describing a scenario where a person possesses a garden filled with the best fruits, including palm trees and grapevines, with rivers flowing beneath its trees. Despite all the virtues of this beautiful garden, the owner is in a state of old age with weak offspring {وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ}. The combination of old age, frailty of offspring, and the goodness of the garden is then struck by a devastating whirlwind with fire, causing it to burn. This loss is of utmost severity and pain.

Imam Al-Shawkani (RA) commented that this metaphor represents someone who does good deeds but then nullifies them with actions that destroy their value. On the Day of Judgment, when the person is in dire need of those deeds, they will find them useless, like someone with a garden destroyed by fire in their old age, leaving them with nothing. (Al-Shawkani, Fath al-Qadir: 1/288)

This illustrates that the value of a deed is not in its quantity but in its adherence to the method and intention that Allah Almighty has prescribed. Those who fail to align their spending with Allah's commands will find their actions to be a source of deep regret on the Day when even the smallest accepted deed will be of utmost importance. This underscores the importance of sincerity to Allah, avoiding hypocrisy, boasting, and causing harm, all of which can nullify one's deeds.

The repeated guidance and explanation, along with the numerous examples provided by Allah, highlight the significance of this matter and emphasize that Muslims should take it with the utmost seriousness. There

is no regret greater than that depicted in this parable, where a lavish and fruitful garden, filled with all kinds of produce, is left to an owner who is old and weak, with equally weak offspring unable to restore it. Then, a wind with fire comes and burns it down. Imagine the degree of sorrow, pain, and fear the owner would feel for his offspring's survival and his own predicament, coupled with the difficulty of regaining what was lost. This is analogous to spending that does not follow Allah's prescribed method; it will be a source of regret on the Day of Judgment, as it has been consumed by hypocrisy, boasting, or harm.

Allah then bestows His favor upon His servants by providing complete guidance: {كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ} [Thus does Allah make clear to you [His] verses] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 266). In this way, Allah's signs and His desired method and intent are made clear. This is followed by the command to reflect: {الْعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ} [so that you might give thought], directing believers to ponder over what Allah has commanded, forbidden, and clarified, so that they may act in accordance with Allah's will as prescribed in His wise law.

This emphasizes the importance of contemplation and deep reflection on Allah's verses, which guide the implementation of His Shariah in the manner He has legislated and intended.

إِذَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

[O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth. And do not aim toward the defective therefrom, spending [from that] while you would not take it [yourself] except with closed eyes. And know that Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 267)

The Quranic context continues to educate the believers on the principles of spending, its methods, and its ethics, guiding them towards actions that will benefit them in both this life and the Hereafter. Allah Almighty says: { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ } [O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 267). The divine guidance begins by addressing the believers with the noble quality of faith, rich in meanings and implications, providing encouragement and profound connotations. The high status of faith calls for actions befitting that status. It is only fitting for believers to spend in a manner that aligns with the significance of this directive from the Lord of all worlds.

Allah directs His believing servants to spend by selecting the best and avoiding the inferior { أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ } [Spend from the good things which you have earned]. The command { أَنْفِقُوا } [spend] in this noble directive indicates the obligation of choosing the best. The phrase { مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ } [from the good things which you have earned] encompasses all that is good in both general and specific terms, as well as all forms of earnings. It also includes the best in quality and quantity, excluding anything not deemed good. Furthermore, the command extends to spending from what is produced from the earth, as indicated by { وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ } [and from that which We have produced for you from the earth], encompassing all sources of produce from the earth, such as crops, minerals, and other resources, as well as what one earns from trade, production, or manufacturing.

One of the significant benefits is the precision in the directive, covering the entirety of earnings and the produce of the earth, whether obtained through effort or naturally, such as what Allah causes to grow with rain. Another favor from Allah to His servants is that He sets the amount of spending in proportion to what brings satisfaction to the soul, as the word { مِنْ } [from] precedes { طَيِّبَاتِ } [the good things], indicating partiality { مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ }

{مَا كَسَبْتُمْ} [from the good things which you have earned], except in the case of zakat, which is explicitly defined by the texts of the Shariah.

In the verse {وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ}, Allah attributes the growth and production of crops solely to Himself, emphasizing that although the farmer plows the land and sows the seeds, it is Allah alone who causes these seeds to grow through His power and perfect creation. The seeds undergo various stages of growth, emerging from the depths of the earth, growing above it, and eventually maturing. This draws attention to the fact that it is Allah who creates the plants and crops, bringing them forth from the earth as a blessing and favor. The credit for what exists with the creation ultimately belongs to Allah, as He clarifies in Surah Al-Waqi'ah: {أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ * أَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ} [Have you seen that which you sow? Is it you who makes it grow, or are We the grower?] (Surah Al-Waqi'ah: 63-64). Allah attributes earnings {مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ} [from the good things which you have earned] to the people, while attributing what is produced from the earth {وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ} [and from that which We have produced for you from the earth] to Himself, highlighting His pure grace and reminding humanity of their incapacity to bring forth or create crops. This precision in expression and the magnificence of Allah's words exemplify His greatness and wisdom. Glory be to Allah the Almighty, and all praise is due to Him.

Allah then teaches the manners and ethics of selecting what to spend in charity: {وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ} [And do not aim toward the defective therefrom, spending [from that]]. This means not to seek out and choose the inferior or impure from one's earnings for charity. The word {تَيَمَّمُوا} implies a deliberate intention and careful selection, indicating that one should not intentionally choose the bad from what they have earned. The term {الْخَبِيثَ} encompasses all that is considered undesirable or inferior, thus covering every situation, type, and level of poor-quality earnings and

production. This word choice beautifully encapsulates numerous meanings in one term, showcasing the profound eloquence of the Quran. This highlights the importance and necessity of giving the best in charity and avoiding what is inferior.

Allah further explains this by stating: {وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَخْذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ} [while you would not take it [yourself] except with closed eyes]. This directive brings the giver back to their own perspective, asking them to imagine the situation: if they were given the same inferior item they are offering in charity, they would only accept it by overlooking its defects. Allah places the giver in the position of the receiver, urging them to understand the significance and impact of their choice in charity. If one would not be pleased with such a gift for themselves, they should not offer it to others.

This has an educational and ethical lesson for teachers, guides, preachers, and mentors: to place the learner or recipient in the situation they are being guided through. This helps them fully grasp the situation from all angles and dimensions. It aligns with the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): "None of you [truly] believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself" (Sahih al-Bukhari: 1/21, Hadith: 13) and Majma Al-Zawa'id (1/100).

In this noble directive to choose the best, most valuable, and purest for charity, there is an alignment with the principle that Allah is Pure and only accepts that which is pure. This teaches the believer to develop a generous spirit, to overcome selfish tendencies, and to prioritize what pleases Allah over the stinginess of the soul. When the soul becomes accustomed to this practice, generosity and nobility of character become ingrained traits.

Among the benefits of this ethic in spending is that it brings joy to the recipient, who receives a beautiful and wholesome gift with an open heart, full of gratitude, and responds with sincere prayers for the giver. This strengthens social and fraternal bonds among those who engage in charity, whether it is zakat or general charity. The act of giving thus becomes an

expression of mercy, kindness, and connection, all motivated by the desire to please Allah.

The verse provides both a command and a prohibition: the command is found in {أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ} [Spend from the good things], and the prohibition in {وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ} [And do not aim toward the defective]. This clear distinction highlights the importance of precise guidance, ensuring that the audience understands the significance of striving for excellence in their actions.

The verse concludes with a noble directive from the Lord of all worlds: {وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ} [And know that Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 267). This divine command to know that Allah is both rich and praiseworthy underscores His complete independence from His creation, their earnings, and their charity. Allah is entirely self-sufficient, which implies that the reward for spending is for the benefit of the givers themselves. Allah, in His infinite wisdom, has designed society with various levels and degrees of provision.

Allah is also {حَمِيدٌ} [Praiseworthy], being praised in the heavens and the earth, in this world and the Hereafter. He is praised for all His actions, words, laws, and decrees. He is praiseworthy in His guidance, His attributes, and in all things. When a servant understands Allah's attributes and His beautiful names, it compels them to obedience, trust, and reliance upon Him.

The phrase {وَاعْلَمُوا} [And know] emphasizes the obligation of knowing Allah's names and attributes, including those mentioned in this verse: {غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ} [Rich and Praiseworthy].

{الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ}

[Satan threatens you with poverty and commands you to immorality, while Allah promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 268)

The Quranic guidance then transitions to explaining the motivations behind greed, stinginess, and the fear of poverty associated with spending. This is to help the believer understand what drives them towards greed and frugality in spending so that Allah, exalted be He, can guide them through the factors that encourage the believer to give the best, most valuable, and purest of what they have with great peace of mind. Allah Almighty says: {الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ} [Satan threatens you with poverty and commands you to immorality, while Allah promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 268).

The verse begins by addressing the fear that prevents spending and giving, focusing on the whispers of Satan: {الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ} [Satan threatens you with poverty]. Satan instills fear of poverty by whispering to people, making them refrain from spending in obedience to Allah. This causes them to hesitate in spending, especially in selecting the best and purest items for charity, or they might even abstain from giving altogether, fearing that their wealth will diminish and the good they have will decrease.

When they do give, they may strive to offer the least valuable of what they possess, hoping to retain the better and more valuable items for themselves, with the expectation that these will bring them greater benefit and profit. They thus hold onto the best for themselves and give away the inferior, driven by the fear of poverty that Satan has instilled. Satan is the cause of this behavior by promising them poverty, leading them to act in this manner.

ويأمركم (ويعدكم الفقر) "As for sins and immoral acts, Satan commands them (ويعدكم الفقر), encouraging their commission by making them appear attractive and strengthening the urges to commit them. Among these immoral acts are stinginess and miserliness, along with other factors that Satan embellishes, pushing people to spend their wealth on immorality and falsehood. The description (ويأمركم بالفحشاء) indicates that Satan's influence extends to the point of commanding such actions. This serves as a warning to Muslims about the degree of Satan's influence and hostility, which necessitates seeking refuge from him at all times, especially in situations where he is most likely to appear.

والله يعدكم مغفرة منه (والله يعدكم مغفرة منه) (وفضلاً). Allah Almighty promises – and His promise is true – His forgiveness, as well as provision and bounty (وفضلاً). As Imam Al-Shawkani (RA) explains, 'favor' here means that Allah will replace what they spend with something better, expand their sustenance, and bless them in the Hereafter with what is better, greater, and more beautiful (Al-Shawkani, Fath al-Qadir: 1/289).

Allah's promise motivates the believer toward goodness, generosity, and abundant giving, as they do not fear poverty but rather hope for wealth and favor from Allah. The believer chooses the best of their provisions for charity, desiring the reward from the Generous, the Merciful.

The verse fittingly concludes with a reminder of Allah's boundless nature (والله واسع عليم). He is vast in His gifts, bounty, knowledge, and power – none of His creation can encompass His vastness, and only He knows the true extent of His greatness. He is aware of what the believer does, what they give, how they give, from what they give, and why they give. Nothing is hidden from His knowledge. This understanding compels the believer to act in a manner befitting the majesty of Allah, the One with vast and all-encompassing knowledge. These meanings emphasize the importance of

ending each directive with a reminder of Allah's names and attributes, as knowledge of them drives the Muslim towards all that is good and restrains them from all that is evil."

{يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ}

[He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. But none will remember except those of understanding.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 269)

Allah Almighty then explains the virtue of wisdom and the distinction of those who attain it, affirming that He alone is the one who grants it: {يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا} [He grants wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been granted wisdom has certainly been given much good] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 269).

The noble verse begins by clarifying that it is Allah who bestows wisdom, and no one from His creation has the ability to grant it to anyone, not even to themselves. The one who gives wisdom is Allah: {يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ} [He grants wisdom] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 269). The exclusivity of bestowing wisdom lies with Allah alone; no one can take it for themselves, nor can they grant or inherit it to others. Rather, Allah grants it by His will: {يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ} [He grants wisdom to whom He wills] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 269). This implies that whoever seeks wisdom should first seek it from Allah through supplication and obedience, then take the necessary means to attain it.

The meaning and implication of wisdom encompass various aspects such as prophethood, understanding the Qur'an, knowledge, jurisprudence, correctness in speech, piety in Allah's religion, fear of Allah, intellect in religion, comprehension, knowledge, and action. (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Masir*: 1/280; Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*: 1/329).

Imam Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) added that the correct view held by the majority is that wisdom is not restricted to prophethood, although prophethood is the highest form of it (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/329).

One of the benefits of this varied explanation of the meaning of wisdom is that the term encompasses numerous great virtues and meanings. One should reflect on the eloquent expression of the Qur'an, as the word 'wisdom' includes all aspects of great goodness.

Allah then describes the status of those who are granted wisdom: { وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا } [And whoever has been granted wisdom has certainly been given much good] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 269). This illustrates the lofty position of wisdom and that whoever attains it has indeed acquired abundant goodness. Wisdom leads to the obedience of Allah, acting according to His will, and thus the person becomes one of the people of Paradise. With wisdom, understanding is illuminated, minds are opened, aspirations are revived, integrity is preserved, ranks are elevated, ignorance is removed, mistakes are corrected, and truth is placed in its proper context. People rise in ranks, manners and ethics are displayed, and the person who possesses wisdom is loved, sought after, and held in high esteem by others because they carry much good: { وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا } [And whoever has been granted wisdom has certainly been given much good] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 269).

This requires seeking wisdom and striving to obtain it by asking Allah, being diligent in obedience to Him, and pursuing the means to attain it, the foremost of which is the knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah, followed by striving to act upon them.

The noble verse concludes with a reminder of the reward for those who reflect and remember: { وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ } [But none will remember except those of understanding] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 269). Only those endowed

with intellect benefit from the reminder and reflection, as they grasp and comprehend what is being said to them.

{وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ نَفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ (٢٧٠) إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ
فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ}

[And whatever you spend of expenditures or make of vows - indeed, Allah knows of it. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers. If you disclose your charitable expenditures, they are good; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you, and He will remove from you some of your misdeeds. And Allah, with what you do, is [fully] Acquainted.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 270-271)

Then, following the preceding verses, comes this verse that clarifies to the addressed the vast and comprehensive knowledge of Allah concerning their spending: {وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ نَفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ} [And whatever you spend of expenditures or make of vows - indeed, Allah knows of it] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 270).

This noble verse emphasizes the all-encompassing knowledge of Allah regarding whatever the servant spends, whether small or large, significant or insignificant, good or bad. Allah is fully aware of it all. One of the benefits of realizing Allah's knowledge of everything we spend is that it instills in a person the need to monitor themselves in their expenditures, considering every aspect.

The verse also explains Allah's knowledge of the voluntary acts of obedience, such as vows, that a person commits to, even though they are not obligatory. {أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ} [or make of vows - indeed, Allah knows of it] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 270). Nothing is hidden from Allah, which obliges the believer to avoid what Allah has forbidden, such as spending in ways that are impure or harmful, thereby wronging themselves through

inappropriate spending, contrary to what Allah desires. Allah then warns of this wrongdoing: {وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ} [And for the wrongdoers, there are no helpers]. (Surah Al-Baqarah: 270). This is a severe warning for the wrongdoers that no helpers will protect them from Allah's punishment.

On the other hand, spending good wealth sincerely for the sake of Allah, without causing harm, boasting, or showing off, brings great benefit to the one who gives. This includes acceptance from Allah, multiplied rewards, and the love of the people, especially those who have been given to. Their hearts are comforted, honored, and they pray for the giver, fostering love between individuals and strengthening social bonds within the community.

Allah then explains the ruling on charity, whether it is given openly or in secret, and the rewards attached to each: {إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا} [If you disclose your charitable expenditures, they are good; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 271). Public charity is praised, but secret charity is given additional commendation. The scholar Ibn Sa'di (may Allah have mercy on him) commented: "The principles of Shariah indicate that the greater benefit should be sought. Sometimes making charity public is better, as it encourages others and motivates them toward good deeds". (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan: 1/215)

Allah Almighty praises both forms of giving: openly and secretly. He is most aware of the intention behind making charity public; if the intention is to encourage others to follow suit, it can increase the good. One of the benefits is that both forms of charity are praised: public charity is commended by Allah with the phrase {فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ} [they are good], and private charity is described as {فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ} [it is better for you]. Moreover, the act of charity brings about expiation of sins: {وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ} [He will remove from you some of your misdeeds] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 271).

The verse concludes with a profound reminder: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ} [And Allah, with what you do, is [fully] Acquainted] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 271). Allah is fully aware of what you spend, its type, amount, quality, and purity. He even knows the intention behind the act of charity. Nothing from the servant's actions is hidden from Him. If a person keeps this in mind, along with their certainty of Allah's knowledge, it will guide them towards the perfection that Allah desires during their act of giving.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ

[Their guidance is not your responsibility, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever you spend of good is for yourselves. And you do not spend except seeking the face of Allah. And whatever you spend of good – it will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 272)

The Qur'anic context transitions to addressing the matter of spending on non-Muslims. The verse begins by affirming the matter of guidance: {لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ} [Their guidance is not your responsibility, but Allah guides whom He wills] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 272). This address is directed towards the Prophet (ﷺ), explaining that ultimate guidance is not in his hands, nor is it his responsibility. His mission, rather, is to convey the message, guide, and instruct, while the guidance of success (tawfiq) is solely in the hands of Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) should not feel burdened by the responsibility of guiding them, as Allah alone grants guidance to whomever He wills.

This relieves the Prophet (ﷺ) from the concern of their guidance, as he was eager to guide them, as mentioned in another verse: {حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ} [He is concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful]

(Surah At-Tawbah: 128). This also implies that no one from creation has the power to guide others through insistence or force, but rather through prayer, example, and righteous behavior, which can encourage non-Muslims to enter Islam. This is a valuable lesson for every caller to Allah, stressing the importance of praying and asking Allah for the guidance of others while showing people the way to Islam by explaining its principles, virtues, and objectives.

The Prophet (ﷺ) himself supplicated: "O Allah, strengthen Islam through either Abu Jahl ibn Hisham or Umar" (Tirmidhi, 5/577, Hadith 3638, 3681). Also, he prayed: "O Allah, guide the tribe of Daws and bring them to Islam" (Bukhari, 2/341, Hadith 2937).

In the exegesis, it is mentioned that when the Prophet (ﷺ) was prevented from giving charity to the polytheists in the hope that they would accept Islam, this verse was revealed (Tafsir al-Jalalayn, p. 46). Initially, the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed that charity should only be given to Muslims until this verse was revealed, after which he was commanded to give charity to anyone who asked, regardless of their religion. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/331)

This passage emphasizes that the path of Islam is a divinely ordained way from Allah, as He did not approve of the *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) of His Messenger (ﷺ) in this matter. It highlights that Islam is a mercy for both Muslims and non-Muslims, and its principles encourage non-Muslims to embrace it when they witness the fairness and sincerity of its teachings. Such guidance could only come from the Creator and Owner of the universe.

The verse also addresses the potential concerns of a human being about the outcome of their charitable spending, teaching the believer that whatever they spend on others is ultimately for their own benefit: { وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ } فَلَا تُنْفِقُكُمْ [And whatever you spend of good is for yourselves] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 272). The reward and benefit of the charity are returned to the

giver. What one spends on others in this world will result in blessings, protection from harm, and an increase in sustenance in this life, as well as forgiveness and elevated ranks in the Hereafter. Allah's bounty and grace are boundless.

The verse emphasizes that the charity must be of good quality: {مِنْ خَيْرٍ} [of good], excluding anything inferior, as it is not considered "good." This encourages the believer to give from the best of what they have. Allah then clarifies the intention behind spending: {وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ} [And you do not spend except seeking the face of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 272). This serves as a reminder that the true purpose of charity is to seek the pleasure of Allah alone, thereby eliminating any desire for showing off or gaining fame.

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) stated: "If you give for the sake of Allah, it is of no concern to you what the recipient does with it. When a person gives sincerely for Allah's sake, their reward is with Allah, regardless of whether the charity reaches a righteous or sinful person, a deserving or undeserving one. The giver is rewarded for their intention" (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/331).

This illustrates the gentleness of Allah's Shari'ah and its attention to the intricate workings of the human soul. It confirms that it is indeed the law of Allah.

Allah further assures the believer that their charity is secure with Him and that no wrong will befall them: {وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُؤَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ} [And whatever you spend of good - it will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 272). This serves as additional assurance that Allah will preserve the reward of the one who gives charity, ensuring that it is not lost or diminished in any way.

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ
تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِحَافًا وَمَا تَنْفَقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

[For the poor who have been restricted for the cause of Allah, unable to move about in the land. An ignorant person would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint, but you will recognize them by their [characteristic] sign. They do not ask people persistently [or at all]. And whatever you spend of good – indeed, Allah is knowing of it.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 273)

Allah Almighty then describes the characteristic of modesty among the believers, specifically the early generation of the Companions (RA), presenting them as a model for all times and societies. He says: {لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} [For the poor who have been restricted for the cause of Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 273). The verse draws attention to the care that should be given to those poor individuals who have devoted themselves to the cause of Allah and are unable to earn a livelihood to meet their needs: {لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ} [unable to move about in the land]. This negates their ability to travel for trade or work, as they have dedicated themselves to the path of Allah.

This highlights the human need for reminders and the importance of paying attention to those modest and needy individuals who are unable or do not know how to earn a living. It also points out that there is a category of the poor and needy that people might overlook, especially those ignorant of their circumstances. The verse implies that poverty is not a reason for blame, as a person may be hindered by psychological, intellectual, or cognitive barriers that prevent them from finding work to sustain themselves. Thus, the wealthy should not judge or criticize them as being lazy or unwilling to work but should guide and help them if they wish to move towards work and self-sufficiency.

The verse also underscores the importance of the wealthy being aware of the poor, describing and reminding them of their responsibility towards the less fortunate.

It is also understood from this that people vary in what they excel at and are skilled in. Some may find their purpose in the path of Allah, such as dedicating themselves to knowledge, and thus focus their time entirely on it, unable to engage in other forms of work. They may not be able to meet the demands of life that allow them to be self-sufficient. The One who guided the wealthy and enabled them to earn and provided them with sustenance is the same One who guided this person to dedicate their life to one of the doors of Allah's cause. They fill a crucial role in Islam.

Allah then describes the condition of those addressed in the noble verse, drawing the attention of the generous to their state. It mentions that the ignorant person would assume them to be wealthy due to their modesty: {يَحْسِبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ} [An ignorant person would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 273). The one unaware of their true condition would assume they are well-off, self-sufficient, and in no need of help due to their self-restraint and reluctance to ask for assistance or even show signs of their need. This is a noble image of modesty and self-reliance, where only those who know them well recognize their true situation. This teaches the poor and needy one of the qualities of the early Muslims, serving as an example to be followed.

Among their distinguishing characteristics, Allah says: {تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ} [You will recognize them by their signs] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 273). The signs of poverty are evident in their physical appearance. To the one addressed and responsible for giving, you will recognize them by these signs, such as physical strain that reveals poverty, wealth, illness, or health, and their humility displayed in their demeanor. However, their inner selves do not reveal their need, as described before: {يَحْسِبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ} [An ignorant person would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint]

(Surah Al-Baqarah: 273). These two profound portrayals distinguish them: one where no one notices them except those who know their condition (their restraint), and another where the knowledgeable recognize them by their signs. This is a deep analysis by the Lord of the worlds of these noble individuals who have dedicated themselves to the path of Allah.

Then Allah says about their state: {لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِحْافًا} [They do not ask people persistently] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 273). They do not ask people at all, let alone persistently, because they are too self-respecting and self-sufficient. They do not extend their hands to anyone, nor do they make others aware of their poverty or need. These are qualities that inspire admiration and praise. Linguistically, "إحاف" refers to persistent begging, but no matter how great their need becomes, it never manifests as a plea. May Allah be pleased with them.

One of the remarkable benefits of the Qur'an is the beauty of its linguistic structure, as seen in this noble verse. Phrases like {لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ} [unable to move about in the land], {يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ} [an ignorant person would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint], and {تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ} [you will recognize them by their signs] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 273) are all perfectly placed. Each word in its context presents an eloquence that moves the hearts, and each sentence leaves the intellect in awe, stunned by the beauty of its composition and the precision with which it conveys Allah's message. Every verse challenges the pens to dare to produce anything similar, and the meanings of each verse challenge scholars and jurists to continually draw from it, finding new insights each time. Yet, the general meaning remains accessible to every listener, scholar or not, conveying Allah's overarching intent. Glory be to the One who has filled His Book with all forms of miracles.

The verse then concludes with a message that reassures the one who gives charity: {وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ} [And whatever you spend of good – indeed, Allah is knowing of it] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 273). Allah specifies that

spending must be of "good" in order to exclude any spending not in line with His intent: {وَمَا تَنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ} [whatever you spend of good]. Therefore, any expenditure not classified as good is excluded from this blessing. Allah is fully aware of all spending, whether small or large, from meager or abundant resources, and He knows whether it was done sincerely for His sake or for show and reputation. The One who knows all about the charity given will surely reward the giver in accordance with what they spent and offered.

{الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ}

[Those who spend their wealth in the night and day, secretly and openly, will have their reward with their Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 274)

Allah Almighty affirms His promise of reward and compensation for those who spend, granting them a great reward and removing any fear or grief from them: {الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} [Those who spend their wealth in the night and day, secretly and openly, will have their reward with their Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 274).

This is praise from Allah for those who spend in His cause, seeking His pleasure at all times—whether in the night or day, secretly or openly. It also includes spending on one's family, as confirmed in the two Sahihs (Bukhari and Muslim) (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/333).

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "You will never spend anything seeking thereby the Face of Allah, but you will be rewarded for it—even what you put in your wife's mouth" (Bukhari 1/35, Hadith 56; Muslim 1628).

In Allah's statement {بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ} [in the night and day], it indicates frequent spending and the varied times of giving, constantly flowing to those in need. The phrase {سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً} [secretly and openly] refers to the

different forms of spending, whether hidden or public. This shows that public spending is permissible and not blameworthy, as it can encourage others to follow suit, provided it is not done with the intention of showing off or seeking reputation.

Allah further reassures the generous with the promise: {فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ} [They will have their reward with their Lord]. The mention of "with their Lord" signifies their high rank and honor with Allah. They will also experience peace and security: {وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ} [No fear will there be concerning them], meaning they will have safety in what is to come in their affairs. Likewise, {وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} [nor will they grieve], meaning they will not feel sorrow for what has passed, as Allah's mercy and generosity will encompass them. Unlike the losers on the Day of Judgment, as Allah says in Surah Maryam: {وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ} [And warn them of the Day of Regret, when the matter will be concluded; yet they are in heedlessness, and they do not believe] (Surah Maryam: 39).

This verse teaches an important lesson about the significance of encouragement and reward for those who fulfill their duties, as this motivates people to avoid ill intentions and negative traits. It encourages them to perform their actions in the best manner. Additionally, it highlights the importance of cultivating a spirit of generosity, giving the best in charity, and being mindful of the needy, especially those who are modest and conceal their poverty.

{الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٢٧٥) يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُزِيلِ الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ ((٢٧٦))

[Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, "Trade is [just] like interest." But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest. So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and desists may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah. But whoever returns [to dealing in interest or usury] – those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein. Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 275-276)

The Qur'anic context transitions to the issue of interest (riba), after previously clarifying the matters related to spending in the path of Allah. Allah says: {الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ} [Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 275). The verse begins with a harsh condemnation of the practice of riba, presenting it in its most repulsive form, showing what will happen to those who consume it on the Day of Resurrection. They will rise from their graves like someone possessed, staggering and convulsing as if struck by Satan. Their resurrection will be grotesque, much like how someone afflicted by a demonic fit appears disoriented and erratic in their movements (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/334).

This image also applies to their state in this world. Their greed, ambition, and impatience to quickly accumulate wealth push them into a frenzy, causing them to behave like someone possessed. The desire for profit agitates their body and mind, making them hastily pursue gains in a manner that disturbs both their physical and mental well-being. They seem as if they are under the influence of a jinn.

This terrifying image serves as a warning to Muslims, urging them to avoid becoming like this due to *riba*. It highlights the necessity for a Muslim to earn through lawful means permitted by Allah, steering clear of *riba* and other forbidden transactions, whether forbidden in their essence or due to the methods involved in buying and selling.

Because of the severity of *riba*, the verse portrays it in a repugnant light, even at the beginning, where Allah describes the practice of *riba* as "eating," which refers to consumption and gaining sustenance. Allah says: {يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا} [They consume interest]. The word "eating" here refers to earning and practicing *riba*, as eating is one of the strongest human desires for wealth and symbolizes extreme greed (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/229). *Riba* refers to the increase in dealings with money and foodstuffs, whether in quantity or time, and the choice of the word "eat" emphasizes its abhorrence (Al-Suyuti, Tafsir al-Jalalayn, p. 47).

This word choice emphasizes the depth and impact of *riba* on the soul, as it perfectly captures the gravity of the sin. Allah then explains their reasoning for permitting *riba*: {ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا} [That is because they say, "Trade is just like interest"] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 275). They equated *riba* with trade, not by analogy but by making them equal. Had they compared *riba* to trade, they would have said, "Interest is like trade," but instead, they stated, "Trade is like interest" to justify their actions, questioning why one was forbidden while the other was permitted. This was a clear objection to Allah's law. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/334)

They justified their actions by objecting to the rulings of Allah, which shows that those who deviate from the straight path often begin their deviation by making permissible what they know to be forbidden. This allows them to create excuses for themselves, avoiding self-reproach, misleading others regarding the noble teachings of Shariah, and enticing others to follow their deviance. This is the method of all those who deviate

from Islam's teachings; they find justifications that align with their desires, seeking refuge from Allah against the influence of desire and Satan.

A Muslim submits to Allah's guidance without questioning it, and they should not entertain any thoughts of objection. The Muslim should not allow Satan or worldly desires to lead them astray. Allah cannot be questioned about what He does, and nothing escapes His wisdom. His rulings govern what is lawful and what is prohibited: {وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا} [But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 275).

The verse then addresses those engaged in *riba*, offering them a way out. Allah says: {فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ} [So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and desists may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 275). Those who receive the message about *riba* and abandon it when they learn of its prohibition may keep what they have earned from previous dealings (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim). Their ultimate judgment – whether they are forgiven or punished – lies with Allah.

There are multiple meanings within the phrase {وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ} [and his affair rests with Allah]. One interpretation is that it refers to *riba* itself, meaning Allah alone has the authority to enforce its prohibition. Another interpretation is that it refers to past transactions, leaving their resolution in Allah's hands, whether He pardons them or holds them accountable. A third interpretation is that it refers to the person involved in *riba*, implying that Allah will guide them to maintain their abandonment of *riba* or return them to the sin if they persist (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an: 3/234).

These interpretations emphasize that understanding the meanings of the Qur'an is a task for scholars well-versed in knowledge, skilled in the Arabic language, and familiar with evidence, distinguishing between strong and weak arguments, and knowing the abrogated and the abrogating, as well

as the general and the specific. Therefore, no one should attempt to interpret the Qur'an without proper knowledge.

As for those who return to engaging in riba after receiving this admonition from their Lord, justifying its permissibility by equating riba with trade, Allah has warned them with eternal punishment in Hell: { وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ } [But whoever returns [to dealing in interest] – those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 275). Those who persist after the warning deserve punishment because the evidence against them is clear. This verse is a powerful deterrent, instilling fear and awe regarding the consequences of engaging in riba. It calls for caution, repentance, and distancing oneself from riba before death and meeting Allah with the sin of riba. May Allah protect us and all Muslims from it and all that displeases Him.

Allah then describes what He does with riba: { يَمْحَقُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّبَا } [Allah destroys interest]. He diminishes its value and removes its blessing, such that even if the profits seem large, they hold no true benefit or happiness for the one who acquires them. Despite the apparent gains, they bring nothing but hardship and toil, for they are devoid of Allah's blessings. In contrast, charity is the opposite: { وَيُزِيدِ ٱلصَّدَقَاتِ } [And He gives increase for charities]. Allah blesses charitable acts, increasing their value in this world and multiplying the reward in the Hereafter.

This presents a clear comparison between two opposites. On the surface, riba appears to increase wealth, but in reality, it diminishes it. On the other hand, charity may seem to reduce one's wealth, but it brings abundant blessings and growth both in this world and the next. Riba is represented by the greedy, while charity is embodied by the generous. These two are incomparable in terms of their appearance, effects, and outcomes. This comparison serves as a test for the believer, challenging them to choose between these two opposing paths.

A true believer adopts the practice of charity and avoids *riba* in both thought and action. This contrast emphasizes the clear distinction between right and wrong, encouraging deep reflection and greater understanding. It shows what is diseased and what is sound, distinguishing falsehood from truth and good from evil, guiding the intelligent to choose the right path.

This comparison illustrates the profound methodology of the Qur'an in stimulating minds through reflection and comparison, helping them recognize superiority and distinction in the clearest and most eloquent way. The Qur'an, revealed by Allah to the best of messengers, Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), is a guiding light.

The verse concludes with a heart-shaking admonition: {وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ} [And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 276). Allah declares that He does not love those who persist in disbelief and sin. The description "أَثِيمٍ" (sinful) is emphasized to show the gravity of their persistent sinfulness. As Sheikh Ibn Sa'di (may Allah have mercy on him) explained: "This refers to the one who denies Allah's blessings, rejects His favors, and stubbornly persists in his disobedience". (Ibn Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman: 1/218)

The negation of Allah's love stirs the heart of the believer, who longs for and desires Allah's love. It also creates fear of every trait associated with the sinful disbeliever. As Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) explained: "Allah does not love the one who is ungrateful in heart, sinful in word and deed... The one who engages in *riba* is not content with what Allah has provided for him lawfully, nor does he suffice with the permissible means of earning. Instead, he seeks to consume the wealth of others unlawfully, showing ingratitude for Allah's blessings, being unjust and sinful, consuming the wealth of people wrongfully" (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim: 1/338).

This emotional awakening motivates the believer to be cautious of *riba* and anything that could categorize them with those whom Allah has declared

as unloved. This fear and drive keep the believer on the straight path, seeking to earn Allah's love by adhering to what is lawful and avoiding the wrongful consumption of wealth.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ}

[Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds and establish prayer and give zakah will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 277)

The Qur'anic context transitions to praise Allah's obedient servants, presenting a clear contrast between those who obey Him and those who disobey. Allah says: {إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} [Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds and establish prayer and give zakah will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 277).

Allah praises and commends His servants who believe, beginning with faith because it is the foundation of all worship. Faith is the starting point of Islam and submission, and it is the essential basis for avoiding what Allah has forbidden, including riba. Then Allah mentions those who do righteous deeds, with the term {الصَّالِحَاتِ} [righteous deeds] encompassing all that Allah loves and is pleased with, in contrast to all the evils that anger Him, including riba.

Allah then specifies prayer and zakah, even though they are part of righteous deeds, to emphasize their importance and honor their lofty status. The third act mentioned is {وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ} [and establish prayer], for prayer deters immoral behavior and wrongdoing, including riba. The fourth act is {وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ} [and give zakah], which is an act of charity and

generosity, in direct opposition to *riba*, which is driven by greed and hoarding.

These individuals are promised, as Allah says, {لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ} [they will have their reward with their Lord], and they will be in a state of safety and security, free from fear on the Day of Judgment. The verse continues: {وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ} [and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve]. This indicates that they will be protected from fear about what may terrify them on the Day of Resurrection, and they will not experience regret or sorrow for any shortcomings they may have had, as they fulfilled their duty to Allah.

A believer's regret on the Day of Judgment leads to sorrow because, by that time, they cannot undo their mistakes or correct their path. However, those described in this verse will be free from such regret because they have fulfilled their obligation to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

This divine clarification follows the discussion of *riba* and those who engage in it, allowing the wise person to compare two outcomes: one where Allah says, {وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ} [Allah does not love every sinning disbeliever] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 276), and another where He says, {لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ} [they will have their reward with their Lord]. This contrast teaches the importance of comparison as a means of correcting behavior and adjusting one's mindset, based on the principles of faith and worship, just as we have seen in the previous verses of the Qur'an.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (٢٧٨) فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِن تُبْتِغُوا فَلََكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ (٢٧٩) وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٢٨٠) وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

[O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers. And if you do not, then be informed of a war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger. But if you repent, you may have your principal - [thus] you do no wrong, nor are you wronged. And if someone is in hardship, then [let there be] postponement until [a time of] ease. But if you give [from your right as] charity, then it is better for you, if you only knew. And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be wronged.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 278-281)

The Qur'anic context shifts once again to offer a remedy through advice and guidance, presenting the correct choice. Allah says: { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ } [O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 278). The verse begins with a form of address, "يَا أَيُّهَا" [O you], to grab attention and encourage the listener to pay close heed to what follows, as it carries significant commands, warnings, and guidance.

Allah addresses them with the noble quality of faith, {الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [those who have believed]. When someone is addressed with such a profound description, they are expected to obey and comply with the One addressing them, especially when the speaker is Allah. Those described as believers should not turn away from the content of this message. The divine guidance is then given: {اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ} [fear Allah]. These two words carry immense meaning – they command believers to fear Allah, His authority, His punishment, and His power, while also encouraging them to hope for His mercy and reward, to rush to His obedience, and to abandon what He

has prohibited. These two words embody significant admonition from Allah.

Allah continues: {وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا} [and give up what remains of interest]. This is a decisive command to cease all dealings with riba immediately, encompassing everything owed or promised as interest. Nothing of what remains from riba should be taken; one must stop and abandon it completely. This is an unequivocal and final order, reinforced by the condition {إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ} [if you should be believers]. This condition affirms the reality of faith: abstaining from riba is proof of strong faith, and failure to do so indicates one falls among those whom Allah describes as: {وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ} [Allah does not love every sinning disbeliever] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 276).

The phrase {إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ} [if you should be believers] suggests that true faith is a barrier against sin, just as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The adulterer does not commit adultery while he is a believer." (Bukhari, 2/201, Hadith 2475)

A weak level of faith fails to prevent one from committing sins, especially major sins. A person with weak faith does not refrain from sins due to the overpowering influence of desires and temptations that push them toward sin. Only faith can prevent such transgressions, which highlights the importance of faith and the need to nurture it through spiritual development and strengthening all means that enhance faith.

The Qur'anic context then moves to explain the fate of those who do not heed these divine admonitions and directives. Allah says: {فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا} [But if you do not, then be informed of a war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 279). This is a severe warning for those who persist in violating Allah's boundaries after clear knowledge has come to them regarding the ruling of riba. It signifies a war from Allah, including punishment, torment, and the removal of blessings. Who can withstand a war against Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ)?

This highlights the grave seriousness of *riba*, one of the most detestable prohibitions in Allah's law. The term "war" is comprehensive, encompassing all forms of warfare, even those unimaginable to humans.

However, if repentance occurs, the matter changes. Allah says: { وَإِنْ تَبُتُمْ فَلَكُمْ } [But if you repent, you may have your principal] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 279). This indicates that repentance is the first step toward abandoning *riba*, emphasizing its importance. Repentance entails sincere regret and remorse for what has been done, accompanied by a strong resolve not to return to the sin, while giving up all forms of *riba* and being content with only the original capital. Allah says: { فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ } [you may have your principal]. The guideline is that the original amount you invested is yours to keep, but any *riba* (interest) accrued must be abandoned. Thus, you neither wrong others nor are you wronged in this just ruling: { لَا تَظْلُمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ } [you do no wrong, nor are you wronged] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 279). This fairness ensures justice between both parties involved in the transaction.

In the case of hardship for the debtor, the principle of mercy applies, as Allah says: { وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ } [And if someone is in hardship, then [let there be] postponement until [a time of] ease] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 280). Allah directs the creditor to show kindness to the debtor by granting them time until they are able to repay. This guidance fosters compassion between them. Allah further encourages a better course of action: { وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا } [But if you give [from your right as] charity, then it is better for you] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 280). The creditor has the choice to either wait until the debtor can repay or to forgive the debt as an act of charity. Though this may seem like a loss, Allah assures that it is, in fact, better for the creditor. When Allah declares something as "better for you," it is a definite truth, not open to doubt. It brings blessings, divine compensation, love from the debtor, their prayers for the creditor, and relief from their hardship. Such charitable forgiveness leads to abundant blessings, known only to Allah, who has provided this path and explained its superiority.

This reveals the comprehensive methodology of the Qur'an in addressing every aspect and outcome, benefiting both the creditor and the debtor. It offers a divine solution that leads to tremendous goodness for all involved.

The subject of *riba* concludes with a profound and noble admonition: { وَاتَّقُوا } [And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be wronged] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 281).

The verse begins with a reminder of essential matters that stir the hearts and awaken the believing soul—the return to Allah on the Day of Judgment, where everyone will be fully repaid for their deeds, with no one being wronged. Justice will prevail, and each person will receive their due, whether good or bad. May Allah treat us with His grace and mercy, for He is the most Merciful of the merciful.

This emphasizes the importance of being reminded of the return to Allah, accountability, and the ultimate reward or punishment. The command to fear Allah and to be mindful of that Day serves as a lofty admonition with immense impact on the soul, encouraging righteousness and repentance before the final reckoning.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاصْتُبُوهُ ۚ وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ وَلَا يَأْب كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَبْخَسَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رَجَالِكُمْ ۖ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى ۚ وَلَا يَأْب الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا ۚ وَلَا تَسْأَمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ ۚ ذَلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا ۚ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا ۗ وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ ۚ وَإِنْ تَفَلَّوْا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيَعْلَمُكُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

[O you who have believed, when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down. And let a scribe write [it] between you in justice. Let no scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him. So let him write and let the one who has the obligation dictate. And let him fear Allah, his Lord, and not leave anything out of it. But if the one who has the obligation is of limited understanding or weak or unable to dictate himself, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And bring to witness two witnesses from among your men. And if there are not two men [available], then a man and two women from those whom you accept as witnesses - so that if one of the women errs, then the other can remind her. And let not the witnesses refuse when they are called upon. And do not be [too] weary to write it, whether it is small or large, for its [specified] term. That is more just in the sight of Allah and stronger as evidence and more likely to prevent doubt between you, except when it is an immediate transaction which you conduct among yourselves. For then there is no blame upon you if you do not write it. And take witnesses when you conclude a contract. Let no scribe be harmed or any witness. For if you do so, indeed, it is [grave] disobedience in you. And fear Allah. And Allah teaches you. And Allah is Knowing of all things.] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282)

After Allah Almighty clarified in numerous powerful verses the matters related to charity and spending in His cause, followed by a stern prohibition against engaging in *riba* (usury), the discourse turns in the longest verse of the Qur'an to address the interests of His servants in matters of lending, contracts, and transactions involving buying and

selling. Allah says: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَآكْتُبُوهُ} [O you who have believed, when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282).

The verse begins by calling out to the believers with the phrase {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا} [O you who have believed], a call from Allah to His believing servants. This divine address is not like the calling between people; it demands attention, reflection, and careful listening. By addressing them with the honorable title of 'believers,' Allah is praising and acknowledging their faith. This is a noble and lofty status, which requires gratitude, respect, and attentiveness to the message from the Almighty. If this divine style is how Allah addresses His servants, it shows the importance of using kind and respectful forms of address among people as well, calling others by their best names and titles, starting conversations with goodwill, and preparing the listener to receive the intended message, as these factors deeply impact human interactions.

Allah then says after this address to the believers: {إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى} [when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down]. Here, Allah guides His servants to document lending transactions and record the amounts, the repayment period, and all related details. The instruction is given in a general form {إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ} [when you contract a debt], encompassing all forms of lending, including loans, deferred payments for goods, real estate, and other forms of debts. Thus, the phrase {إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ} includes all types of lending, and {فَآكْتُبُوهُ} [write it down] covers every aspect of the transaction, such as time, type, quantity, amount, description, and all other relevant details. This reflects the profound eloquence of the Qur'an, which, with concise wording, covers everything intended by Allah.

One of the key lessons from this verse is that Allah guides His servants towards what preserves their interests and prevents conflicts and disputes that may arise due to forgetfulness, fear, death, or other factors that can strain relationships. It is indeed a great blessing from Allah that He has

directed His servants to what ensures their mutual well-being and protects them from the harm that could result from lending and borrowing.

Allah then outlines the key elements of documenting debt, saying: { وَلْيَكْتُبْ ۖ بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ } [And let a scribe write [it] between you in justice] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). Here, Allah guides that the one writing the debt contract should be a scribe who writes "بِالْعَدْلِ" [in justice], meaning with truth and fairness. The scribe must record the contract accurately, without increasing or decreasing the amount or altering the repayment term. The requirement for a just scribe underscores the significance of the quality of fairness, implying that those chosen for responsible positions must embody fairness. This is because their performance directly impacts the preservation of others' rights. Therefore, selecting a fair person for such duties is an obligation.

Moreover, since writing is a form of knowledge, the verse also highlights the importance and virtue of knowledge, as well as the responsibility that comes with it. Those endowed with knowledge are expected to apply it with efficiency and expertise, maintaining a high standard of justice.

One of the additional elements related to writing is the command: { وَلَا يَأْبَ } [Let no scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). The scribe must not refuse to write if called upon, as Allah has blessed him with this particular skill. This implies that knowledge, ultimately, comes from Allah. Since knowledge is a gift from Allah, it should not be withheld from others. Similarly, if someone possesses a particular expertise, they should not be reluctant to share it or use it to benefit others. Just as Allah has bestowed knowledge upon them, they are obligated to use it to assist others. This principle also extends to anyone tasked with carrying out beneficial work for the community, especially when no one else is capable of doing it. They must respond and serve as Allah has blessed them with that ability.

Allah further emphasizes this responsibility with the command {فَلْيَكْتُبْ} [So let him write], reinforcing the duty of the scribe to carry out this task.

The verse then provides specific details regarding the one who dictates the terms of the debt: {وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ} [And let the one who has the obligation dictate]. The individual responsible for dictating the terms to the scribe is the debtor, the one upon whom the obligation rests. This ensures that the debtor acknowledges the debt and agrees to the terms written by the scribe. Since the debtor is the one to fulfill the debt, it is essential that they confirm the amount, repayment period, and any other terms, thus preventing any future disputes.

There is also a significant benefit in appointing the debtor as the one to dictate the terms, as it clarifies responsibility, preventing any confusion between the two parties. This administrative clarity emphasizes the importance of defining roles and responsibilities in any agreement, ensuring there is no conflict over authority. The goal of this structure is to serve professional interests and promote fairness, not to reflect personal influence or power. While the creditor may have more influence, they are not granted the authority to dictate. This ensures that the primary interest—protection of both parties' rights—is maintained.

By allowing the debtor to dictate the terms, the creditor's interests are safeguarded, as the debtor's acknowledgment of the debt becomes an established and legal recognition of the creditor's right. This acknowledgment prevents the debtor from later denying the debt or creating an excuse, thus securing the creditor's rights.

The divine directive also includes a command for piety: {وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ} وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ [And let the one who has the obligation dictate, and let him fear Allah, his Lord] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). This is an instruction for the debtor to fear Allah when dictating the terms of the debt, whether it pertains to the repayment period, the amount, the type, the quantity, or any other matter related to writing the debt. The reminder to be mindful of

Allah's piety is the best and most comprehensive advice for the debtor, and indeed for all Muslims. This is followed by a prohibition: {وَلَا يَخْسُ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا} [and not leave anything out of it]. The debtor must not withhold or reduce any part of the owed amount, ensuring the creditor's rights are fully preserved. This highlights the importance of piety in dealings and the need to avoid diminishing others' rights or manipulating records and contracts.

The divine guidance extends beyond individual transactions, emphasizing the significance of integrity in administrative, organizational, and employment-related contexts. It underscores the necessity of protecting the interests of all parties involved, including beneficiaries and service providers, as well as the importance of advice and its profound impact in guiding ethical administrative decisions. Those entrusted with decision-making and documentation bear a great responsibility.

The verse also addresses potential issues that may arise between the two parties involved in the contract. Allah says: {فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمِلَّ هُوَ} [But if the one who has the obligation is of limited understanding or weak or unable to dictate himself] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). The verse presents possible conditions of the debtor. They may be "سَفِيهًا" [of limited understanding], meaning someone who is careless or incapable of managing money properly, or "ضَعِيفًا" [weak], either due to young age or old age. The phrase "أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمِلَّ هُوَ" [or unable to dictate himself] covers all other potential hindrances to dictation, such as muteness, language barriers, or ignorance of the correct legal language.

These provisions highlight the importance of considering all possible scenarios, especially in administrative contexts, such as when designing policies and regulations. Paying attention to potential issues ensures there are no loopholes for disputes between individuals or organizations. This reflects the depth of the Islamic system in safeguarding the interests of all people, with legislation that addresses even the minutest details – details that human beings might overlook without divine guidance.

One of the profound benefits of these divine instructions is that Allah has relieved His servants of the burden of legislative organization by establishing a framework that covers all their needs. These guidelines encompass individual and collective interests, professional and family matters, and all aspects of life, including trade, leasing, and more. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

Allah Almighty provided solutions to these potential issues in the process of documenting a contract. If the debtor is unable to dictate due to any of the mentioned hindrances, Allah has guided us towards delegation: { فَلْيُمْلَأْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ } [then let his guardian dictate in justice] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). The guardian, such as a parent, trustee, or translator, will take on the responsibility of dictating on the debtor's behalf, ensuring no deficiencies or harm come to the debtor due to their inability. This highlights the concern of Shariah for safeguarding the rights and affairs of individuals, preventing any exploitation or injustice that may arise from their weaknesses or limitations. It also prohibits taking advantage of those who are unaware, foolish, or weak in any situation where they might suffer harm. Furthermore, this confirms the establishment of guardianship over minors and those incapable of managing their affairs. A guardian is obliged to protect the rights of those under their care and must not neglect this responsibility, as they are accountable in both this life and the Hereafter. The guardian will be held responsible in the courts of this world and before Allah on the Day of Judgment. Allah has commanded that the guardian dictates "بالعدل" [with justice], ensuring that no harm comes to either the one under guardianship or the creditor. Justice requires the prevention of harm in both directions.

Allah then directs further steps to secure the contract by calling for witnesses: { وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رَجَالِكُمْ } [And bring to witness two witnesses from among your men] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). The term "رَجَالِكُمْ" [your men] and the description "رَجُلَيْنِ" [two men] exclude minors and non-free men, requiring that the witnesses be adult, free Muslim men. The phrase

"مِنْ رِّجَالِكُمْ" also implies that the witnesses should be from among the community, meaning they should be known and not anonymous. This ensures that the witnesses can be summoned if needed to testify, preventing the selection of two unknown individuals who may be difficult to locate later. This precision in Islamic law reflects the depth of its structure, providing safeguards to avoid complications, loss of rights, or failure in performance.

The attention to such details serves as a foundation for drafting policies and regulations in any system, particularly those involving public interest. It ensures that potential gaps are addressed and that the rights of all parties are protected. This principle forms a basis for formulating laws and regulations within the framework of "Masalih Mursalah" (consideration of public interests). By ensuring accuracy and thoroughness in legal documentation, Islamic law provides a robust framework for maintaining justice and preventing disputes.

Allah then provides further precision and caution regarding the type of witnesses, stating: {فَإِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ} [But if there are not two men [available], then a man and two women from those whom you accept as witnesses] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). This clause accommodates situations where two male witnesses are not available, allowing for one man and two women as witnesses, provided they are mutually agreed upon and trusted by both parties. This provision allows flexibility in choosing witnesses, preventing potential disputes or doubts that may arise if one party objects to a witness for any reason. Thus, the agreement on witnesses is based on mutual satisfaction, ensuring fairness between the creditor and the debtor.

Allah, in His infinite wisdom, addresses all potential issues that might arise, even those unforeseen by human understanding, ensuring meticulous regulation of matters. This highlights a key aspect of Islamic governance and law (السياسة الشرعية), which takes into account the public's

best interests while ensuring justice and preventing injustice. It also emphasizes the need for safeguards that prevent mistakes or wrongdoing, ensuring the rights of all parties involved are protected.

Allah then explains the rationale behind requiring two women to witness in place of one man: {أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَىٰ} [so that if one of them forgets, the other can remind her]. The wisdom here is to account for the possibility that one woman may forget or be unclear about the details of the testimony. In such a case, the other woman can remind and assist her in recalling what was missed. Allah does not assign this reminder to the male witness but to the second woman, recognizing the common ground between the two women. Women, in such situations, can communicate freely and without the social barriers that may exist when discussing with men. This allowance ensures a comfortable exchange of dialogue, allowing one woman to remind the other, which may not occur as naturally in mixed-gender situations.

Additionally, the nature of commercial transactions, such as lending and trading, is something men are generally more accustomed to due to their frequent involvement in such matters. This familiarity strengthens their grasp of the details and nuances, making them less likely to forget. Thus, the role of the second woman is to support and remind the first if necessary. This provision does not imply any deficiency in a woman's faith or intellect; rather, it addresses the practical differences in experience and exposure between men and women in certain fields, such as business dealings. Therefore, the second woman serves as a safeguard to ensure the integrity of the testimony, without diminishing the dignity or value of women.

Allah then explains the obligation of the witnesses: {وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا} [And the witnesses must not refuse when they are called upon] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). This is a directive to the witnesses that if they are summoned to bear witness, they must not refuse. As Al-Hasan said, this

verse combines two directives: not refusing to bear witness when asked to do so and not refusing to testify when called to present the testimony (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an, 3/257). Therefore, a witness must not decline to record the contract or refuse to testify in case a dispute arises later.

The verse then addresses the scope of documentation, no matter the size of the transaction: {وَلَا تَسْأَمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ} [And do not become weary of writing it down, whether it is small or large, for its specified term] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). Allah instructs that no matter how trivial or substantial the debt may seem, one must not neglect to write it down. The phrase “small or large” begins with “small” to emphasize the importance of even minor amounts, which people may be inclined to ignore. Neglecting to document small debts can lead to disputes, as forgetfulness or misunderstandings can occur even with minor amounts. The Qur'an's precision in its choice of words reflects its concern for protecting rights and preventing harm.

Allah further emphasizes the need to set a fixed term for the debt: {إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ} [for its specified term], ensuring that the parties agree on a deadline and record it in writing. This point also has relevance in administrative and professional settings, where clear documentation of responsibilities can prevent conflicts and promote smooth cooperation. The directive helps prevent disagreements and ensures clarity about duties and rights.

Allah then explains why documenting even small debts is crucial: {ذَٰلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ} [That is more just in the sight of Allah]. Writing down debts, regardless of size, ensures justice and fairness between the parties. Additionally, it helps preserve the testimony: {وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ} [and stronger for establishing testimony], safeguarding the witnesses' role by ensuring their testimony is recorded accurately. The verse continues: {وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا} [and nearer to preventing doubt]. By recording the debt, doubts and potential disagreements are reduced, preventing suspicion between the parties. The

Qur'an emphasizes that uncertainty can lead to disputes, and thus, clear documentation is essential to maintaining harmony. The manner of encouragement in this verse is to urge the believer toward what Allah desires from him, and not to deviate from it or neglect it, as Allah says: {ذَلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ} [That is more just in the sight of Allah].

Since circumstances may sometimes make it difficult to record transactions in fast-moving trade between people, Allah has made an exception, as mentioned in the noble verse: {إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ} [Unless it is a present trade which you conduct among yourselves] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). This means that if the sale is hand-to-hand (immediate exchange), then there is no harm in not documenting it, as there is no risk in not doing so. Ibn Kathir explained this in his Tafsir, saying: 'There is no sin in not writing it down because it does not involve deferred payments, but rather it is an immediate exchange by hand' (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Azim 1/344). The phrase {تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ} [you conduct among yourselves] implies that the transaction is completed hand-to-hand.

The verse then addresses the matter of witnessing a sale: {وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ} [And take witnesses when you conclude a sale]. Allah commands that sales be witnessed. Imam Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) explained that this command, according to the majority of scholars, is one of encouragement and recommendation, not obligation (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Azim 1/344).

Here lies a benefit from the juristic efforts of the scholars, who combined the texts from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, including the actions of the Prophet (ﷺ), to derive this ruling that the command is for recommendation, not obligation, based on the prophetic tradition that indicates this. This type of juristic insight demonstrates the intellectual depth and precision in understanding and interpreting the texts. One can see how scholars moved from general understanding to more detailed and nuanced reasoning.

For instance, consider their interpretation of the verse {وَلَا يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ} [Let no scribe be harmed, and no witness either] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). They interpreted it in various ways: the first interpretation is that the scribe should not write anything other than what has been dictated to him, and the witness should not add or omit anything from their testimony. The second interpretation is that the scribe should not refuse to write, nor should the witness refuse to testify. The third interpretation is that the scribe and witness should not be called upon while they are busy, and if they apologize, they should not be accused of disobeying Allah's command, nor should any harm be caused to them (Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an 3/261-262).

This illustrates the benefit of considering all possible interpretations, which highlights that Qur'anic verses can encompass multiple meanings in a single word or phrase, due to their profound eloquence. All interpretations align closely with the intended meaning, demonstrating the comprehensive nature of the Qur'an, which accommodates multiple layers of meaning.

The noble and wise verse concludes with a profound admonition. Allah says: {وَأِنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ} [But if you do so, indeed, it is grave disobedience in you] (Surah Al-Baqarah: 282). This means that if you violate what you have been commanded or commit what you have been prohibited from, then this disobedience will befall you and cling to you, and you will not easily rid yourselves of it. Ibn Kathir explains that "فسوق" [disobedience] here refers to straying from obedience to Allah (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Azim, 1/344). The term "فسوق" means departing from Allah's commands, which is a stern warning against going against Allah's orders and prohibitions. It indicates that His commands must be taken seriously and adhered to.

Then Allah says: {وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ} [Fear Allah]. This means to fear and be mindful of Him, to obey His commands, and to avoid what He has forbidden. Allah continues: {وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ} [and Allah teaches you], meaning Allah instructs you

in what benefits you and guides you to the best in your affairs. This implies that Allah is the source of this knowledge, including what is mentioned in the verse, and that He teaches all beneficial knowledge. Moreover, He guides His servants to what they will need in the future, making it easy for them to attain it. This obliges us to show gratitude to Allah, adhere to piety, and recognize the blessings of knowledge He has bestowed upon us. Piety is a means and a cause for obtaining knowledge.

Allah concludes the verse with {وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is Knowing of all things]. He is fully aware of His servants and all things, and nothing is hidden from Him. Thus, the verse ends with a reminder that Allah's knowledge encompasses everything, as stated in {وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is Knowing of all things].

{وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا فَرِهَانٌ مَّقْبُوضَةٌ فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِمِنَ أَمَانَتَهُ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ آثِمٌ قَلْبُهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ}

[And if you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe, then a security deposit should be taken. But if one of you entrusts another, let him who is entrusted discharge his trust [faithfully], and let him fear Allah, his Lord. And do not conceal testimony, for whoever conceals it - his heart is indeed sinful, and Allah is Knowing of what you do]. (Surah Al-Baqarah: 283).

The divine instruction from the Lord of the Worlds transitions to another scenario concerning the seller and buyer, where Allah says: {وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ} [And if you are on a journey]. This verse addresses a situation where both parties may be traveling, and in this is a lesson in the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an. The divine instructions cover various situations and circumstances, confirming that such precise guidance could only come from divine revelation. The verse anticipates the potential conditions the seller and buyer may find themselves in, and what obstacles might arise,

such as {وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا} [and cannot find a scribe]. This is a possibility that the Qur'an acknowledges, providing guidance from Allah. Whether the sale involves full or partial debt, or whether there is a lack of a scribe or writing materials such as paper and pen, the Qur'an provides for such circumstances.

Allah directs His servants toward the use of collateral as a solution, saying: {فَرِهَانٌ مَّقْبُوضَةٌ} [then a security deposit (rahn) should be taken]. In place of writing, collateral is used, whereby the one entitled to repayment receives something as a guarantee. This ensures the creditor's right is protected, even in cases where the full price has not been paid or where writing is not possible for any reason. This reflects the precision of Islamic law in addressing the complexities of sales transactions, recognizing their importance in people's lives and the various situations—whether stationary or while traveling—that may arise. The solution ensures that the seller's and buyer's interests are protected, and the absence of a written contract does not prevent the realization of justice.

Then Allah Almighty issues an exception to this, as He says: {فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا} [If one of you entrusts another] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:283). Here, there is a state of trust and security between both parties, reinforced by mutual confidence. Allah permits the two parties in a sale or purchase not to write down a contract between them or secure a pledge. He directs both parties to uphold the agreement with honesty, saying, {فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِمِنَ أَمَانَتَهُ} [Let him who is trusted discharge his trust] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:283). He commands the debtor to fulfill the debt he owes to the creditor. Here, Allah refers to the debtor as "the trusted one" (المؤتمن), indicating that the buyer (debtor) has been entrusted by the believer (the seller), the one who holds the right. This is an example of the passive verb usage, and Allah refers to the debt as a trust (أمانة), for nothing expresses the magnitude of this responsibility better than this term, urging the debtor to fulfill what the believer has entrusted to him.

Then Allah commands him to have piety, saying: {وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ} [and let him fear Allah, his Lord] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:283). He must fear Allah in fulfilling his debt. Allah combines His majestic name "Allah" with the attribute "his Lord," as the Lord is the Owner, commanding the debtor to fear the One who owns him and his affairs. The debtor should beware of not fulfilling what Allah has commanded him, for it is an eloquent and profound warning, rich in impact. Praise be to Allah for the blessing of the Noble Qur'an, the great knowledge contained therein, and the blessing of learning and all the blessings He bestows, both apparent and hidden.

The admonition continues in this verse as Allah says: {وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ} [Do not conceal the testimony] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:283). This is a prohibition against concealing testimony, whether by withholding it or refusing to bear witness, thereby hiding its contents. Whoever conceals it is described and judged by Allah's words: {وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ آثِمٌ قَلْبُهُ} [And whoever conceals it, his heart is indeed sinful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:283). As Al-Suddi said, this means that his heart is corrupt (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Quran al-Azim, 1/345). He is described as sinful, with the heart specifically mentioned because it is the center of trust, from which it either emanates or is hidden. This indicates that the loss of the trust of testimony and other duties from the heart is evidence of its corruption and lack of piety, while fulfilling the trust of testimony and other duties is proof of the heart's piety, as it is the house of trust within a person.

The admonition further points to Allah's knowledge, saying: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:283). Nothing of the deeds of the children of Adam or any of His creation is hidden from Him. This should lead one to be cautious, for Allah knows the good or evil one holds. It highlights the importance of being aware of Allah's knowledge of one's state, which compels obedience and avoiding sin. If one's self inclines toward disobedience, let him remember Allah's awareness of him.

The statement of Allah Almighty: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:283), serves as a controlling principle for behavior. If a person feels tempted toward disobedience, they remind themselves: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do]. If they intend to be negligent, they say to themselves: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do]. When inclined toward goodness, this phrase strengthens them, encouraging them to complete the good action by saying: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do]. If they hesitate in doing good, they encourage themselves by repeating: {وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ} [And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do]. Thus, this becomes a controlling and motivating principle for doing good, and a deterrent from sin, by Allah's will and guidance.

In this divine attention to the issue of trade and debts, there is evidence of the virtue of buying and selling, and seeking the livelihood on earth. It encourages such activities due to the mutual benefits and interests shared among people, as they benefit from one another. Moreover, it is an opportunity for forming friendships and performing acts of charity that are beloved to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). This also highlights the importance of work and the condemnation of idleness, as the methodology of Islam ensures the employment of human capabilities to achieve mutual interests. It regulates them with precise and honorable rules and regulations, as evidenced by the fact that the longest verse in the longest Surah of the Book of Allah addresses matters of buying, selling, debts, and pledges, both in stay and travel. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

{لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَغْفِرْ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبْ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٢٨٤) ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ (٢٨٥) لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ}

[To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, Allah will bring you to account for it. Then He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom He wills, and Allah is over all things competent. The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say, "We hear and we obey. [Grant us] Your forgiveness, our Lord. To You is the [final] destination." Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned. "Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord, and lay not upon us a burden like that which You laid upon those before us. Our Lord, and burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear. And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us. You are our protector, so give us victory over the disbelieving people."] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:284-286).

The context of this blessed Surah transitions to the sovereignty of Allah Almighty, addressing matters of faith, forgiveness, and divine blessings. Allah states: {لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ} [To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:284). This is an affirmation from Allah that He possesses the dominion of the heavens and the earth, along with everything within them and between them—He is their Creator, Owner, Controller, and Knower of all things. Not only does

He encompass what a person conceals in their heart, whether hidden from people or displayed openly, but He also holds the power to judge all actions. Allah the All-Knowing and All-Wise says: { وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ } [Whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, Allah will bring you to account for it] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:284). This statement establishes Allah's knowledge and accountability, thus confirming the reality of the Hereafter and His dominion over all creation.

Allah knows the hypocrite who outwardly displays belief while concealing disbelief, and He knows those whose intentions are corrupt even while performing a righteous deed. He knows those who seek to gain fame and recognition through good deeds and those whose hearts are filled with sincerity but are unable to fulfill their good intentions. Similarly, He knows those who intentionally neglect their duties, like someone who sleeps with no intention of praying on time. Thus, nothing is hidden from Allah, whether a person harbors a pure or corrupt secret in their heart.

This realization affirms for the believer that they are a servant of Allah, who owns them and everything they possess. Whatever they hold is not theirs in absolute terms but merely something entrusted to them, which they will inevitably leave behind, if it does not leave them first. They are powerless to control or protect it from calamities, except through the will and wisdom of the true Owner—Allah, the All-Knowing and All-Wise. This serves as a reminder that every person and all they own are in constant need of the true Owner, Allah, and thus it is necessary to obey Him, avoid disobedience, and seek His help and reliance.

The verse also highlights that forgiveness and punishment are within Allah's dominion: { فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ } [He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:284). Allah alone has the right to forgive whomever He wills from His servants and to punish whomever He wills. His judgment cannot be overturned, and He is capable of all things: { وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } [and Allah is over all things competent]

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:284). This emphasizes Allah's capacity for forgiveness, and that no matter the extent of a person's sins, Allah can forgive them if He so wills, for He is capable of all things.

This realization should prompt the believer to seek Allah's forgiveness and never despair, regardless of how overwhelming their sins may seem, for Allah forgives whomever He wills. The phrase {لَمَنْ يَشَاءُ} [whomever He wills] indicates that the choice belongs to Allah alone, thereby influencing the servant's behavior. Since one does not know whether they are among those whom Allah has chosen to forgive, they should strive earnestly in obedience, repentance, and avoiding sin. This prevents them from persisting in disobedience, while the predominant expectation is Allah's mercy and forgiveness, as supported by the noble texts of the Shari'ah, such as the Qudsi Hadith: "I am as My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 4/384, Hadith 7405).

The revelation of this noble verse had a profound impact on the Companions (RA) due to its message that Allah holds one accountable for what is within their soul. Abu Huraira (RA) narrates: "When the verse was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): {لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَ اِنْ تَبَدُّوْا مَا } [To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, Allah will bring you to account for it. Then He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom He wills, and Allah is over all things competent] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:284), it weighed heavily upon the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). They came to him and knelt down, saying, 'We have been burdened with actions that we can handle – prayer, fasting, zakat, jihad, and charity – but this verse has been revealed to you, and we cannot bear it.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Do you wish to say as the people of the two books before you said: "We hear and we disobey"? Rather, say: "We hear and we obey. Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return."' When the people accepted this and it became natural for their tongues, Allah revealed the

following two verses: {آمن الرسول بما أنزل إليه من ربه والمؤمنون} [The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers...] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:285-286).

And Allah said: {لا يكلف الله نفساً إلا وسعها لها ما كسبت وعليها ما اكتسبت} [Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286) (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim, 1/345-346).

These two verses brought tranquility, for Allah Almighty said in them: {آمن الرسول بما أنزل إليه من ربه والمؤمنون} [The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:285). Allah affirmed that the believers share in the faith and truth that the Messenger (ﷺ) believed in, an honor for them to be associated with their Prophet in their belief. This reflects Allah's special care for His believing servants, as He lifted the burden that had caused them distress. They had believed in everything that Allah revealed to His Prophet (ﷺ): {كل آمن بالله وملائكته وكتبه ورسله لا يفرق بين أحد من رسله} [Each one believes in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:285). This confirms their faith and outlines what every Muslim must believe in, as well as anyone who wishes to embrace Islam.

The believers then declared: {وقالوا سمعنا وأطعنا} [And they say, "We hear and we obey"] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:285). This is the state of the true believer – listening and obeying Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). They do not dispute any command or prohibition from Allah with their own opinions or desires; rather, they respond to every law of Allah by saying, 'We hear and we obey.'

This phrase, {سمعنا وأطعنا} [We hear and we obey], becomes a foundational principle for the Muslim. If their soul whispers doubts about Allah's commands, they say: {سمعنا وأطعنا} [We hear and we obey]. If they are

tempted by whispers from humans or jinn, they respond: {سمعنا وأطعنا} [We hear and we obey]. If they hear something contrary to the Book of Allah or the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), they seek refuge in Allah and declare: {سمعنا وأطعنا} [We hear and we obey]. If people dispute over Allah's laws, they stand firm by saying: {سمعنا وأطعنا} [We hear and we obey], thereby strengthening their resolve to uphold Allah's Shari'ah.

Similarly, the believer says: {غفرانك ربنا وإليك المصير} [Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:285). They seek Allah's forgiveness for any sins or shortcomings, acknowledging and believing that the return is to Allah. This remembrance provides strength, for whenever they sense their own shortcomings, they say: {غفرانك ربنا وإليك المصير} [Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return]. Whenever a sin occurs, they remember and say: {غفرانك ربنا وإليك المصير} [Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return].

Then Allah Almighty says: {لا يكلف الله نفساً إلا وسعها} [Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). Out of His mercy, He has not placed anything in the Shari'ah that burdens the soul or exceeds human capacity. It is from His mercy that He provides concessions for every condition of His servant, in accordance with their circumstances. For example, He permits the sick person to break their fast in Ramadan and make it up later, allows those unable to stand during prayer to pray while sitting, and has set the zakat rate at a quarter of a tenth. For one who forgets during prayer, there is the prostration of forgetfulness (Sujood as-Sahw). Thus, from His mercy, He has not imposed upon anyone more than they can bear. He knows the limits of each of His creation, understands the capabilities of the sick in what they are able to perform, and is aware of the rich and the poor, the fearful and the safe. Allah knows the condition of each one of His servants and what they are able to accomplish in terms of obedience, whether obligatory or recommended. Nothing is hidden from Him.

Then Allah says: {لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ} [It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). This implies that a person will have the reward of whatever good they have earned and will be held accountable for the sins they have committed. Thus, no injustice exists with Allah, ever. Knowing this, a person is compelled to guard themselves from sin and strive in doing good deeds.

One of the insights here is that Allah did not specify the words "good" or "sin" in the phrase {لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ}. This is because earning can either result in good for a person, and thus the outcome will be in their favor, or it can result in sin, and thus the outcome will be against them. Therefore, there was no need to explicitly mention "good" or "sin," as the meaning is inherent. This reflects the precision and beauty of Quranic expression, where unnecessary words are avoided.

Then Allah Almighty guides the believers to a comprehensive supplication: {رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا} [Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we forget or make a mistake] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). This is a plea for pardon from the sin that occurs due to forgetfulness or mistakes. It reflects Allah's kindness, for humans are prone to committing errors and experiencing forgetfulness, which may cause them to miss acts of obedience or fall short in striving for deeds that bring them closer to Allah. Therefore, Allah Almighty instructs them to seek His forgiveness.

Then the believers are taught to ask Allah for relief from burdensome obligations: {رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا} [Our Lord, and lay not upon us a burden like that which You laid upon those before us] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). The plea is to not impose upon them, O Lord, what may be too difficult for them, as was the case with previous nations in what was prescribed for them.

{رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ} [Our Lord, and burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). This is a supplication

asking not to be burdened with difficult obligations, calamities, or trials beyond their capacity. It is a profound prayer for protection from all tribulations and afflictions that exceed one's strength.

In Allah's instruction of this great supplication to His believing servants, there is clear evidence of His mercy. He does not intend hardship, affliction, or harm for His servants, and it demonstrates that supplication and pleading with Allah are essential acts of worship. The believers continue, saying: {وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا} [And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). In {وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا}, they ask for pardon from their sins and not to be punished for them, while in {وَارْحَمْنَا}, they request forgiveness, meaning to cover their sins (Al-Shawkani, Fath al-Qadir, 1/308).

Forgiveness from Allah means protecting the servant from punishment (Al-Asfahani, Al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Quran, p. 362). It entails the removal and erasure of the sin from the sinner. In {وَارْحَمْنَا}, they ask for Allah's goodness, grace, and continued kindness, asking Him to keep them from falling into sin again.

{أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا} [You are our protector] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). They affirm that Allah is their protector, guardian, and supporter, and they place their trust in Him: {فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ} [so give us victory over the disbelieving people] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:286). The believers ask Allah to grant them victory over those who reject His religion, deny His oneness, and the message of His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), asking for a favorable outcome against them in both this world and the Hereafter (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, 1/351).

This supplication affirms that Allah is the Pardoner, and only He is sought for pardon. He is the Forgiver, from whom forgiveness is requested, and He is the Most Merciful, from whom mercy is sought. He is the only one who grants victory, and thus, He is the One Whose help is sought in every matter.

Among the insights derived from this is the teaching of comprehensive supplications. It is part of Allah's mercy towards His servants that He taught them how to invoke Him with the most comprehensive and perfect prayers, seeking the best of this world and the Hereafter. One of the benefits of these two verses is reflected in the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): "The two verses from the end of Surah Al-Baqarah, whoever recites them at night, they will suffice him" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3/93, Hadith 4008).

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said: "I have been given the endings of Surah Al-Baqarah from a treasure beneath the Throne, and no prophet before me was given them" (Musnad Ahmad, 3/274-275, Hadith 21345).

He (ﷺ) further stated: "No devil will come near a house where they are recited for three nights" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 5/147, Hadith 2882).

{رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ وَتُوبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ} [Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing. And turn to us in mercy. Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful] (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:127-128).

By the grace of Allah Almighty, the first part has been completed, and, with Allah's permission, the second part will follow.

