

# **Al-An'am** [Livestock] **Makkan Period**

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

[1] All praise is due for Allah alone, Who created the heavens and the earth, and brought into being light and darkness, and yet those who have rejected the call of the Truth ascribe others to be equals to their Lord.

[2] He it is Who has created you out of clay, and then decreed a term (of life), and has also appointed another term, a term determined with Him.<sup>1</sup> Yet you are in doubt!

[3] And He it is Who is the One True God in the heavens and the earth. He knows your deeds - both secret and open -and knows fully whatever good or evil you do.

[4] Yet every time a Sign of their Lord comes to them, they run away from it,

[5] and thus they gave the lie to the Truth that has now come to them. Soon they will come upon some news concerning what they had mocked at.<sup>2</sup>

*1. This alludes to the Hour of judgement when all human beings, regardless of the time in which they lived, will be brought back to life and summoned to render their account before their Lord.*

*2. The allusion here is to the Migration (Hijrah) and the numerous victories destined to follow it in quick succession. When this allusion was made, the unbelievers could not have guessed what kind of news they would receive, and even the Muslims could not have imagined the developments that were about to unfold.*

[6] Have they not seen how many a people We have destroyed before them? People whom We had made more powerful in the earth than you are and upon whom We had showered abundant rains, from the heavens and at whose feet We caused the rivers to flow? And then (when they behaved ungratefully) We destroyed them for their sins, and raised other peoples in their place.

[7] (O Messenger), had We sent down to you a book inscribed on parchment, and had they even touched it with their own hands, the unbelievers would still have said: "This is nothing but plain magic."

[8] They also say: "Why has no angel been sent down to this Prophet?"<sup>3</sup> Had We sent down an angel, the matter would surely have long been decided and no respite would have been granted them.

[9] Had We appointed an angel, We would have sent him down in the form of a man - and thus We would have caused them the same doubt which they now entertain,

[10] And indeed before your time, (O Muhammad), many a Messenger has been scoffed at; but those who mocked at them were encompassed by the Truth they had scoffed at.

*3. The unbelievers said that if Muhammad (peace be on him) had indeed been endowed with prophethood, an angel should have been sent down from heaven to announce that he was the Messenger of God, and that people would be punished if they did not follow his directives.*

[11] Say: "Go about journeying the earth, and behold the end of those who gave the lie (to the Truth)."

[12] Ask them: "To whom belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth?" Say: "Everything belongs to Allah." He has bound Himself to the exercise of Mercy (and thus does not instantly chastise you for your disobedience and excesses). Surely He will gather you all together on the Day of Resurrection the coming of which is beyond doubt; but those who have courted their own ruin are not going to believe.

[13] And to Him belongs all that dwells in the night and the day. He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

[14] Say: "Shall take for my Guardian anyone other than Allah, the Originator of the heavens and earth; He Who feeds and Himself is not fed?" Say: "Surely I have been commanded to be the first among those who submit (to Allah) and not to be one of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity (even though others may do so)."

[15] Say: "Surely do I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the chastisement of an awesome Day."

[16] Whosoever has been spared chastisement on that Day, Allah has bestowed His Mercy upon him. That is the manifest triumph.

[17] Should Allah touch you with affliction, there is none to remove it but He; and should He touch you with good, He has the power to do everything.

[18] He has the supreme hold over His servants. He is All-Wise, All-Aware.

[19] Ask them: "Whose testimony is the greatest?" Say: "Allah is the witness between me and you; and this Qur'an was revealed to me that I should warn you thereby and also whomsoever it may reach." Do you indeed testify that there are other gods with Allah?<sup>4</sup> Say: "I shall never testify such a thing." Say: "He is the One God and I am altogether averse to all that you associate with Him in His Divinity."

[20] Those whom We have given the Book recognize this just as they recognize their own offspring; but those who have courted their own ruin will not believe.

[21] And who could be more wrong-doing than he who either foists a lie on Allah or gives the lie to His Signs? Surely such wrong-doers shall not attain success.

[22] On the Day when We shall gather them all together, We shall ask those who associated others with Allah in His Divinity: "Where, now, are your partners whom you imagined (to have a share in the Divinity of Allah)?"

[23] Then they will be able to play no mischief but will say (falsely): "By Allah, our Lord, we associated none (with You in Your Divinity)."

[24] Behold, how they will lie against themselves and how their forged deities will forsake them!

[25] And of them there are some who appear to pay heed to you, but upon their hearts We have laid coverings so they do not understand; and in their ears, there is heaviness (so they do not hear). Even if they were to witness every Sign, they would still not believe in it so much so that when they come to you, they dispute with you and those who disbelieve contend: "This is nothing but fables of the ancient times."

*4. In order to bear witness to something, mere guesswork and imagination are not enough, What is required is knowledge on the basis of which a person can state something with full conviction, Hence, the question means: Did they really have knowledge of anyone other than God who could lay claim to man's worship and absolute service on the grounds that He was the Omnipotent Sovereign, and the One whose will prevailed throughout the Universe?*

[26] As for others, they prevent them from embracing the Truth; and they themselves flee from it (so as to harm you). But they court their own ruin, although they do not realize it.

[27] If you could but see when they shall be made to stand by the Fire! They will plead: "Would that we were brought back to life? Then we would not give the lie to the Signs of our Lord and would be among the believers."

[28] No! They will say this merely because the Truth which they had concealed will become obvious to them; or else if they were sent back, they would still revert to what was forbidden to them.(So this plea of theirs would be a lie too) for they are just liars.

[29] They say now: "There is nothing but the life of this world, and we shall not be raised from the dead."

[30] If you could but see when they will be made to stand before their Lord. He will say: "Is not this the Truth?" They will say: "Yes indeed, by our Lord." Whereupon He will say: "Then taste the chastisement for your denying the Truth."

[31] Those who consider it a lie that they will have to meet Allah are indeed the losers so much so that when that Hour comes to them suddenly they will say: "Alas for us, how negligent we have been in this behalf." They will carry their burden (of sins) on their backs. How evil is the burden they bear!

[32] The life of this world is nothing but a sport and a pastime, <sup>5</sup> and the life of the Hereafter is far better for those who seek to ward off their ruin. Will you, then, not understand?

5. *This does not mean that earthly life has nothing serious about it and that it has been brought into being merely as a sport and pastime. What this observation means is that as compared with the true and abiding life of the Hereafter, earthly life seems as if it were a sport, a transient pastime with which to amuse oneself before turning to serious business. Earthly life has been likened to a sport and pastime for another reason as well. Since the Ultimate Reality is hidden during the course of worldly life, the superficially-minded ones who lack true perception of things encounter many a thing which causes them to fall a prey to misconceptions. As a result of these misconceptions such persons indulge in a variety of actions which are so blatantly opposed to reality that their life seems to consist merely of sport and pastime.*

[33] (O Muhammad), We know indeed that the things they say grieve you, though in truth it is not you whom they give the lie to, but it is the Signs of Allah that these wrong-doers reject.<sup>6</sup>

[34] Messengers before you have been given the lie to, and they endured with patience their being given the lie to and being persecuted until the time when Our help reached them. None has the power to alter the words of Allah. Indeed some account of the Messengers has already reached you.

[35] Nevertheless, if their turning away grieves you, then seek - if you can - either a way down into the earth or a ladder to the heavens, and try to bring to them some Sign. Had Allah so willed, He would have gathered them all to the true guidance. Do not, then, be among the ignorant.<sup>7</sup>

6. *The fact is that before the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) began to preach God's Message; his people regarded him as truthful and trustworthy and had full confidence in his veracity. Only after he began to preach God's Message did they call him a liar. Even during this period none dared to say that the Prophet (peace be on him) had ever been guilty of untruthfulness in personal matters. Not even his worst enemies ever accused him of lying in any matter. When they did accuse him of falsehood, they did so in respect of his prophetic mission. Abu Jahl, for instance, was one of his staunchest enemies. According to a tradition from 'Ali, Abu Jahl once said to the Prophet (peace be on him): "We do not disbelieve you. We do not believe in your Message."*

7. *Don't trouble yourself about showing them the Signs that would convince them of the Truth and make them accept the true faith. Had it been required that all-people should be driven to embrace the Truth, there would have been no need to send Prophets and to direct the believers to engage in struggle against the unbelievers.*

[36] Only those who listen can respond to the call of the Truth; <sup>8</sup> as for the dead, Allah will raise them and then to Him they Will be returned.

[37] And they say: "Why has no miraculous Sign been sent down to him from his Lord?" Say: "Surely Allah has the power to send down a Sign, but most of them do not know."<sup>9</sup>

[38] There is no animal that crawls on the earth and no bird that flies with its two wings but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book (of Decree). Then to their Lord will they all be mustered.

8. *"Those who hear" refers to those whose consciences are alive, who have not atrophied their intellect and reason, who have not closed their hearts to the Truth out of irrational prejudice and mental adamance. In contrast to such people are those who are characterized as "dead" - who blindly follow the old, familiar, beaten tracks, and can never deviate from the ways they have inherited, even when these ways are plainly at variance with the Truth.*

9. *The word ayah here signifies a tangible miracle. The purpose of the verse is to point out that the reason for not showing a miraculous Sign is not God's powerlessness. The true reason is something else which those people in their immaturity have failed to comprehend.*

[39] Those who gave the lie to Our Signs are deaf and dumb and blunder about in darkness. Allah causes whomsoever He wills to stray in error, and sets whomsoever He wills on the Straight Way."<sup>10</sup>

[40] Say: "What do you think it some chastisement of Allah or the Hour suddenly overtakes you: do you cry to any other than Allah? Answer, if you speak the truth.

[41] Lo, it is to Him alone that you cry and then, if He so wills, He removes the distress for which you had cried to Him. Then you forget the partners you had set up with Allah."<sup>11</sup>

[42] And We indeed sent Messengers to other nations before you and then seized those nations with misfortune and hardship so that they might humble themselves (before Us).

[43] But when misfortune befell them from Us why did they not humble themselves? Their hearts had hardened and Satan had made their deeds seem fair to them.

10. *God's act of misguiding a man consists in not enabling him who cherishes his ignorance to observe the signs of God. The fact is that if a biased person - one who does not really cherish the Truth-were to observe the Signs of God, he might still fail to perceive it. Indeed, all those things which cause misconception and confusion would probably continue to alienate him from it. God's act of true guidance consists in enabling a seeker after the Truth to benefit from the sources of true knowledge so that he constantly discovers sign after sign, leading him ultimately to the Truth.*

11. *This Sign is ingrained in man's soul. When either some great calamity befalls a man or when death starkly stares him in the face, it is only to God that he turns for refuge. On such occasions even the staunchest polytheists forget their false gods and cry out to the One True God, and even the most rabid atheists' stretch out their hands in prayer to Him. This phenomenon is mentioned here in order to draw an instructive lesson. It shows that devotion to God and monotheism are ingrained in the human soul. No matter how overlaid this truth might be, some day it shakes off man's heedlessness and ignorance and manifests itself with full force.*

[44] So, when they forgot what they had been reminded of, We opened the gates of all things so that while they rejoiced in what they had been granted We suddenly seized them and they were plunged into utter despair.

[45] Thus the last remnant of those wrong-doing People was cut off. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the entire Universe, (for having punished them so).

[46] Say (O Muhammad): "What do you think? If Allah should take away your hearing and your sight and seal your hearts<sup>12</sup>-who is the god, other than Allah, who could restore them to you?" Behold, how We put forth Our Signs in diverse forms, and yet they turn away from them.

[47] Say: "If the chastisement of Allah were to overtake you suddenly or openly shall any except the wrong-doing People be destroyed?"

[48] We do not send Messengers except as bearers of glad tidings and warners. So, he who believes in their Message and mends his conduct need have no fear and need not grieve,

[49] whereas those who give the lie to Our Signs, chastisement will visit them for their transgression.

[50] (O Muhammad)! Say: "I do not say to you that I have the treasures of Allah; nor do I have knowledge of what is beyond the reach of perception; nor do I say to you that I am an angel. I only follow what is revealed to me." Then ask them: "Are the blind and the seeing alike?" Do you not then reflect?

*12. The expression "sealing of hearts" means rendering people incapable of thinking and understanding things correctly.*

[51] And warn with this (revealed message) those who fear that they shall be mustered to their Lord, that there will be none apart from Allah to act as their protector and intercessor; then maybe they will become God-fearing.

[52] And do not drive away those who invoke their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His pleasure all the time. You are by no means accountable for them just as they are by no means accountable for you. If you still drive them away, you will become among the wrong- doers.

[53] Thus We have made some of them a means to test others<sup>13</sup> so that they should say: "Are these the ones among us upon whom Allah has bestowed His Favour?" Yes, does Allah not know well who are the thankful?

[54] And when those who believe in Our Signs come to you, say to them: "Peace be upon you. Your Lord has made Mercy incumbent upon Himself so that if anyone of you does a bad deed out of ignorance and thereafter repents and makes amends, surely you will find Him All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate."<sup>14</sup>

[55] Thus do We clearly set forth Our Signs that the way of the wicked might become distinct.

13. *By enabling the poor and the indigent, the people who have a low station in society to take the lead in believing, God has put those who wax proud on account of their wealth, power and pelf to a severe test.*

14. *Several of those who came to believe in the Prophet (peace be on him) had committed many serious sins before they embraced Islam. Even though their lives had altogether changed following their conversion, the opponents continued to play up the weaknesses and misdeeds of their past life. The Prophet (peace be on him) is asked to comfort such persons and to tell them that God does not punish those who sincerely repent for their sins and mend their ways.*

[56] Say, (O Muhammad): "I have been forbidden to serve those whom you call upon other than Allah." Say: "I do not follow your desires, for were I to do that, I would go astray and would not be of those who are rightly-guided."

[57] Say: "I take stand upon a Clear Evidence from my Lord and it is that which you have given the lie to. What you desire to be hastened is not within my power. Judgement lies with Allah alone. He declares the Truth, and He is the Best Judge."

[58] Say: "If what you demand so hastily were in my power, the matter between me and you would have long been decided. But Allah knows best how to judge the wrong-doers."

[59] He has the keys to the realm of the Unseen which none knows but He. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea; there is not a leaf which falls that He does not know about and there is not a grain in the darkness of the earth or anything green or dry which has not been recorded in a Clear Book.

[60] He recalls your souls by night, and knows what you do by day, and then He raises you back each day in order that the term appointed by Him is fulfilled. Then to Him you will return, whereupon He will let you know what you have been doing.

[61] And He alone holds sway over His servants and sets guardians over you till death approaches any of you and Our deputed angels take his soul, neglecting no part of their task.

[62] Then all are restored to Allah, their True Protector. Behold, His is the judgement. He is the swiftest of those who take account."

[63] Ask them, (O Muhammad): "Who is it that delivers you from dangers in the deep darkensses of the land and the sea, and whom do you call upon in humility and in the secrecy of your hearts? To whom do you pray: If He will but save us from this distress, we shall most certainly be among the thankful?"

[64] Say: "Allah delivers you from this and from every distress, and yet you associate others with Allah in His Divinity."<sup>15</sup>

[65] Say: "It is He Who has the power to send forth chastisement upon you from above you, or from beneath your feet, or split you into hostile groups and make some of you taste each other's violence. Behold how We set forth Our Signs in diverse forms, so that they may understand the Truth."

[66] Your people have denied it even though it is the Truth. Say: "I am not a guardian over you."<sup>16</sup>

*15. That God alone possesses all power and authority and has full control over the things which cause benefit or harm to people, that He alone holds the reins of their destiny are facts to which there is ample testimony in man's own life. For instance, whenever man is faced with a really hard time, and when the resources upon which he normally falls back seem to fail him, he instinctively turns to God. In spite of such a clear sign, people set up partners to God without any shred of evidence that anyone other than God has any share in His power and authority. The anomaly is that even though they are nourished by resources that God alone has created, they acknowledge others than Him to be their lords. Even though they have been delivered from insecurity and stress by His grace and mercy, they consider others rather than God to be their protectors and helpers, Even though they were god's born slaves, it is to others that they devote their worship. Even though it is God alone Who relieves their distress and to Whom they cry out in adversity for deliverance, no sooner are they out of immediate danger than they extol others as their rescuers, and it is to them rather than to the One True God that they pay homage and make offerings.*

*16. A Prophet is neither required to compel people to see what they are not prepared to see nor to force into their hearts what they fail to comprehend. It is not a Prophet's task to chastise people for failing to see and comprehend the Truth.*

[67] Every tiding has its appointed time; you yourselves will soon know (the end)."

[68] When you see those who are engaged in blasphemy against Our Signs, turn away from them until they begin to talk of other things; and should Satan ever cause you to forget, then do not remain, after recollection, in the company of those wrong-doing people.

[69] For those who are God-fearing are by no means accountable for others except that it is their duty to admonish them; maybe they will shun evil.

[70] Leave alone those who have made a sport and a pastime of their religion and whom the life of the world has beguiled. But continue to admonish them (with the Qur'an) lest a man should be caught for what he has himself earned, for there shall neither be any protector nor intercessor apart from Allah; and though he may offer any conceivable ransom it shall not be accepted from him, for such people have been caught for the deeds that they have themselves earned. Boiling water to drink and a painful chastisement to suffer for their unbelief is what awaits them.

[71] Ask them, (O Muhammad): "Shall we invoke anything apart from Allah that can neither benefit nor harm us, and thus be turned back on our heels after Allah has guided us? Like the one whom the evil ones have lured into bewilderment in the earth, even though he has friends who call him to true guidance, saying, "Come to us." Say: "Surely Allah's guidance is the only true guidance, and we have been commanded to submit ourselves to the Lord of the entire Universe,

[72] and to establish Prayer, and to have fear of Him. It is to Him that all of you shall be gathered.

[73] And He it is Who has created the heavens and the earth in Truth; <sup>17</sup> and the very day He will say: "(Let there) be (resurrection)" and it will be. His Word is the Truth and His will be the dominion on the day the Trumpet is blown. He knows that which is hidden and that which is evident, He is the All-Wise, the All-Aware."<sup>18</sup>

*17. It has been asserted again and again in the Qur'an that God created the heavens and the earth "in Truth". This covers a wide range of meanings:*

*First, that the heavens and the earth have not been created just for the fun of it. This state of existence is not a theatrical farce. This world is not a child's toy with which to amuse oneself as long as one wishes before crushing it to bits and throwing it away. Creation is rather an act of great seriousness. A great objective motivates it, and a wise and benevolent purpose underlies it. Hence, after the lapse of a certain stage it is necessary for the Creator to take full account of the work that has been done and to use those results as the basis for the next stage.*

*Second, it means that God has created this entire system of the universe on solid foundations of Truth. The whole of the universe is based on justice, wisdom and truth. Hence, there is no scope in the system for falsehood to take root and prosper. The phenomenon of the prosperity of falsehood which we observe is to be ascribed to the will of God, Who grants the followers of falsehood the opportunity; if they so wish, to expend their efforts in promoting unrighteousness, injustice and untruth. In the end, however, the earth will throw up all the seeds of untruth that have been sown, and in the final reckoning every follower of falsehood will see that the efforts he devoted to cultivating and watering this precious tree have all gone to waste.*

*Third, it means that God has founded the universe on the basis of right, and it is on account of being its Creator that He governs it. His Command in the Universe is supreme since He alone has the right to govern it, the Universe being nothing but His creation. No one else has any right to enforce his will.*

*18. Ghayb signifies all that is hidden from, and is beyond the ken of man's knowledge. Shahadah, as opposed to ghayb, signifies that which is manifest and thus can be known by man.*

[74] And recall when Abraham said to his father, Azar: "Do you take idols for gods? I see you and your people in obvious error."

[75] And thus We showed Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, so that he might become one of those who have sure faith.

[76] Then, when the night outspread over him, he beheld a star, and said: "This is my Lord." But when it went down, he said: "I do not love the things that go down."

[77] Then, when he beheld the moon rising, he said: "This is my Lord!" But when it went down, he said: "Were that my Lord did not guide me, I surely would have become among the people who have gone astray."

[78] Then when he beheld the sun rising, he said: "This is my Lord. This is the greatest of all." Then, when it went down, he said: "O my people! Most certainly I am quit of those whom you associate with Allah in His Divinity."<sup>19</sup>

[79] Behold, I have turned my face in exclusive devotion to the One Who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am certainly not one of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity"

*19. Here some light is thrown on the mental experience through which Abraham passed in the beginning and which led him to an understanding of the Truth before prophethood was bestowed on him. This experience shows how a right-thinking and sound-hearted person who had opened his eyes in a purely polytheistic environment and had received no instruction in monotheism, was ultimately led to discover the Truth by careful observation of, and serious reflection on, the phenomena of the Universe.*

[80] His people remonstrated with him whereupon Abraham said: "Do you remonstrate with me concerning Allah Who has guided me to the right way? I do not fear those whom you associate with Allah in His Divinity Only that which my Lord wills, indeed that alone will come by. My Lord embraces all things within His knowledge. Will You not take heed?"<sup>20</sup>

[81] Why Should I fear those whom you have associated (with Allah in His Divinity)when you do not fear associating others with Allah in His Divinity - something for which He has sent down to you no authority. Then, which of the two parties has better title to security? Tell us, if you have any knowledge!

[82] Those who believe and did not tarnish their faith with wrong-doing for them there is security, and it is they who have been guided to the right way."

[83]That was Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people. We raise in ranks whom We will. Truly your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.

[84] And We bestowed upon Abraham (his offspring) Ishaq (Isaac) and ya'qub (Jacob) and each of them did We guide to the Right Way as We had earlier guided Noah to the Right Way; and (of his descendants We guided) Da'ud (David) and Sulayman (Solomon), Ayyub (Job), Yusuf (Joseph), Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron). Thus do We reward those who do good.

[85] (And of his descendants We guided) Zakariya (Zechariah), Yahya (John), 'Issa (Jesus) and Ilyas (Elias): each one of them was of the righteous.

*20. The word used here is tadhakkur, which conveys the sense that somebody who had been either heedless or negligent of something suddenly wakes up to its true meaning. Hence this translation of afala tatadhakkarun.*

[86] (And of his descendants We guided) Ismail (Ishmael), al-Yasa '(Elisha), Yunus (Jonah), and Lut (Lot). And each one of them We favoured over all mankind.

[87] Likewise We elected for Our cause and guided on to a Straight Way some of their forefathers and their offspring and their brethren.

[88] That is Allah's guidance wherewith He guides those of His servants whom He will. But if they ever associate others with Allah in His Divinity then all that they had done would have gone to waste.

[89] Those are the ones to whom We gave the Book, and judgement and prophethood.<sup>21</sup> And if they refuse to believe in it now, We will bestow this favour on a people who do believe in it.

[90] (O Muhammad), those are the ones Allah guided to the Right Way. Follow, then, their way, and say: "I ask of you no reward (for carrying on this mission); it is merely an admonition to all mankind."

[91] They did not form any proper estimate of Allah when they said: "Allah has not revealed anything to any man." Ask them: "The Book which 'Moses brought as a light and guidance for people and which you keep in bits and scraps - some of which you disclose While the rest you conceal, even though through it you were taught that which neither you nor your forefathers knew - who was it who revealed it?"<sup>22</sup> Say: "Allah"- and then leave them to sport with their argumentation.

*21. Here the Prophets are mentioned as having been endowed with three things: first, the revealed guidance embodied in the Book; second, hukm, i.e. the correct understanding of the revealed guidance, the ability to apply its principles to the practical affairs of life, the God-given ability to arrive at right opinions regarding human problems; and third, prophethood, the office by virtue of which they are enabled to lead human beings in the light of the guidance vouchsafed to them.*

*22. The revelation of the Torah to Moses (peace be on him) is adduced by way of evidence since the Jews, to whom this response is addressed, believed that it was revealed. It is obvious that their recognition of the Torah as the Book revealed to Moses negated their standpoint that God had never revealed anything to any human being. Their belief in the Torah at least proved that revelation to man is possible, and that it had actually taken place.*

[92] (Like that Book) this too is a Book which We have revealed, one full of blessing, confirming what was revealed before it so that you might warn the people of the Mother of Cities (Makkah) and those around it. Those who believe in the Hereafter believe in it, and are ever-mindful of their Prayers.

[93] Who can be more unjust than he who foists a lie on Allah or says: "Revelation has come to me" when in fact nothing was revealed to him, and who says: "I will produce the like of what Allah has revealed?" If you could but see the wrong-doers in the agonies of death, and the angels stretching out their hands (saying): "Yield up your souls! Today you will be recompensed with the chastisement of humiliation for the lie you spoke concerning Allah, and for you waxing proud against His Signs."

[94] (And Allah will say): "Now you have come to Us all alone even as We had created you in the first instance, and you have left behind all that We had bestowed upon you in the

world. We do not see with you your intercessors whom you imagined to have a share with Allah in your affairs. You have now been cut off from one another and all those whom you imagined (to be Allah's associates in your affairs) have vanished from you."

[95] Truly it is Allah Who causes the grain and the fruit- kernel to sprout.<sup>23</sup> He brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living.<sup>24</sup> Such is Allah. So whither are you tending in error?

[96] It is He Who causes the dawn to split forth, and has ordained the night for repose, and the sun and the moon for reckoning time. All this is determined by Allah the Almighty, the All-Knowing.

[97] It is He Who has made for you the stars that you may follow the right direction in the darkness of the land and the sea. We have indeed spelled out Signs<sup>25</sup> for the people who have knowledge.

[98] It is He Who created you out of a single being, and appointed for each of you a place of stay (in life) and a resting place (after death) and a resting place, We have indeed spelled out Our Signs for those who can understand.

[99] It is He Who has sent down water from the heavens, and thereby We have brought vegetation of every kind, and out of this We have brought forth green foliage and then from it close-packed ears of corn, and out of the palm-tree - from the sheath of it - thick-clustered dates, hanging down with heaviness, and gardens of vines, and the olive tree, and the pomegranate - all resembling one another and yet so different. Behold their fruit when they bear fruit and ripen! Surely, in all this there are Signs for those who believe.

*23. The one who causes the seed-grain to split open under the surface of the earth and then makes it grow and appear on the surface as a plant is none other than God.*

*24. To "bring forth the living from the dead" means creating living beings out of dead matter. Likewise, "to bring out the dead from the living" means to remove the lifeless elements from a living organism.*

*25. By "signs" are meant all that support the proposition that there is only One God, that is, no one has either the attributes of God or any share in His authority or can rightfully claim any of the rights which exclusively belong to Him.*

[100] And yet, some people have come to associate the *jinn* with Allah in His Divinity,<sup>26</sup> even though it is He Who created them; and in ignorance they impute to Him sons and daughters. He is Holy and Exalted far above that which they attribute to Him.

[101] He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How can He have a son when He has had no mate? He has created everything and He has full knowledge of all things.

[102] Such is Allah, your Lord. There is no god but He - the Creator of all things. Serve Him alone- for it is He Who is the Guardian of everything.

[103] No visual perception can encompass Him, even though He encompasses all visual perception. He is the All-Subtle, the All-Aware.

[104] The lights of clear perception have now come to you from your Lord. Then, he who chooses to see clearly does so to his own good; and he who chooses to remain blind, does so to his own harm. I am not your keeper.<sup>27</sup>

*26. Because of man's imaginativeness and superstitious disposition, he has often associated other invisible beings with God in His governance of the Universe and in the making and marring of man's destiny. He has believed, for example, that there was a deity of rain and another of vegetation; a god of wealth and another of health, and so on. Such absurd beliefs are found among all polytheistic nations of the world.*

*27. Even though this statement is from God, it is expressed through the mouth of the Prophet (peace be on him). This is similar to what we find in Surah al-Fatihah. Though the statement is God's, it is expressed as a statement of His servants (men of faith). The statement "I am not your keeper" signifies that the task of the Prophet is confined to carrying the light of true guidance to others and then it is up to them either to use it to perceive the Reality or to keep their eyes closed. The Prophet (peace be on him) is not required to compel those who deliberately kept their eyes shut to open them, forcing them to see what they did not wish to see.*

[105] Thus do We make Our Signs clear in diverse ways that they might say: "You have learned this (from somebody)"; and "We do this in order that We make the Truth clear to the people of knowledge."

[106] (O Muhammad), follow the revelation which has come to you from your Lord, other than Whom there is no god, and turn away from those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity.

[107] Had Allah so willed they would not have associated others with Him in His Divinity; and We have not appointed you a watcher over them, and you are not their guardian.

[108] Do not revile those other than Allah whom they invoke, because they will revile Allah in ignorance out of spite. For We have indeed made the deeds of every people seem fair to them. Thereafter, they will return to their Lord and He will inform them of what they have done.

[109] They swear by Allah with their most solemn oaths that if a Sign comes to them, they will certainly believe in it. Say: "Signs are in Allah's power alone. What will make you realize that even if those Signs were to come, they would still not believe?"<sup>28</sup>

[110] We are turning their hearts and eyes away from the Truth even as they did not believe in the first instance - and We leave them in their insurgence to stumble blindly.

*28. These words are addressed to the Muslims. Driven by the restless yearning to see people embrace Islam - a yearning which they sometimes expressed in words -they wished some miracle to happen, a miracle that would lead their erring brethren to the true faith.*

[111] Even if We had sent angels down to them and the dead had spoken to them, and even if We had assembled before them all the things, face to face, they would still not believe unless it be Allah's will that they believe. Most of them behave in utter ignorance.

[112] And so it is that against every Prophet We have set up the evil ones from among human beings and *jinn*, some of them inspire others with specious speech only by way of delusion. Had it been your Lord's will, they would not have done it. Leave them alone to fabricate what they will,

[113] so that the hearts of those who do not believe in the Life to Come might incline towards this attractive delusion and that they may be well pleased with it and might acquire the evils that they are bent on acquiring.<sup>29</sup>

[114] Shall I look upon anyone apart from Allah for judgement when it is He Who has revealed to you the Book in detail?<sup>30</sup> And those whom We gave the Book (before you) know that this (Book) has been revealed in Truth by your Lord. Do not, then, be among the doubters.

[115] The Word of your Lord is perfect in truthfulness and justice; no one can change His words. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

*29. What the verses 110-113 convey is that the Law of God does not envisage man receiving guidance as a matter of course in the manner that a tree bears fruit or the human skull grows hair. Rather, God has sent human beings to the world to put them to a test which leaves them free to either choose the right path or the wrong one. If a person chooses the wrong path God does not compel him to righteousness.*

*30. The implied speaker in this sentence is the Prophet (peace be on him) and the words are addressed to the Muslims.*

[116] (O Muhammad), if you obey the majority of those who live on earth, they will lead you away from Allah's Path. They only follow idle fancies, indulging in conjecture.

[117] And your Lord knows well those who stray from His Path, and also those who are rightly-guided.

[118] if you believe in the Signs of Allah, eat (the flesh) of that over which Allah's name has been pronounced.

[119] And how is it that you do not eat of that over which Allah's name has been pronounced even though He has clearly spelled out to you what He has forbidden you unless you are constrained to it. Many indeed say misleading things without knowledge, driven merely by their desires. But your Lord knows well the transgressors.

[120] Abstain from sin, be it open or secret. Indeed those who commit sins shall surely be requited for all they have done.

[121] Do not eat of (the animal) over which the name of Allah has not been pronounced (at the time of its slaughtering), for that is a transgression. And behold, the evil ones do (indeed)

inspire doubts and objections into the hearts of their friends so that they might dispute with you; but if you obey them, you will surely turn into those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity.

[122] He who was dead and whom We raised to life, and We set a light for him to walk among people - is he like the one steeped in darkness out of which he does not come out?<sup>31</sup> Thus have their own doings been made to seem fair to the unbelievers.

[123] We have appointed the leaders of the wicked ones in every land to weave their plots; but in truth they plot only to their own harm, without even realizing it.

*31. The question is: "There are some who have been able to attain genuine consciousness of their true human nature and who, by dint of their knowledge of the Truth, can clearly distinguish the Straight Way from the numerous crooked ways of life. How can we expect such people to live like those who lack true consciousness and who keep on stumbling in the darkness of ignorance and folly?"*

[124] Whenever there comes to them a Sign from Allah, they say: "We will not believe until we are given what was given to the Messengers of Allah." Allah knows best where to place His Message. Soon shall these wicked ones meet with humiliation and severe chastisement from Allah for all their evil plotting.

[125] So whomsoever Allah wills to guide, He opens his breast for Islam; and whomsoever He wills to let go astray He causes his breast to become strait and constricted, as if he were climbing towards the sky. Thus Allah lays the abomination (of aversion from Islam) on those who do not believe<sup>32</sup>

[126] even though this Way is the Straight Way of your Lord, and We have distinguished its Signs to those who heed to the Admonition.

[127] Theirs shall be an abode of peace with their Lord - their Protector -in recompense for all they have done.

[128] And on the Day when He shall muster them all together, He will say (to the *jinn*): "O assembly of *jinn*, you have seduced a good many of mankind." And their companions from among the humans will say: "Our Lord! We did indeed benefit from one another and now have reached the term which You had set for us." Thereupon Allah will say: "The Fire is now your abode, and therein you shall abide." Only those whom Allah wills shall escape the Fire. Surely your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.

*32. It is clear from this verse that God constricts the breast with regard to Islam of those who disbelieve and are disinclined to accept the true faith. God does not desire to direct such people to the Right Way.*

[129] In this manner We shall make the wrong-doers the friends of one another (in the Hereafter) because they earned (evil in the world) together.

[130] (Then Allah will also ask them): "O assembly of jinn and mankind! Did there not come to you Messengers from among yourselves, relating to you My Signs, and warning you of the encounter of this Day (of judgement) of yours?" They will say: "Yes, we bear witness against ourselves." They have been deluded by the life of this world, and they will bear witness against themselves that they had disbelieved.

[131] (They will be made to bear this witness to show that) it is not the Way of your Lord to destroy cities unjustly while their people were unaware of the Truth.

[132] Everyone is assigned a degree according to his deed. Your Lord is not heedless of what people do.

[133] Your Lord is Self-Sufficient, full of compassion. If He wills, He can put you away and cause whomever He wills to succeed you just as He has produced you from the seed of another people.

[134] Surely what you have been promised shall come to pass; and you do not have the power to frustrate (Allah).

[135] Say, (O Muhammad): "O people! Work in your place; and I too am at work. Soon you will know in whose favour the ultimate decision will be. Surely the wrong-doers will not prosper."

[136] They assign to Allah a portion out of the produce and cattle that He has created, saying out of their fancy: "This is for Allah" - so they deem - "and this is for the associates (of Allah) whom we have contrived." Then, the portion assigned to the beings whom they have set up as associates (of Allah) does not reach Allah, but the portion assigned to Allah reaches the beings they set up as associates (of Allah).<sup>33</sup> How evil are their judgements!

[137] And, likewise, the beings supposed to have a share in Allah's Divinity have made the slaying of their offspring seem lawful to many of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity<sup>34</sup> so that they may ruin them and confound them regarding their faith.<sup>35</sup> If Allah had so willed, they would not have done that. Leave them alone to persist in their fabrication.

**33.** *This is a subtle sarcasm at the trickery to which the polytheists resorted when they divided the offerings between God and those whom they had set up as His partners. By one device or another they increased the share of the false deities, which only showed that their hearts lay with those sham partners of God rather than with God Himself.*

*It is instructive to recall those tricks. If, while they were apportioning God's share of cereals and fruits, anything belonging to His share fell out of its place, it used to be added to the portion earmarked for the share of God's partners. On the contrary, if any part of the partners' share fell out or got mixed up with the portion earmarked for God, they meticulously returned it to where it belonged. Likewise, they were in need of consuming out of the apportioned shares they would use the one that belonged to God but refrain from touching the one earmarked for the false deities for fear lest some calamity should befall them.*

34. The word "associate" is used here in a different sense from that implied in verse 136. There it meant the deities whose blessing or intercessions are considered helpful in obtaining good fortune. They therefore gave thanks to those deities even as they gave thanks to God for the benefactions that they enjoyed. However, in the present verse the word "associate" refers to those humans who had made the killing of their own children lawful and the evil ones who had made them regard this callous custom as legitimate, nay even a desirable act.

*It is pertinent to recall that three forms of infanticide were practised among the Arabs, and the Qur'an alludes to each:*

*(1) Girls were put to death either to forestall the intrusion of a son-in-law, to prevent them from falling into the hands of enemies in the event of an outbreak of tribal feuding or to stop them from becoming a source of disgrace for other possible reasons.*

*(2) Both male and female children were killed if parents thought they would not be able to support them and that they would thus become an unendurable burden.*

*(3) Children of both sexes were placed as sacrificial offerings on the altars of the deities in order to gratify them.*

35. In Jahiliyah, the Age of Ignorance, the Arabs both identified themselves with Abraham and Ishmael and were quite convinced that they were indeed the followers of Abraham and Ishmael. They therefore considered their religion to be the one that had been prescribed by God. The fact, however, was that over the course of centuries a number of innovations had overlaid the religion preached by Abraham and Ishmael. These innovations, which had been introduced by their religious leaders, the tribal chiefs and the elders of noted families, had become hallowed with the passage of time, and were considered an integral part of their original religion. This rendered the entire religious tradition of the Arabs unauthentic in the sight of the people of Arabia themselves.

[138] They say: "These animals and these crops are sacrosanct: none may eat of them save those whom we will" -imposing interdictions of their own contriving. And they declare that it is forbidden to burden the backs of certain cattle, and these are the cattle over which they do not pronounce the name of Allah. All these are fabrications against Allah, and He will soon requite them for all that they fabricate.

[139] They say: "What is within the bellies of such and such cattle is exclusively for our males and is forbidden to our females; but if it be born dead, they all may share in it." He will soon requite them for all that they (falsely) attribute to Allah. He is All-Wise, All-Knowing.

[140] Those who slew their children out of folly and ignorance, and forbade the sustenance that Allah has provided them, falsely ascribing that to Allah, are utter losers; they have gone astray, and are certainly not among those guided to the Right Way.

[141] It is He Who has brought into being gardens - the trellised and the untrellised - and the palm trees, and crops, all varying in taste, and the olive and pomegranates, all resembling one another and yet so different. Eat of their fruits when they come to fruition and pay His due on the day of harvesting, and do not exceed the proper limits, for He does not love those who exceed the proper limits,

[142] And of the cattle (He has made) some for burden, and some whose flesh you eat and whose skins and hair you use to spread on the ground.<sup>36</sup> Eat of the sustenance that Allah has provided you and do not follow in the footsteps of Satan, for surely he is your open enemy.

*36. That is, their skins and hair are used for preparing coverings for the floor.*

[143] These are eight couples, two of sheep, two of goats. Now ask them: "Is it either the two males that Allah has forbidden or the two females, or what the wombs of the two females may contain? Tell me about this on the basis of sure knowledge, if you speak the truth."

[144] And likewise, of camels there are two, and of oxen there are two. Ask them: "Is it either the two males that He has forbidden or the two females, or that which the wombs of the two females may contain? Or were you present when Allah enjoined this commandment on you?" Who, then, would be more unjust than he who fabricates a lie against Allah that he may lead people astray without knowledge. Surely Allah never guides such a wrong-doing folk.

[145] Tell them (O Muhammad!): "I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden for anyone who wants to eat unless it be carrion, outpoured blood and the flesh of swine, all of which is unclean; or that which is profane having been slaughtered in a name other than that of Allah.<sup>37</sup> But whosoever is constrained to it by necessity - neither desiring to disobey nor exceeding the limit of necessity - to such your Lord is surely All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate."

[146] And to those who had Judaized We have forbidden all beasts with claws, and the fat of oxen and sheep except the fat which is either on their backs or their entrails, or that which sticks to the bones. Thus did We requite them for their rebellion.<sup>38</sup> Surely We state the Truth.

*37. This does not mean that besides these no other eatables have been forbidden by the Shariah. What it implies is that the forbidden does not consist of the things that people have made unlawful for themselves but the ones that God has made unlawful. The point is further elucidated in nn.2 and 9, surah al-Ma'idah (5:1 and 4).*

*38. See Surah al-Imran (3:93) and Surah al-Nisa (4:160).*

[147] Then if they give you the lie, say: "Your Lord is the Lord of unbounded Mercy; but His punishment shall not be averted from the guilty folk."

[148] Those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity will now surely say: "Had Allah willed, neither we nor our forefathers would have associated others with Allah in His Divinity, nor would we have declared anything (which Allah did not forbid) as forbidden."<sup>39</sup> Even so those who had lived before them gave the lie (to the Truth) until they tasted Our chastisement. Tell them: "Have you any sure knowledge that you can produce before us? In fact you are only following idle fancies and are merely conjecturing."

[149] Then say to them: "(As against your argument) Allah's is the conclusive argument. Surely, had He willed, He would have guided you all to the Truth."<sup>40</sup>

39. *Their apology for their crimes and misdeeds would be that which has always been advanced by criminals and wrong-doers - an apology based on the assumption of absolute determinism. They would plead that when they associated others with God in His Divinity, or unwarrantedly regarded certain things as prohibited, they did so because those acts had been willed for them by God. Had He not so willed, they would not have been able to do what they did. Hence, since they were doing everything according to the will of God, everything was proper. If anyone was to blame, it was God and not they. They were under compulsion to do what they did, for the ability to do otherwise lay beyond their power.*

40. *The argument which they put forward, viz. "If Allah had willed, we would not have associated others with Allah in His Divinity," does not embody the whole truth. The whole truth is that "had He willed, He would have guided you all to the Truth." In other words, they were not prepared to take the Straight Way of their own choice and volition. As it was not God's intent to create them with inherent right guidance like the angels, they would be allowed to persist in the error they had chosen for themselves.*

[150] Say to them: "Call your witnesses to testify that Allah forbade such and such." Then if they do testify, neither testify with them<sup>41</sup> nor follow the desires of those who have given the lie to Our Signs and who do not believe in the Hereafter and set up equals to their Lord.

[151] Say to them, (O Muhammad): "Come, let me recite what your Lord has forbidden:<sup>42</sup>

(i) that you associate nothing with Him;

(ii) and do good to your parents;

(iii) and do not slay your children out of fear of poverty. We provide you and will likewise provide them with sustenance;

(iv) and do not even draw near to things shameful<sup>43</sup> - be they open or secret;

(v) and do not slay the soul sanctified by Allah except in just cause; this He has enjoined upon you so that you may understand;

41. *A person who is conscious that he should testify only to that which he knows, can never testify to this. But if some people are brazen enough to feel no compunction in bearing false witness, then at least the believers should not become their partners in lying.*

42. *The restrictions which have shackled your lives are not those imposed by God. The ones prescribed by God are as follows.*

43. *The word fawahish applies to all those acts whose abominable character is self-evident. In the Qur'an all extra-marital sexual relationships, sodomy, nudity, false accusations of unchastity, and taking as one's wife a woman who had been married to one's father, are specifically reckoned as "shameful deeds". According to Hadith, theft, taking intoxicating drinks and begging have been characterized as fawahish, as several other brazenly indecent acts. Man is required to abstain from them both openly and in secret.*

[152] (vi) and do not even draw near to the property of the orphan in his minority except in the best manner;

(vii) and give full measures and weight with justice, We do not burden anyone beyond his capacity;

(viii) when you speak, be just, even though it concerns a near of kin;

(ix) and fulfil the covenant of Allah." That is what He has enjoined upon you so that you may take heed.

[153] (X) This is My Way -that which is Straight; follow it, then, and do not follow other paths lest they scatter you from His Path. This is what He has enjoined upon you, so that you may beware."

[154] Then We gave to Moses the Book, completing the benediction of Allah upon the one who acts righteously, spelling out everything clearly, a guidance and a mercy, that they may believe in their meeting with their Lord.<sup>45</sup>

*44. "Covenant of Allah" signifies commitment to God, as well as commitments between one human being and another which automatically take place the moment a person is born onto God's earth and in human society.*

*45. To believe in "meeting with the Lord" signifies the conviction that one is answerable to God, which leads one to adopt a responsible behaviour in life.*

[155] And likewise We revealed this Book - a blessed one. Follow it, then, and become God-fearing; you may be shown Mercy.

[156] (You may no longer) say now that the Book was revealed only to two groups of people before us and that we had indeed been unaware of what they read.

[157] Nor may you claim that: "Had the Book been revealed to us, we would have been better guided than they." Surely clear evidence has come to you from your Lord, which is both a guidance and a mercy. Who, then, is more unjust than he who gave the lie to the Signs of Allah and turned away from them? And We shall soon requite those who turn away from Our Signs with a severe chastisement for having turned away.

[158] What, do they wait either for the angels to appear before them or for your Lord to come unto them or for some Clear Signs<sup>46</sup> of your Lord to appear before them? When some Clear Signs of your Lord will appear, believing will be of no avail to anyone who did not believe before, or who earned no good deeds through his faith. Say: "Wait on; we too are waiting."

[159] Surely you have nothing to do with those who have made divisions in their religion and have split into factions. Their matter is with Allah and He will indeed tell them (in time) what they have been doing.

[160] Whoever will come to Allah with a good deed shall have ten times as much, and whoever will come to Allah with an evil deed, shall be requited with no more than the like of it. They shall not be wronged.

*46. That is, either tokens of the approach of the Day of Reckoning or God's scourge or any other Sign that will uncover the Truth, after which there will be no reason left for testing people.*

[161] Say: "As for me, my Lord has guided me on to a Straight Way, a right religion, the way of Abraham who adopted it in exclusive devotion to Allah, and he was not of those who associated others with Allah in His Divinity."

[162] Say: "Surely my Prayer, all my acts of worship,<sup>47</sup> and my living and my dying are only for Allah, the Lord of the whole Universe.

[163] He has no associate. Thus have I been hidden, and I am the foremost of those who submit themselves (to Allah)."

[164] Say: "Shall I seek someone other than Allah as Lord when He is the Lord of everything?" Everyone will bear the consequence of what he does, and no one shall bear the burden of another.<sup>48</sup> Thereafter your return will be to your Lord, whereupon He will let you know what you disagreed about.

[165] For He it is Who has appointed you vicegerent over the earth, and has exalted some of you over others in rank that He may try you in what He has bestowed upon you. Indeed your Lord is swift in retribution, and He is certainly All- Forgiving, All-Compassionate.

*47. The Arabic word nusuk used here signifies ritual sacrifice as well as other forms of devotion and worship.*

*48. Every person is responsible for whatever he does; and no one is responsible for the deeds of others.*