

Ha' . Mim. Al-Sajdah

Makkan Period

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

[1] *Ha' . Mim.*

[2] This is a revelation from the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,

[3] a Book whose verses have been well-expounded; an Arabic Qur'an for those who have knowledge,

[4] one bearing good news and warning. Yet most of them turned away and are not wont to give heed.

[5] They say: "Our hearts are securely wrapped up against what you call us to, and in our ears is a heaviness, and between you and us there is a veil. So act; we too are acting."

[6] Tell them, (O Prophet): "I am only a human being like you. It is revealed to me that your God is One God; so direct yourselves straight to Him, and seek His forgiveness. Woe to those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity,

[7] who do not pay *Zakah*, and who deny the Hereafter.

[8] As to those who have faith and do good works, surely theirs shall be a never-ending reward.

[9] Tell them, (O Prophet): "Do you indeed disbelieve in Him and assign compeers to Him Who created the earth in two days? He is the Lord of all beings of the Universe.

[10] (After creating the earth) He set up firm mountains on it, blessed it, and provided it with sustenance in proportion to the needs of all who seek (sustenance).¹ All this was done in four days.

[11] Then He turned to the heaven while it was all smoke? He said to the heaven and the earth: "Come (into being), willingly or unwillingly." They said: "Here we come (into being) in willing obeisance."

[12] Then He made them seven heavens in two days and revealed to each heaven its law. And We adorned the lower heaven with lamps, and firmly secured it. All this is the firm plan of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.

[13] But if they turn away, tell them: "I warn you against a sudden scourge like that which struck 'Ad and Thamud."

[14] When the Messengers (of Allah) came to them from the front and from the rear, saying: "Do not serve any but Allah"; they said: "Had our Lord so willed, He would have sent down angels. So we deny the Message you have brought."

[15] As for 'Ad, they waxed proud in the land without justification and said: "Who is greater than we in strength?" Did they not see that Allah, Who created them, is greater in strength than they? They continued to deny Our Signs,

1. In His providential scheme God saw to it that there would be enough sustenance to suffice the requirements of all creatures.

2. This does not mean that God created the heavens after having created the earth and after having arranged to provide sustenance for the earth's creatures. The word "then" used in the verse does not denote temporal sequence. Instead, the sequence that we find here is simply for purposes of narration. This is borne out by the statement that immediately follows.

[16] whereupon We sent upon them a fierce wind on inauspicious days that We might make them taste a degrading chastisement in the life of this world. And surely the chastisement of the Hereafter is even more degrading. There will be none to help them there.

[17] As for Thamud, We bestowed guidance upon them, but they preferred to remain blind rather than be guided. At last a humiliating scourge overtook them on account of their misdeeds.

[18] Yet We delivered those who believed and were God-fearing.

[19] Imagine the Day when Allah's enemies will be mustered to the Fire,³ and the people of the former times will be detained until the arrival of people of the later times,⁴

[20] and when all have arrived, their ears, their eyes, and their skins shall bear witness against them, stating all that they had done in the life of the world.

3. What is meant by this statement is that God's enemies would be mustered so that they stand before God for His final judgement. The actual words, however, are: "... when Allah's enemies will be mustered to the Fire." The reason is obvious: the ultimate destiny of God's enemies is nothing else than Hell-Fire.

4. On the Day of Judgement it will not happen that the people belonging to one generation will be first called to account, followed by the next generation, followed by the next, and so on. What will happen instead is that all human beings will be brought together at one and the same time and all will be so called to account. This is understandable because each generation is affected by the good and evil deeds of the generation that precedes it.

[21] They will ask their skins: "Why did you bear witness against us?" The skins will reply: "Allah gave us speech, as He gave speech to all others. He it is Who created you for the first time and it is to Him that you will be sent back.

[22] When you used to conceal yourselves (while committing misdeeds) you never thought that your ears or your eyes or your skins would ever bear witness against you; you rather fancied that Allah does not know a great deal of what you do.

[23] This thought of yours about your Lord has led to your perdition and you have become among the losers.”

[24] In this state, whether they bear with patience (or not), Fire alone shall be their abode. And if they seek to make amends, they will not be allowed to do so.

[25] We had assigned to them companions who embellished for them all that was before them and behind them. Thus the same decree (of chastisement) which had overtaken the previous generations of *jinn* and human beings (also) became due against them. Surely they became the losers.

[26] The deniers of the Truth say: "Do not give ear to the Qur'an and cause interruption when it is recited; thus perhaps you will gain the upper hand."

[27] We shall certainly make these unbelievers taste a terrible chastisement and shall fully requite them according to the worst deeds that they committed.

[28] That is the recompense of the enemies of Allah- the Fire, their abiding home. That will be the re-compense for their denying Our Signs.

[29] There the unbelievers will say: "Our Lord, show us those that led us astray, both *jinn* and humans, and we will trample them under our feet so that they are utterly degraded.”

[30] Those who say "Allah is our Lord" and then remain steadfast,⁵ upon them descend angels (and say): "Do not fear nor grieve, and receive good tidings of Paradise which you were promised.

[31] We are your companions in this world and in the Hereafter. There you shall have all that you desire and all what you will ask for.

[32] This is by way of hospitality from Him Who is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."

[33] And who is fairer in speech than he who calls to Allah and acts righteously and says: "I am a Muslim"?

[34] (O Prophet), good and evil are not equal. Repel (evil) with that which is good, and you will see that he, between whom and you there was enmity, shall become as if he were a bosom friend (of yours).

[35] But none attains to this except those who are steadfast; none attains to this except those endowed with mighty good fortune.

5. This is a major characteristic of those who have true faith in God. When they committed themselves to God, declaring Him to be their Lord, such a declaration was not an accidental utterance. Such people were under no misperception that they could commit themselves to God as their Lord, and then combine this with accepting others as their Lord. On the contrary, once they had made up their minds to accept God as their One True God, they steadfastly stood by that commitment. Such people neither adopted any creed repugnant to

their exclusive commitment to the One True God, nor allowed their belief to be adulterated by mixing it with elements drawn from false creeds. Moreover, they also strove hard to translate their belief in the One True God into practice.

[36] And if you are prompted by a provocation from Satan,⁶ seek refuge with Allah. He, and He alone, is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

[37] And of His Signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate yourselves before the sun, nor before the moon, but prostrate yourselves before Allah Who created them, if it is Him that you serve.

[38] But if they Wax proud (and persist in their attitude, it does not matter, for) the angels near-stationed to your Lord glorify Him night and day, and never grow weary.

[39] And of His Signs is that you see the earth withered, then We send down water upon it, and lo! It quivers and swells. Surely He Who gives life to the dead earth will also give life to the dead. Surely He has power over everything.

[40] Those who pervert Our Signs are not hidden from Us. Is he who will be cast into the Fire better, or he who comes secure on the Day of Resurrection? Do as you wish; He sees all what you do.

[41] These are the ones who rejected the Good Counsel when it came to them, although it is certainly a Mighty Book.

6. Here the words "provocation from Satan" denote Satan's arousing the believer's anger, When someone becomes infuriated at an opponent's abuse and slander and feels like paying them back in the same coin, he should alert himself to the danger that has set in. He should become conscious that Satan is prompting him to stoop to the level of his ignoble opponents.

[42] Falsehood may not enter it from the front or from the rear.⁷ It is a revelation that has been sent down from the Most Wise, the Immensely Praiseworthy.

[43] (O Prophet), nothing is said to you but what was already said to the Messengers before you. Surely your Lord is the Lord of forgiveness and the Lord of grievous chastisement.

[44] Had We revealed this as a non-Arabic Qur'an they would have said: "Why were its verses not clearly expounded? How strange, a non-Arabic scripture and an Arab audience!"⁸ Tell them: "It is a guidance and a healing to the believers. But to those who do not believe, it serves as a plug in their ears and a covering over their eyes. It is as if they are being called from a place far away.

7. The statement that "falsehood may not enter it from the front" means that if someone were to mount a direct, frontal attack on the Qur'an and try to establish that any of its teachings are erroneous, such an effort will prove abortive. As for the statement that "falsehood may not enter it from the rear," this means that nothing will ever be discovered until the Day of

judgement that will negate the truths propounded by the Qur'an. No scientific advancement, no expansion of knowledge, no new facts yielded by observation and experiment will ever be able to establish that any guidance furnished by the Qur'an relating to belief and morality, law and culture, society, economy and polity, is flawed.

8. This illustrates the ill-conceived obduracy which the Prophet (peace be on him) encountered. Since the Qur'an was couched in the Arabic language and the Prophet (peace be on him) was an Arab, the unbelievers occasionally contended that he himself had authored it and hence there was no basis to claim that it was God's revelation. In other words, they would consider the Qur'an a revelation from God only if it were couched in a foreign language such as Persian, Latin or Greek and the Prophet (peace be on him) would recite it with absolute fluency despite his being an Arab. Here, this line of argument is being countered. The unbelievers are being told in effect: Now that the Qur'an has been revealed to them in their own tongue so that they might fully comprehend it, you are casting doubts about its being God's revelation on the grounds that it is in Arabic, the Prophet's own tongue. On the other hand, had it been revealed in a foreign tongue, the same people would have raised a storm of opposition on the grounds that it was odd that the Messenger was raised among the Arabs, but the revelation he brought to them was in a foreign tongue which could be understood neither by the Messenger nor by his people!

[45] And in the past We gave Moses the Book and yet it became an object of dispute. If your Lord's decree had not gone forth before, a decisive judgement would have been made among them, once and for all. Surely they are in a disquieting doubt about it.

[46] Whoever does good, does so to his own benefit; and whoever does evil, will suffer its evil consequence. Your Lord does no wrong to His servants.

[47] The knowledge of the Hour rests solely with Him.⁹ Not a fruit comes forth from its sheath, nor does any female conceive nor give birth to a child but it is in His knowledge. On that Day He will call out to them: "Where are those associates of Mine?" They will answer: "We have declared to You that none of us can bear witness to that."

[48] Then all those deities whom they once used to call upon shall vanish and they will come to know for sure that there is no escape for them.

9. Knowledge of the Hour means knowledge of the Hour of Resurrection.

[49] Man wears not of praying for good, but when evil visits him, he despairs and gives up all hope.

[50] And if We bestow Our Mercy upon him after hardship, he will surely say: "This is what I truly deserve, and I do not believe that the Hour (of Resurrection) will ever come to pass; and if I am returned to my Lord, there too I shall enjoy the best." Surely We shall fully apprise the unbelievers of what they have done, and We shall certainly make them taste a severe chastisement.

[51] When We bestow Our favour upon man, he turns away and waxes proud; but when a misfortune touches him, he is full of supplication.

[52] Tell them, (O Prophet): “Did you ever consider: if this Qur’an is indeed from Allah and you still deny it, who can be in greater error than he who goes far in fiercely opposing it?”

[53] Soon shall We show them Our Signs on the horizons and in their own beings until it becomes clear to them that it is the Truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a witness over everything?

[54] Lo, they are in doubt concerning their meeting with their Lord. Surely He fully encompasses everything.¹⁰

10. That is, nothing is beyond God's power, nor is there anything beyond the range of His knowledge.