

Al-Hadid [Iron]

Madinan Period

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

[1] All that is in the heavens and the earth extols the glory of Allah. He is the Most Mighty, the Most Wise.

[2] His is the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes death, and He has power over everything.

[3] He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden,¹ and He has knowledge of everything.

[4] He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself on the Throne. He knows all that enters the earth and all that comes forth from it, and all that comes down from the heaven and all that goes up to it.² He is with you wherever you are. Allah sees all that you do.

[5] His is the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and to Him are all matters referred (for judgement).

1. These are some of God's major Attributes: God has always been even when there was nothing else and He will always be even when there will be nothing else. Furthermore, God is the Most Manifest of the manifest, for whatever is manifest is so because of His Attributes, His Work and His Light. He is also the Most Hidden of the hidden. This because He cannot be grasped by the senses. Additionally, His essence and reality defy man's intellect, thought and imagination.

2. God not only knows the generality of all things, but also their particulars and details. To illustrate, God knows each seed that penetrates the layers of the earth. He also knows all the leaves and buds that open out of the earth, even as He knows the drops of rain that fall from the sky and the vapours that rise from the seas, rivers and lakes and then head towards the sky. So pervasive is God's knowledge that He is well aware of every single seed that lies under the soil, Wherever it might be. Thanks to this pervasive knowledge, God causes that seed to split open, sprout and grow. He is also fully aware of the amount of vapour that rises at any given place and the heights to which it reaches. It is again thanks to this knowledge that God is able to merge this vapour into cloud, distribute it and cause it to descend in the form of rain in different parts of the earth according to well-calculated measures.

[6] He causes the night to pass into the day, and causes the day to pass into the night, and He fully knows all that is hidden in the breasts of people.

[7] Believe in Allah and in His Messenger³ and expend of what He has entrusted to you. A great reward awaits those of you who believe and spend their wealth.

[8] How is it that you do not believe in Allah when the Messenger calls you to believe in your Lord⁴ and although he has taken a covenant from you,⁵ if indeed you are believers?

[9] He it is Who sends down Clear Signs to His servant so as to bring you out from darkness into light. Surely Allah is Most Kind and Most Compassionate to you.

3. Here the call to believe in God and His Messenger does not signify merely a verbal declaration of faith. The call is rather to believe sincerely, to believe with all one's mind and heart.

4. Here too the call to believe means believing from the depths of one's heart.

5. That is, the covenant to obey God.

[10] How is it that you do not expend in the Way of Allah when to Allah belongs the inheritance of the heavens and the earth?⁶ Those who spent their wealth and took part in fighting before the Victory cannot be equated (with those who spent their wealth and took part in fighting afterwards). They are higher in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards. But to each Allah has promised a good reward.⁷ Allah is well aware of all that you do.

[11] Who is it that will give Allah a beautiful loan? A loan that Allah will repay after increasing it many times and grant him a generous reward.⁸

6. This carries two meanings. First, whatever wealth man has will not endure forever. For surely a day will come when he will die and leave all his possessions behind and then God will inherit all that wealth. Second, when a man spends his wealth in God's cause, he need entertain no fear of destitution and poverty on that account. For God on Whom he depends and in Whose cause he spends his wealth is the Lord of the treasures of the heavens and earth. His treasures have not been exhausted by what He has given people so far; there is still an immense amount in His possession which He can bestow on them in the future.

7. At times there might be very strong indications that the balance of power is heavily tilted against Islam. Furthermore, it might appear that the chances of Islam's victory are not within the range of what is possible. Hence, if some people stake their lives and spend their resources to support Islam's cause in such gloomy circumstances before Islam's triumph and victory, they will occupy very high ranks with God, higher than the ranks of those who strive and spend in God's cause after Islam has emerged victorious in its encounter with Unbelief.

8. This is indicative of God's beneficence and munificence in dealing with people. A person who spends out of his wealth in God's cause in fact spends out of what God Himself has provided him, Nevertheless, God treats this expense as a loan that he has given to God, provided he does so with sincerity. God makes two promises in regard to the loans so given to Him. First, that He will repay them after increasing them several fold. Second, that over and above that, such people will receive "an excellent reward" from Him.

[12] On that Day you will see believing men and women that their light will be running before them and on their right hands.⁹ (They will be told): "A good tiding to you today." There shall be Gardens beneath which rivers flow; therein they shall abide. That indeed is the great triumph.

[13] On that Day the hypocrites, both men and women, shall say -to the believers: "Look at us that we may extract some light from your light." They will be told: "Go back and seek light for yourselves elsewhere." Then a wall shall be erected between them with a door in it. On the inside of it there will be mercy, and on the outside of it there will be chastisement.

[14] The hypocrites will call out to the believers: "Were we not with you?" The believers will reply: "Yes; but you allowed yourselves to succumb to temptations, and you wavered and you remained in doubt and false expectations deluded you until Allah's command came to pass, and the Deluder deluded you concerning Allah.

9. This might give rise to a query, namely, that while one can understand the meaning of the light of the believers running before them, but what is meant by saying that this light "will be running on their right hands"? Does this imply that there will be darkness on their left hands? The fact, however, is that if a person is walking with a light in his right hand, his left side will also be lit up. This despite the fact that the light is only in his right hand.

[15] So no ransom shall be accepted from you today, nor from those who disbelieved. You are destined for the Fire. That will be your guardian. And that indeed is a grievous destination.

[16] Is the time not come that the hearts of the believers¹⁰ should be humbled to Allah's remembrance and to the Truth that He has revealed, and that they should not be like those who were vouchsafed the Book and then a long time elapsed so that their hearts were hardened? A great many of them are now evil-doers.

[17] Know Well that Allah revives the earth after it becomes lifeless.¹¹ We have clearly shown Our Signs to you, perchance you will use your reason.

[18] Verily those who give alms -be they men or women,¹²-and give Allah a beautiful loan shall be repaid after increasing it many times; and theirs shall be a generous reward.

10. The word "believers" here does not embrace all Muslims. It refers here only to those who had become a part of the Prophets community after their verbal declaration of faith although their hearts were devoid of any true identification with and sympathy for Islam.

11. The context in which this statement is made needs to be fully grasped. At several places in the Qur'an, prophethood and revelation of the Book are likened to rainfall. This because the effect produced by them for humanity is similar to the effect of rainfall on the soil. Rainfall causes fertile soil to bloom and blossom. On the contrary, a tract of barren land remains barren even after rainfall.

12. Sadaqah, in Islamic parlance, signifies whatever given in charity with sincerity and with the intent to please God. It is required that this be done without flaunting it and without impressing upon its recipients that it was given to them as a favour.

[19] In Allah's sight only those who truly believe in Allah and His Messengers are utterly truthful¹³ and true bearers of witness¹⁴ (for the sake of Allah). For them is their reward and their light. As for those who gave the lie to Our Signs, they are the people of Hell.

[20] Know well that the life of this world is merely sport and diversion and adornment and an object of your boasting with one another, and a rivalry in the multiplication of riches and children. Its likeness is that of rain: when it produces vegetation it delights the tillers. But then it Withers and you see it turn yellow, and then it crumbles away. In the Hereafter there is (either) grievous chastisement (or) forgiveness from Allah and (His) good pleasure. The life of this world is nothing but delusion.

[21] So vie with one another in seeking to attain your Lord's forgiveness and a Garden whose width is as the width of the heaven and the earth,¹⁵ one which has been prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is Allah's bounty which He bestows upon those whom He pleases. Allah is the Lord of abounding bounty.

13. Siddiq ("the most truthful") is the intensive form of **sadiq** ("the truthful"). It denotes a truthful person who is free from every taint of falsehood, a person who never diverges from the course of truth and righteousness, one about whom it is inconceivable that he will ever say even a word against his conscience. He is the kind of person who, when he believes in something, does so with utter sincerity and remains faithful to his commitment in all circumstances, a person whose truthfulness of faith is fully testified to by his actions.

14. Shahid is he who bears witness to the Truth both by his word and deed.

15. If this verse is read alongside **Al 'Imran 3:133**, it will be evident that the gardens and palaces that will be granted to people in Paradise will be provided to serve as their dwellings. However, the inmates of Paradise will not be confined to these gardens and palaces, but will be able to traverse about the entire Universe (which will also be turned into Paradise).

[22] No misfortune ever befalls on earth, nor on yourselves but We have inscribed it in the Book before We make it manifest. Surely that is easy for Allah.

[23] (We do so) that you may not grieve over the loss you suffer, nor exult over what He gave you. Allah does not love the vainglorious, the boastful,

[24] those who are niggardly and bid others to be niggardly. And he who turns away, (should know that) Allah is Self-Sufficient, Immensely Praiseworthy.

[25] Indeed We sent Our Messengers with Clear Signs, and sent down with them the Book and the Balance that people may uphold justice.¹⁶ And We sent down iron, wherein there is awesome power and many benefits for people,¹⁷ so that Allah may know who, without even having seen Him, helps Him and His Messengers. Surely Allah is Most Strong, Most Mighty.

*16. Here we find a succinct statement describing the essence of all Prophets' Mission. All God's Messengers brought along with them three things: (1) **bayyinat**: that is, Clear Signs, strong and persuasive arguments and lucid directives; (2) a Book embodying the teachings needed for mankind's guidance so that people could turn to it for enlightenment; and (3) **mizan**, that is the criterion of right and wrong that might precisely indicate, as does a balance, the golden mean of justice that eschews extremes in thought, moral conduct and inter-human relationships.*

17. The statement that God "sent down iron" immediately after stating the Prophets' Mission clearly indicates that the word "iron" is not used here in its literal sense; instead, it is used figuratively to signify political and military power. The purpose of the verse, therefore, is to stress that God did not raise His Messengers simply to put forward a scheme to establish justice. It was also a part of the Messengers' Mission to strive to put that scheme into effect. Likewise, it was a part of their Mission to acquire the power needed to establish justice and to render powerless all those who would try to disrupt or resist that scheme.

[26] Indeed We sent forth Noah and Abraham and established in their line Prophecy and the Book. Then some of them embraced the guidance and many of them are wicked.

[27] In their wake, We sent a succession of Our Messengers, and raised Jesus, son of Mary, after all of them, and bestowed upon him the Evangel, and We set tenderness and mercy in the hearts of those that followed him. As for monasticism,¹⁸ it is they who invented it; We did not prescribe it for them. They themselves invented it in pursuit of Allah's good pleasure, and then they did not observe it as it ought to have been observed. So We gave their reward to those of them that believed. But many of them are wicked.

*18. **Rahbaniyah** (monasticism) signifies world-renunciation, withdrawal from the affairs of mundane life, and retreat to mountains and forests or to a life of seclusion and solitude.*

[28] Believers, have fear of Allah and believe in His Messenger, and He will grant you a two-fold portion of His Mercy and will appoint for you a light whereby you shall walk; and He will forgive you. Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Compassionate.

[29] (You should do this) so that the People of the Book know that they have no control over Allah's Bounty and that all bounty is in Allah's Hand; He bestows it on whomsoever He pleases. Allah is the Lord of abounding bounty.