

مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ قَالَ: وَيْحَكَ لَا تَفْتَحْهُ فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ
فَتَحْتَهُ تَلْجَهُ فَالصِّرَاطُ: الْإِسْلَامُ وَالسُّورَانِ: حُدُودُ
اللَّهِ وَالْأَبْوَابُ الْمَفْتَحَةُ مَحَارِمُ اللَّهِ وَذَلِكَ الدَّاعِي
عَلَى رَأْسِ الصِّرَاطِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَالدَّاعِي مِنْ
فَوْقِ الصِّرَاطِ وَاعِظُ اللَّهِ فِي قَلْبِ كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ»

(Allah has set an example: a Srat (straight path) that is surrounded by two walls on both sides, with several open doors within the walls covered with curtains. There is a caller on the gate of the Srat who heralds, 'O people! Stay on the path and do not deviate from it.' Meanwhile, a caller from above the path is also warning any person who wants to open any of these doors, 'Woe unto you! Do not open it, for if you open it you will pass through.' The straight path is Islam, the two walls are Allah's set limits, while the doors resemble what Allah has prohibited. The caller on the gate of the Srat is the Book of Allah, while the caller above the Srat is Allah's admonishment in the heart of every Muslim.)

The Faithful ask for and abide by Guidance

If someone asks, "Why does the believer ask Allah for guidance during every prayer and at other times, while he is already properly guided Has he not already acquired guidance"

The answer to these questions is that if it were not a fact that the believer needs to keep asking for guidance day and night, Allah would not have directed him to invoke Him to acquire the guidance. The servant needs Allah the Exalted every hour of his life to help him remain firm on the path of guidance and to make him even more firm and persistent on it. The servant does not have the power to benefit or harm himself, except by Allah's permission. Therefore, Allah directed the servant to invoke Him constantly, so that He provides him with His aid and with firmness and success. Indeed, the happy person is he whom Allah guides to ask of Him. This is especially the case if a person urgently needs Allah's help day or night. Allah said,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ءَامِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي
أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ)

(O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and His Messenger (Muhammad), and the Book (the Qur'an) which He has sent down to His Messenger, and the Scripture which He sent down to those before (him)) (4:16).

Therefore, in this Ayah Allah commanded the believers to believe, and this command is not redundant since what is sought here is firmness and continuity of performing the deeds that help one remain on the path of faith. Also, Allah commanded His believing servants to proclaim,

(رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ)

(Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly, You are the Bestower.) (3:8). Hence,

(اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ)

(Guide us to the straight way) means, "Make us firm on the path of guidance and do not allow us to deviate from it."

(صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ)

(7. The way of those upon whom You have bestowed Your grace, not (that) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray).

We mentioned the Hadith in which the servant proclaims,

(اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ)

(Guide us to the straight way) and Allah says, "This is for My servant, and My servant shall acquire what he asks for." Allah's statement.

(صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(The way of those upon whom You have bestowed Your grace) defines the path. `Those upon whom Allah has bestowed His grace' are those mentioned in Surat An-Nisa' (chapter 4), when Allah said,

(وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا - ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا)

(And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad), then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace, the Prophets, the Sddiqin (the truly faithful), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are! Such is the bounty from Allah, and Allah is sufficient to know) (4:69-70).

Allah's statement ,

(غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ)

(Not (the way) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray) meaning guide us to the straight path, the path of those upon whom you have bestowed Your grace, that is, the people of guidance, sincerity and obedience to Allah and His Messengers. They are the people who adhere to Allah's commandments and refrain from committing what He has prohibited. But, help us to avoid the path of those whom Allah is angry with, whose intentions are corrupt, who know the truth, yet deviate from it. Also, help us avoid the path of those who were led astray, who lost the true knowledge and, as a result, are wandering in misguidance, unable to find the correct path. Allah asserted that the two paths He described here are both misguided when He repeated the negation `not'. These two paths are the paths of the Christians and Jews, a fact that the believer should beware of so that he avoids them. The path of the believers is knowledge of the truth and abiding by it. In comparison, the Jews abandoned practicing the religion, while the Christians lost the true knowledge. This is why `anger' descended upon the Jews, while being described as `led astray' is more appropriate of the Christians. Those who know, but avoid implementing the truth, deserve the anger, unlike those who are ignorant. The Christians want to seek the true knowledge, but are unable to find it because they did not seek it from its proper resources.

This is why they were led astray. We should also mention that both the Christians and the Jews have earned the anger and are led astray, but the anger is one of the attributes more particular of the Jews. Allah said about the Jews,

(مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ)

(Those (Jews) who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath) (5:60).

The attribute that the Christians deserve most is that of being led astray, just as Allah said about them,

قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ

(Who went astray before and who misled many, and strayed (themselves) from the right path) (5:77).

There are several Hadiths and reports from the Salaf on this subject. Imam Ahmad recorded that `Adi bin Hatim said, "The horsemen of the Messenger of Allah seized my paternal aunt and some other people. When they brought them to the Messenger of Allah, they were made to stand in line before him. My aunt said, `O Messenger of Allah! The supporter is far away, the offspring have stopped coming and I am an old woman, unable to serve. Grant me your favor, may Allah grant you His favor.' He said, `Who is your supporter' She said, `Adi bin Hatim.' He said, `The one who ran away from Allah and His Messenger' She said, `So, the Prophet freed me.' When the Prophet came back, there was a man next to him, I think that he was `Ali, who said to her, `Ask him for a means of transportation.' She asked the Prophet, and he ordered that she be given an animal.

"`Adi then said, "Later on, she came to me and said, `He (Muhammad) has done a favor that your father (who was a generous man) would never have done. So and-so person came to him and he granted him his favor, and so-and-so came to him and he granted him his favor.' So I went to the Prophet and found that some women and children were gathering with him, so close that I knew that he was not a king like Kisra (King of Persia) or Caesar. He said, `O `Adi! What made you run away, so that La ilaha illallah is not proclaimed Is there a deity worthy of worship except Allah What made you run away, so that Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greater) is not proclaimed Is there anything Greater than Allah' I proclaimed my Islam and I saw his face radiate with pleasure and he said:

«إِنَّ الْمَعْضُوبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْيَهُودُ وَ إِنَّ الضَّالِّينَ النَّصَارَى»

(Those who have earned the anger are the Jews and those who are led astray are the Christians.)"

This Hadith was also collected by At-Tirmidhi who said that it is Hasan Gharib.

Also, when Zayd bin `Amr bin Nufayl went with some of his friends - before Islam - to Ash-Sham seeking the true religion, the Jews said to him, "You will not become a Jew unless you carry a share of the anger of Allah that we have earned." He said, "I am seeking to escape Allah's anger." Also, the Christians said to him, "If you become one of us you will carry a share in Allah's discontent." He said, "I cannot bear it." So he remained in his pure nature and avoided worshipping the idols and the polytheistic practices. He became neither a Jew, nor Christian. As for his companions, they became Christians because they found it more pure than Judaism. Waraqah bin Nawfal was among these people until Allah guided him by the hand of His Prophet, when he was sent as Prophet, and Waraqah believed in the revelation that was sent to the Prophet may Allah be pleased with him.

The Summary of Al-Fatihah

The honorable Surah Al-Fatihah contains seven Ayat including the praise and thanks of Allah, glorifying Him and praising Him by mentioning His most Beautiful Names and most high Attributes. It also mentions the Hereafter, which is the Day of Resurrection, and directs Allah's servants to ask of Him, invoking Him and declaring that all power and strength comes from Him. It also calls to the sincerity of the worship of Allah alone, singling Him out in His divinity, believing in His perfection, being free from the need of any partners, having no rivals nor equals. Al-Fatihah directs the believers to invoke Allah to guide them to the straight path, which is the true religion, and to help them remain on that path in this life, and to pass over the actual Sirat (bridge over hell that everyone must pass over) on the Day of Judgment. On that Day, the believers will be directed to the gardens of comfort in the company of the Prophets, the truthful ones, the martyrs and the righteous. Al-Fatihah also encourages performing good deeds, so that the believers will be in the company of the good-doers on the Day of Resurrection. The Surah also warns against following the paths of misguidance, so that one does not end up being gathered with those who indulge in sin, on the Day of Resurrection, including those who have earned the anger and those who were led astray.

The Bounties are because of Allah, not the Deviations

Allah said,

(صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(The way of those upon whom you have bestowed Your grace), when He mentioned His favor. On mentioning anger, Allah said,

(غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(Not (that) of those who earned Your anger), without mentioning the subject, although it is He Who has sent down the anger on them, just as Allah stated in another Ayah,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(Have you (O Muhammad) not seen those (hypocrites) who take as friends a people upon whom is the wrath of Allah (i.e. Jews) (58:14).

Also, Allah relates the misguidance of those who indulged in it, although they were justly misguided according to Allah's appointed destiny. For instance, Allah said,

(مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ
وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا)

(He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly-guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the right path)) (18:17)

and,

(مَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَيَدْرُهُمْ فِي
طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ)

(Whomsoever Allah sends astray, none can guide him; and He lets them wander blindly in their transgression) (7:186).

These and several other Ayat testify to the fact that Allah alone is the One Who guides and misguides, contrary to the belief of the Qadariyyah sect, who claimed that the servants choose and create their own destiny. They rely on some unclear Ayat avoiding what is clear and contradicts their desires. Theirs, is the method of the people who follow their lust, desire and wickedness. An authentic Hadith narrated,

«إِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
الَّذِينَ سَمَّى اللَّهُ فَاَحْذَرُواهُمْ»

(When you see those who follow what is not so clear in it (the Qur'an), then they are those whom Allah has mentioned (refer to 3:7). Hence, avoid them.)

The Prophet was referring to Allah's statement,

(فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ
مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ)

(So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking Al-Fitnah (polytheism and trials), and seeking for its hidden meanings)(3:7).

Verily, no innovator in the religion could ever rely on any authentic evidence in the Qur'an that testifies to his innovation. The Qur'an came to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and

guidance and misguidance. The Qur'an does not contain any discrepancies or contradictions, because it is a revelation from the Most Wise, Worthy of all praise.

Saying Amin

It is recommended to say Amin after finishing the recitation of Al-Fatihah. Amin means, "O Allah! Accept our invocation." The evidence that saying Amin is recommended is contained in what Imams Ahmad, Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi recorded, that Wa'il bin Hujr said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah recite,

(غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ)

(Not (that) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray), and he said `Amin' extending it with his voice."

Abu Dawud's narration added, "Raising his voice with it." At-Tirmidhi then commented that this Hadith is Hasan and was also narrated from `Ali and Ibn Mas`ud. Also, Abu Hurayrah narrated that whenever the Messenger of Allah would recite,

(غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ)

(Not (the way) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray), He would say Amin until those who were behind him in the first line could hear him.

Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith with the addition, "Then the Masjid would shake because of (those behind the Prophet) reciting Amin." Also, Ad-Daraqutni recorded this Hadith and commented that it is Hasan.

Further, Bilal narrated that he said, "O Messenger of Allah! Do not finish saying Amin before I can join you." This was recorded by Abu Dawud.

In addition, Abu Nasr Al-Qushayri narrated that Al-Hasan and Ja`far As-Sadiq stressed the `m' in Amin.

Saying Amin is recommended for those who are not praying (when reciting Al-Fatihah) and is strongly recommended for those who are praying, whether alone or behind the Imam. The Two Sahihs recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا أَمَّنَ الْإِمَامُ فَأَمِّنُوا، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ وَافَقَ تَأْمِينَهُ
تَأْمِينِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ»

(When the Imam says, 'Amin', then say, 'Amin', because whoever says, 'Amin' with the angels, his previous sins will be forgiven.)

Muslim recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا قَالَ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي الصَّلَاةِ: آمِينَ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ فِي السَّمَاءِ: آمِينَ، فَوَافَقَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ»

(When any of you says in the prayer, 'Amin' and the angels in heaven say, 'Amin', in unison, his previous sins will be forgiven.)

It was said that the Hadith talks about both the angels and the Muslims saying Amin at the same time. The Hadith also refers to when the Amins said by the angels and the Muslims are equally sincere (thus bringing about forgiveness).

Further, it is recorded in Sahih Muslim that Abu Musa related to the Prophet that he said,

«إِذَا قَالَ يَعْنِي الْإِمَامَ : وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ، فَقُولُوا: آمِينَ، يُجِيبُكُمُ اللَّهُ»

(When the Imam says, 'Walad-dallin', say, 'Amin' and Allah will answer your invocation.)

In addition, At-Tirmidhi said that 'Amin' means, "Do not disappoint our hope", while the majority of scholars said that it means. "Answer our invocation."

Also, in his Musnad, Imam Ahmad recorded that 'A'ishah said that when the Jews were mentioned to him, the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَحْسُدُونَا عَلَى شَيْءٍ كَمَا يَحْسُدُونَا عَلَى الْجُمُعَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا، وَعَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا وَعَلَى قَوْلِنَا خَلْفَ الْإِمَامِ: آمِينَ»

(They will not envy us for anything more than they envy us for Friday which we have been guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for the Qiblah which we were guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for our saying 'Amin' behind the Imam.)

Also, Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith with the wording,

«مَا حَسَدَتْكُمْ الْيَهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مَّا حَسَدَتْكُمْ عَلَى
السَّلَامِ وَالْتَّامِينَ»

(The Jews have never envied you more than for your saying the Salam (Islamic greeting) and for saying Amin.) rgiveness). veneooA ? Further, it is recorded in Sahih Muslim that Abu Musa related to the Prophet that he said,

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عَلَى الْجُمُعَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا،
وَعَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا
وَعَلَى قَوْلِنَا خَلْفَ الْإِمَامِ: آمِينَ»

(They will not envy us for anything more than they envy us for Friday which we have been guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for the Qiblah which we were guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for our saying `Amin' behind the Imam.)

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(The Jews have never envied you more than for your saying the Salam (Islamic greeting) and for saying Amin.)

The Bounties are because of Allah, not the Deviations

Allah said,

(صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(The way of those upon whom you have bestowed Your grace), when He mentioned His favor. On mentioning anger, Allah said,

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(Have you (O Muhammad) not seen those (hypocrites) who take as friends a people upon whom is the wrath of Allah (i.e. Jews)) (58:14).

Also, Allah relates the misguidance of those who indulged in it, although they were justly misguided according to Allah's appointed destiny. For instance, Allah said,

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وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا)

(He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly-guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the right path)) (18:17)

and,

(مَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِي
طُعْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ)

(Whomsoever Allah sends astray, none can guide him; and He lets them wander blindly in their transgression) (7:186).

These and several other Ayat testify to the fact that Allah alone is the One Who guides and misguides, contrary to the belief of the Qadariyyah sect, who claimed that the servants choose and create their own destiny. They rely on some unclear Ayat avoiding what is clear and contradicts their desires. Theirs, is the method of the people who follow their lust, desire and wickedness. An authentic Hadith narrated,

«إِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
الَّذِينَ سَمَّى اللَّهُ فَاحْذَرُواهُمْ»

(When you see those who follow what is not so clear in it (the Qur'an), then they are those whom Allah has mentioned (refer to 3:7). Hence, avoid them.)

The Prophet was referring to Allah's statement,

(فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ
مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ)

(So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking Al-Fitnah (polytheism and trials), and seeking for its hidden meanings)(3:7).

Verily, no innovator in the religion could ever rely on any authentic evidence in the Qur'an that testifies to his innovation. The Qur'an came to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and guidance and misguidance. The Qur'an does not contain any discrepancies or contradictions, because it is a revelation from the Most Wise, Worthy of all praise.

Saying Amin

It is recommended to say Amin after finishing the recitation of Al-Fatihah. Amin means, "O Allah! Accept our invocation." The evidence that saying Amin is recommended is contained in what Imams Ahmad, Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi recorded, that Wa'il bin Hujr said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah recite,

(غَيْرِ الْمَعْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ)

(Not (that) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray), and he said `Amin' extending it with his voice."

Abu Dawud's narration added, "Raising his voice with it." At-Tirmidhi then commented that this Hadith is Hasan and was also narrated from `Ali and Ibn Mas'ud. Also, Abu Hurayrah narrated that whenever the Messenger of Allah would recite,

(غَيْرِ الْمَعْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ)

(Not (the way) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray), He would say Amin until those who were behind him in the first line could hear him.

Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith with the addition, "Then the Masjid would shake because of (those behind the Prophet) reciting Amin." Also, Ad-Daraqutni recorded this Hadith and commented that it is Hasan.

Further, Bilal narrated that he said, "O Messenger of Allah! Do not finish saying Amin before I can join you." This was recorded by Abu Dawud.

In addition, Abu Nasr Al-Qushayri narrated that Al-Hasan and Ja`far As-Sadiq stressed the `m' in Amin.

Saying Amin is recommended for those who are not praying (when reciting Al-Fatihah) and is strongly recommended for those who are praying, whether alone or behind the Imam. The Two Sahih recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا أَمَّنَ الْإِمَامُ فَأَمِّنُوا، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ وَافَقَ تَأْمِينَهُ
تَأْمِينِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ»

(When the Imam says, 'Amin', then say, 'Amin', because whoever says, 'Amin' with the angels, his previous sins will be forgiven.)

Muslim recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا قَالَ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي الصَّلَاةِ: آمِينَ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ فِي
السَّمَاءِ: آمِينَ، فَوَافَقَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى غُفِرَ لَهُ
مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ»

(When any of you says in the prayer, 'Amin` and the angels in heaven say, `Amin', in unison, his previous sins will be forgiven.)

It was said that the Hadith talks about both the angels and the Muslims saying Amin at the same time. The Hadith also refers to when the Amins said by the angels and the Muslims are equally sincere (thus bringing about forgiveness).

Further, it is recorded in Sahih Muslim that Abu Musa related to the Prophet that he said,

«إِذَا قَالَ يَعْنِي الْإِمَامَ : وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ، فَقُولُوا:
أَمِينَ، يُجِيبُكُمُ اللَّهُ»

(When the Imam says, `Walad-dallin', say, `Amin' and Allah will answer your invocation.)

In addition, At-Tirmidhi said that `Amin' means, "Do not disappoint our hope", while the majority of scholars said that it means. "Answer our invocation."

Also, in his Musnad, Imam Ahmad recorded that `Aishah said that when the Jews were mentioned to him, the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَحْسُدُونَا عَلَى شَيْءٍ كَمَا يَحْسُدُونَا
عَلَى الْجُمُعَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا،
وَعَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا
وَعَلَى قَوْلِنَا خَلْفَ الْإِمَامِ: أَمِينَ»

(They will not envy us for anything more than they envy us for Friday which we have been guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for the Qiblah which we were guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for our saying `Amin' behind the Imam.)

Also, Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith with the wording,

«مَا حَسَدَتْكُمْ الْيَهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مَّا حَسَدَتْكُمْ عَلَى
السَّلَامِ وَالْأَمِينِ»

(The Jews have never envied you more than for your saying the Salam (Islamic greeting) and for saying Amin.) rgiveness). veneooA ? Further, it is recorded in Sahih Muslim that Abu Musa related to the Prophet that he said,

«إِذَا قَالَ يَعْنِي الْإِمَامَ : وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ، فَقُولُوا:
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عَلَى الْجُمُعَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا،
وَعَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ الَّتِي هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَا وَضَلُّوا عَنْهَا
وَعَلَى قَوْلِنَا خَلْفَ الْإِمَامِ: آمِينَ»

(They will not envy us for anything more than they envy us for Friday which we have been guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for the Qiblah which we were guided to, while they were led astray from it, and for our saying `Amin' behind the Imam.)

Also, Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith with the wording,

«مَا حَسَدَتْكُمْ الْيَهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مَّا حَسَدَتْكُمْ عَلَى
السَّلَامِ وَالتَّأْمِينِ»

(The Jews have never envied you more than for your saying the Salam (Islamic greeting) and for saying Amin.)

Surat Al-Baqarah

Which was revealed in Al-Madinah

The Virtues of Surat Al-Baqarah

In Musnad Ahmad, Sahih Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i, it is recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«لَا تَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قُبُورًا فَإِنَّ الْبَيْتَ الَّذِي تُقْرَأُ فِيهِ سُورَةُ الْبَقَرَةِ لَا يَدْخُلُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ»

(Do not turn your houses into graves. Verily, Shaytan does not enter the house where Surat Al-Baqarah is recited.) At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih.

Also, `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "Shaytan flees from the house where Surat Al-Baqarah is heard." This Hadith was collected by An-Nasa'i in Al-Yawm wal-Laylah, and Al-Hakim recorded it in his Mustadrak, and then said that its chain of narration is authentic, although the Two Sahihs did not collect it. In his Musnad, Ad-Darimi recorded that Ibn Mas`ud said, "Shaytan departs the house where Surat Al-Baqarah is being recited, and as he leaves, he passes gas." Ad-Darimi also recorded that Ash-Sha`bi said that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "Whoever recites ten Ayat from Surat Al-Baqarah in a night, then Shaytan will not enter his house that night. (These ten Ayat are) four from the beginning, Ayat Al-Kursi (255), the following two Ayat (256-257) and the last three Ayat." In another narration, Ibn Mas`ud said, "Then Shaytan will not come near him or his family, nor will he be touched by anything that he dislikes. Also, if these Ayat were to be recited over a senile person, they would wake him up."

Further, Sahl bin Sa`d said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَنَامًا، وَإِنَّ سَنَامَ الْقُرْآنِ الْبَقْرَةَ،
وَإِنَّ مَنْ قَرَأَهَا فِي بَيْتِهِ لَيْلَةً لَمْ يَدْخُلْهُ الشَّيْطَانُ
ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ، وَمَنْ قَرَأَهَا فِي بَيْتِهِ نَهَارًا لَمْ يَدْخُلْهُ
الشَّيْطَانُ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ»

(Everything has a hump (or, high peek), and Al-Baqarah is the high peek of the Qur'an. Whoever recites Al-Baqarah at night in his house, then Shaytan will not enter that house for three nights. Whoever recites it during a day in his house, then Shaytan will not enter that house for three days.) This Hadith was collected by Abu Al-Qasim At-Tabarani, Abu Hatim Ibn Hibban in his Sahih and Ibn Marduyah.

At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "The Messenger of Allah sent an expedition force comprising of many men and asked each about what they memorized of the Qur'an. The Prophet came to one of the youngest men among them and asked him, 'What have you memorized (of the Qur'an) young man' He said, 'I memorized such and such Surahs and also Al-Baqarah.' The Prophet said, 'You memorized Surat Al-Baqarah' He said, 'Yes.' The Prophet said, 'Then you are their commander.' One of the noted men (or chiefs) commented, 'By Allah! I did not learn Surat Al-Baqarah, for fear that I would not be able to implement it. The Messenger of Allah said,

«تَعَلَّمُوا الْقُرْآنَ وَاقْرَأُوهُ، فَإِنَّ مَثَلَ الْقُرْآنِ لِمَنْ تَعَلَّمَهُ فَقَرَأَ وَقَامَ بِهِ كَمَثَلِ جِرَابٍ مَحْشُوٍّ مِسْكَاً يَفُوحُ رِيحُهُ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ، وَمَثَلُ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَهُ فَيَرْقُدُ وَهُوَ فِي جَوْفِهِ كَمَثَلِ جِرَابٍ أُوكِيَ عَلَى مِسْكِ»

(Learn Al-Qur'an and recite it, for the example of whoever learns the Qur'an, recites it and adheres to it, is the example of a bag that is full of musk whose scent fills the air. The example of whoever learns the Qur'an and then sleeps (i.e. lazy) while the Qur'an is in his memory, is the example of a bag that has musk, but is closed tight.)

This is the wording collected by At-Tirmidhi, who said that this Hadith is Hasan. In another narration, At-Tirmidhi recorded this same Hadith in a Mursal manner, so Allah knows best.

Also, Al-Bukhari recorded that Usayd bin Hudayr said that he was once reciting Surat Al-Baqarah while his horse was tied next to him. The horse started to make some noise. When Usayd stopped reciting, the horse stopped moving about. When he resumed reading, the horse started moving about again. When he stopped reciting, the horse stopped moving, and when he resumed reading, the horse started to move again. Meanwhile, his son Yahya was close to the horse, and he feared that the horse might step on him. When he moved his son back, he looked up to the sky and saw a cloud radiating with light that looked like lamps. In the morning, he went to the Prophet and told him what had happened and then said, "O Messenger of Allah! My son Yahya was close to the horse and I feared that she might step on him. When I attended to him and raised my head to the sky, I saw a cloud with lights like lamps. So I went, but I couldn't see it." The Prophet said, "Do you know what that was?" He said, "No." The Prophet said,

«تِلْكَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ دَنَتْ لِمِصْوَتِكَ وَلَوْ قَرَأْتَ لِأَصْبَحْتَ يَنْظُرُ النَّاسُ إِلَيْهَا، لَا تَتَوَارَى مِنْهُمْ»

(They were the angels, they came close hearing your voice (reciting Surat Al-Baqarah), and if you had kept reading, the people would have been able to see the angels when the morning came, and the angels would not be hidden from their eyes.)

This is the narration reported by Imam Abu Ubayd Al-Qasim bin Salam in his book Fada'il Al-Qur'an.

Virtues of Surat Al-Baqarah and Surat Al `Imran

Imam Ahmad said that Abu Nu`aym narrated to them that Bishr bin Muhajir said that `Abdullah bin Buraydah narrated to him from his father, "I was sitting with the Prophet and I heard him say,

«تَعَلَّمُوا سُورَةَ الْبَقَرَةِ فَإِنَّ أَخْذَهَا بَرَكَهٌ، وَتَرْكُهَا حَسْرَةٌ، وَلَا تَسْتَطِيعُهَا الْبَطَلَةُ»

(Learn Surat Al-Baqarah, because in learning it there is blessing, in ignoring it there is sorrow, and the sorceresses cannot memorize it.)

He kept silent for a while and then said,

«تَعَلَّمُوا سُورَةَ الْبَقَرَةِ وَالْ عِمْرَانَ فَإِنَّهُمَا الزَّهْرَاوَانِ، يُظَلَّانِ صَاحِبَهُمَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كَأَنَّهُمَا غَمَامَتَانِ أَوْ غَيَابَتَانِ أَوْ فِرْقَانِ مِنْ طَيْرِ صَوَافٍ، وَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ يَلْقَى صَاحِبَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حِينَ يَنْشَقُّ عَنْهُ قَبْرُهُ كَالرَّجُلِ الشَّاحِبِ فَيَقُولُ لَهُ: هَلْ تَعْرِفُنِي؟ فَيَقُولُ: مَا أَعْرَفُكَ. فَيَقُولُ: أَنَا صَاحِبُكَ الْقُرْآنُ الَّذِي أَظْمَأْتُكَ فِي الْهَوَاجِرِ وَأَسْهَرْتُ لَيْلِكَ وَإِنَّ كُلَّ تَاجِرٍ مِنْ وَرَاءِ تِجَارَتِهِ، وَإِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ كُلِّ تِجَارَةٍ فَيُعْطِي الْمَلِكَ بِيَمِينِهِ وَالْخُلْدَ بِشِمَالِهِ وَيُوضَعُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ تَاجُ الْوَقَارِ، وَيُكْسَى وَالِدَاهُ حُلَّتَانِ لَا يَقُومُ لَهُمَا أَهْلُ الدُّنْيَا، فَيَقُولَانِ: بِمَا كُسِينَا هَذَا؟ فَيُقَالُ: بِأَخْذِ وَلَدِكُمَا الْقُرْآنَ ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: اقْرَأْ وَاصْنَعْ فِي دَرَجِ

الْجَنَّةُ وَعُرْفِيهَا، فَهُوَ فِي صُعُودِ مَا دَامَ يَقْرَأُ هَذَا كَانَ أَوْ تَرْتِيلًا»

(Learn Surat Al-Baqarah and Al `Imran because they are two lights and they shade their people on the Day of Resurrection, just as two clouds, two spaces of shade or two lines of (flying) birds. The Qur'an will meet its companion in the shape of a pale-faced man on the Day of Resurrection when his grave is opened. The Qur'an will ask him, 'Do you know me' The man will say, 'I do not know you.' The Qur'an will say, 'I am your companion, the Qur'an, which has brought you thirst during the heat and made you stay up during the night. Every merchant has his certain trade. But, this Day, you are behind all types of trade.' Kingship will then be given to him in his right hand, eternal life in his left hand and the crown of grace will be placed on his head. His parents will also be granted two garments that the people of this life could never afford. They will say, 'Why were we granted these garments' It will be said, 'Because your son was carrying the Qur'an.' It will be said (to the reader of the Qur'an), 'Read and ascend through the levels of Paradise.' He will go on ascending as long as he recites, whether reciting slowly or quickly.)"

Ibn Majah also recorded part of this Hadith from Bishr bin Al-Muhajir, and this chain of narrators is Hasan, according to the criteria of Imam Muslim.

A part of this Hadith is also supported by other Hadiths. For instance, Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Umamah Al-Bahili said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«اقْرَأُوا الْقُرْآنَ فَإِنَّهُ شَافِعٌ لِأَهْلِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
اقْرَأُوا الزَّهْرَاوَيْنِ، الْبَقْرَةَ وَالْإِمْرَانَ، فَإِنَّهُمَا
يَأْتِيَانِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كَأَنَّهُمَا غَمَامَتَانِ، أَوْ كَأَنَّهُمَا
غَيَائَتَانِ أَوْ كَأَنَّهُمَا فِرْقَانِ مِنْ طَيْرٍ صَوَافٍ،
يُحَاجَّانِ عَنْ أَهْلِهِمَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(Read the Qur'an, because it will intercede on behalf of its people on the Day of Resurrection. Read the two lights, Al-Baqarah and Al `Imran, because they will come in the shape of two clouds, two shades or two lines of birds on the Day of Resurrection and will argue on behalf of their people on that Day.)

The Prophet then said,

« اِقْرَأُوا الْبَقْرَةَ فَإِنَّ أَخْذَهَا بَرَكَةٌ وَتَرْكُهَا حَسْرَةٌ
وَلَا تَسْتَطِيعُهَا الْبَطَلَةُ »

(Read Al-Baqarah, because in having it there is blessing, and in ignoring there is a sorrow and the sorceresses cannot memorize it.)

Also, Imam Muslim narrated this Hadith in the Book of Prayer

Imam Ahmad narrated that An-Nawwas bin Sam`an said that the Prophet said,

«يُؤْتَى بِالْقُرْآنِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَهْلِهِ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ بِهِ تَقْدَمُهُمْ سُورَةُ الْبَقْرَةِ وَالْأُ عِمْرَانَ»

(On the Day of Resurrection the Qur'an and its people who used to implement it will be brought forth, preceded by Surat Al-Baqarah and Al`Imran.)

An-Nawwas said, "The Prophet set three examples for these two Surahs and I did not forget these examples ever since. He said,

«كَأَنَّهُمَا غَمَامَتَانِ، أَوْ ظِلَّتَانِ سَوْدَاوَانِ بَيْنَهُمَا
شَرْقٌ، أَوْ كَأَنَّهُمَا فِرْقَانِ مِنْ طَيْرٍ صَوَافٍ،
يُحَاجَّانِ عَنْ صَاحِبَيْهِمَا»

(They will come like two clouds, two dark shades or two lines of birds arguing on behalf of their people.)

It was also recorded in Sahih Muslim and At-Tirmidhi narrated this Hadith, which he rendered Hasan Gharib.

Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in Al-Madinah

There is no disagreement over the view that Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in its entirety in Al-Madinah. Moreover, Al-Baqarah was one of the first Surahs to be revealed in Al-Madinah, while, Allah's statement,

(وَأَتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ)

(And be afraid of the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah.) (2:281) was the last Ayah to be revealed from the Qur'an. Also, the Ayat about usury were among the last Ayat to be revealed. Khalid bin Ma`dan used to call Al-Baqarah the Fustat (tent) of the Qur'an. Some of the scholars said that it contains a thousand news incidents, a thousand commands and a thousand prohibitions. Those who count said that the number of Al-Baqarah's Ayat is two hundred and eighty-seven, and its words are six thousand two hundred and twenty-one words. Further, its letters are twenty-five thousand five hundred. Allah knows best.

Ibn Jurayj narrated that `Ata' said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in Al-Madinah." Also, Khasif said from Mujahid that `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr said; "Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed in Al-Madinah." Several Imams and scholars of Tafsir issued similar statements, and there is no difference of opinion over this as we have stated.

The Two Sahihs recorded that Ibn Mas`ud kept the Ka`bah on his left side and Mina on his right side and threw seven pebbles (at the Jamrah) and said, "The one to whom Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed (i.e. the Prophet) performed Rami (the Hajj rite of throwing pebbles) similarly." The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith.

Further, Ibn Marduwyah reported a Hadith of Shu`bah from `Aqil bin Talhah from `Utbah bin Marthad; "The Prophet saw that his Companions were not in the first lines and he said,

«يَا أَصْحَابَ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ»

(O Companions of Surat Al-Baqarah.) I think that this incident occurred during the battle of Hunayn when the Companions retreated. Then, the Prophet commanded Al-`Abbas (his uncle) to yell out,

«يَا أَصْحَابَ الشَّجَرَةِ»

(O Companions of the tree!) meaning the Companions who participated in the pledge of Ar-Ridwan (under the tree). In another narration, Al-`Abbas cried, "O Companions of Surat Al-Baqarah!" encouraging them to come back, so they returned from every direction. Also, during the battle of Al-Yamamah, against the army of Musaylimah the Liar, the Companions first retreated because of the huge number of soldiers in Musaylimah's army. The Muhajirun and the Ansar called out for each other, saying; "O people of Surat Al-Baqarah!" Allah then gave them victory over their enemy, may Allah be pleased with all of the companions of all the Messengers of Allah.

(بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ)

(الم)

(In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) (1. Alif Lam Mim).

The Discussion of the Individual Letters

The individual letters in the beginning of some Surahs are among those things whose knowledge Allah has kept only for Himself. This was reported from Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali and Ibn Mas`ud. It was said that these letters are the names of some of the Surahs. It was also said that they are the beginnings that Allah chose to start the Surahs of the Qur'an with. Khasif stated that Mujahid said, "The beginnings of the Surahs, such as Qaf, Sad, Ta Sin Mim and Alif Lam Ra, are just some letters of the alphabet." Some linguists also stated that they are letters of the alphabet and that Allah simply did not cite the entire alphabet of twenty-eight letters. For instance, they said, one might say, "My son recites Alif, Ba, Ta, Tha..." he means the entire alphabet although he stops before mentioning the rest of it. This opinion was mentioned by Ibn Jarir.

The Letters at the Beginning of Surahs

If one removes the repetitive letters, then the number of letters mentioned at the beginning of the Surahs is fourteen: Alif, Lam, Mim, Sad, Ra, Kaf, Ha, Ya, `Ayn, Ta, Sin, Ha, Qaf, Nun.

So glorious is He Who made everything subtly reflect His wisdom.

Moreover, the scholars said, "There is no doubt that Allah did not reveal these letters for jest and play." Some ignorant people said that some of the Qur'an does not mean anything, (meaning, such as these letters) thus committing a major mistake. On the contrary, these letters carry a specific meaning. Further, if we find an authentic narration leading to the Prophet that explains these letters, we will embrace the Prophet's statement. Otherwise, we will stop where we were made to stop and will proclaim,

(ءَامَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا)

(We believe in it; all of it (clear and unclear verses) is from our Lord) (3:7).

The scholars did not agree on one opinion or explanation regarding this subject. Therefore, whoever thinks that one scholar's opinion is correct, he is obliged to follow it, otherwise it is better to refrain from making any judgment on this matter. Allah knows best.

These Letters testify to the Miraculous Qur'an

The wisdom behind mentioning these letters in the beginning of the Surahs, regardless of the exact meanings of these letters, is that they testify to the miracle of the Qur'an. Indeed, the servants are unable to produce something like the Qur'an, although it is comprised of the same letters with which they speak to each other. This opinion was mentioned by Ar-Razi in his Tafsir who related it to Al-Mubarrid and several other scholars. Al-Qurtubi also related this opinion to Al-Farra' and Qutrub. Az-Zamakhshari agreed with this opinion in his book, Al-Kashshaf. In addition, the Imam and scholar Abu Al-`Abbas Ibn Taymiyyah and our Shaykh Al-Hafiz Abu Al-Hajjaj Al-Mizzi agreed with this opinion. Al-Mizzi told me that it is also the opinion of Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah. KAz-Zamakhshari said that these letters, "Were not all mentioned once in the beginning of the Qur'an. Rather, they were repeated so that the challenge (against the creation) is more daring. Similarly, several stories were mentioned repeatedly in the Qur'an,

and also the challenge was repeated in various areas (i.e., to produce something like the Qur'an). Sometimes, one letter at a time was mentioned, such as Sad, Nun and Qaf. Sometimes two letters were mentioned, such as

(حم)

(Ha Mim) (44:1) Sometimes, three letters were mentioned, such as,

(الم)

(Alif Lam Mim (2: 1)) and four letters, such as,

(المر)

(` Alif Lam Mim Ra) (13:1), and

(المص)

(Alif Lam Mim Sad) (7:1).

Sometimes, five letters were mentioned, such as,

(كهيعص)

(Kaf Ha Ya ` Ayn Sad) (19:1), and;

(حم - تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ)

(Ha Mim. ` Ayn Sin Qaf) (42:1-2).

This is because the words that are used in speech are usually comprised of one, two, three, four, or five letters."

Every Surah that begins with these letters demonstrates the Qur'an's miracle and magnificence, and this fact is known by those well-versed in such matters. The count of these Surahs is twenty-nine. For instance, Allah said,

(الم ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(Alif Lam Mim) This is the Book (the Qur'an), wherein there is no doubt (2:1-2),

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ
نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ)

(Alif Lam Mim. Allah! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), Al-Hayyul-Qayyum (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists). It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur'an) to you (Muhammad) with truth, confirming what came before it.) (3:1-3), and,

(المص كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ
حَرَجٌ مِّنْهُ)

(Alif Lam Mim Sad. (This is the) Book (the Qur'an) sent down unto you (O Muhammad), so let not your breast be narrow therefrom) (7:1-2).

Also, Allah said,

(الر كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ
الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ)

(Alif Lam Ra. (This is) a Book which We have revealed unto you (O Muhammad) in order that you might lead mankind out of darkness (of disbelief and polytheism) into the light (of belief in the Oneness of Allah and Islamic Monotheism) by their Lord's leave) (14:1),

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Alif Lam Mim. The revelation of the Book (this Qur'an) in which there is no doubt, is from the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists)!) (32:1-2),

(حم - تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ)

(Ha Mim. A revelation from (Allah) the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) (41:1-2), and,

(حم - تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ -
غَافِرِ الذَّنْبِ وَقَابِلِ التَّوْبِ شَدِيدِ الْعِقَابِ ذِي
الطَّوْلِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ إِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ)

(Ha Mim. `Ain Sn Qaf. Likewise Allah, the Almighty, the Wise sends revelation to you (O Muhammad) as (He sent revelation to) those before you.) (42:1-3).

There are several other Ayat that testify to what we have mentioned above, and Allah knows best.

(ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(2. That is Book in which there is no Rayb, guidance for the Muttaqin).

There is no Doubt in the Qur'an

The Book, is the Qur'an, and Rayb means doubt. As-Suddi said that Abu Malik and Abu Salih narrated from Ibn `Abbas, and Murrah Al-Hamadani narrated from Ibn Mas`ud and several other Companions of the Messenger of Allah that,

(لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(In which there is no Rayb), means about which there is no doubt. Abu Ad-Darda', Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Malik, Nafi` `Ata', Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Muqatil bin Hayyan, As-Suddi, Qatadah and Isma`il bin Abi Khalid said similarly. In addition, Ibn Abi Hatim said, "I do not know of any disagreement over this explanation." The meaning of this is that the Book, the Qur'an, is without a doubt revealed from Allah. Similarly, Allah said in Surat As- Sajdah,

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Alif Lam Mim). The revelation of the Book (this Qur'an) in which there is no doubt, is from the Lord of all that exists) (32:1-2).

Some scholars stated that this Ayah - 2:2 - contains a prohibition meaning, "Do not doubt the Qur'an." Furthermore, some of the reciters of the Qur'an pause upon reading,

(لَا رَيْبَ)

(there is no doubt) and they then continue;

(فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(in which there is guidance for the Muttaqin (the pious and righteous persons)). However, it is better to pause at,

(لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(in which there is no doubt) because in this case,

(هُدًى)

(guidance) becomes an attribute of the Qur'an and carries a better meaning than,

(فِيهِ هُدًى)

(in which there is guidance).

Guidance is granted to Those Who have Taqwa

Hidayah - correct guidance - is only granted to those who have Taqwa - fear of Allah. Allah said,

(قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءً وَالَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ فِي ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى
أُولَٰئِكَ يُنَادُونَ مِن مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ)

(Say: It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears, and it (the Qur'an) is blindness for them. They are those who are called from a place far away (so they neither listen nor understand)) (41:44), and,

(وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا)

(And We send down of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism and act on it), and it increases the Zalimin (wrongdoers) in nothing but loss) (17:82).

This is a sample of the numerous Ayat indicating that the believers, in particular, benefit from the Qur'an. That is because the Qur'an is itself a form of guidance, but the guidance in it is only granted to the righteous, just as Allah said,

(يَأْيُهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
(

(O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord (i. e. the Qur'an, enjoining all that is good and forbidding all that is evil), and a healing for that (disease of ignorance, doubt, hypocrisy and differences) which is in your breasts, a guidance and a mercy (explaining lawful and unlawful things) for the believers) (10:57).

Ibn `Abbas and Ibn Mas`ud and other Companions of the Messenger of Allah said,

(هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(guidance for the Muttaqin (the pious and righteous persons), means, a light for those who have Taqwa.

The Meaning of Al-Muttaqin

Ibn `Abbas said about,

(هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(guidance for the Muttaqin) that it means, "They are the believers who avoid Shirk with Allah and who work in His obedience." Ibn `Abbas also said that Al-Muttaqin means, "Those who fear Allah's punishment, which would result if they abandoned the true guidance that they recognize and know. They also hope in Allah's mercy by believing in what He revealed." Further, Qatadah said that,

(لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Al-Muttaqin), are those whom Allah has described in His statement;

(الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ)

(Who believe in the Ghayb and perform the Salah) (2:3), and the following Ayat. Ibn Jarir stated that the Ayah (2:2) includes all of these meanings that the scholars have mentioned, and this is the correct view. Also, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah narrated that `Atiyah As-Sa`di said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَا يَبْلُغُ الْعَبْدُ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ حَتَّى يَدَعَ مَا لَا بَأْسَ بِهِ حَذْرًا مِمَّا بِهِ بَأْسٌ»

(The servant will not acquire the status of the Muttaqin until he abandons what is harmless out of fear of falling into that which is harmful.) At-Tirmidhi then said "Hasan Gharib."

There are Two Types of Hidayah (Guidance)

Huda here means the faith that resides in the heart, and only Allah is able to create it in the heart of the servants. Allah said,

(إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ)

(Verily, you (O Muhammad) guide not whom you like) (28:56),

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ)

(Not upon you (Muhammad) is their guidance) (2:272),

(مَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ)

(Whomsoever Allah sends astray, none can guide him) (7:186), and,

(مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ
وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا)

(He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the right path)) (18:17).

Huda also means to explain the truth, give direction and lead to it. Allah, the Exalted, said,

(وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ)

(And verily, you (O Muhammad) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the straight path (i.e. Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism)) (42: 52),

(إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ)

(You are only a warner, and to every people there is a guide) (13:7), and,

(وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَى عَلَى
الهُدَى)

(And as for Thamud, We showed and made clear to them the path of truth (Islamic Monotheism) through Our Messenger (i.e. showed them the way of success), but they preferred blindness to guidance) (41:17).

testifying to this meaning.

Also, Allah said,

(وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ)

(And shown him the two ways (good and evil).) (90:10)

This is the view of the scholars who said that the two ways refer to the paths of righteousness and evil, which is also the correct explanation. And Allah knows best.

Meaning of Taqwa

The root meaning of Taqwa is to avoid what one dislikes. It was reported that `Umar bin Al-Khattab asked Ubayy bin Ka`b about Taqwa. Ubayy said, "Have you ever walked on a path that has thorns on it" `Umar said, "Yes." Ubayy said, "What did you do then" He said, "I rolled up my sleeves and struggled." Ubayy said, "That is Taqwa."

(الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ)

(3.Those Who have faith in the Ghayb).

The Meaning of Iman

Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi said that Al-`Ala' bin Al-Musayyib bin Rafi` narrated from Abu Ishaq that Abu Al-Ahwas said that `Abdullah said, "Iman is to trust.". `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said,

(يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(who have faith) means they trust. Also, Ma`mar said that Az-Zuhri said, "Iman is the deeds." In addition, Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi said that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that, `They have faith', means, they fear (Allah).

Ibn Jarir (At-Tabari) commented, "The preferred view is that they be described as having faith in the Unseen by the tongue, deed and creed. In this case, fear of Allah is included in the general meaning of Iman, which necessitates following deeds of the tongue by implementation. Hence, Iman is a general term that includes affirming and believing in Allah, His Books and His Messengers, and realizing this affirmation through adhering to the implications of what the tongue utters and affirms."

Linguistically, in the absolute sense, Iman merely means trust, and it is used to mean that sometimes in the Qur'an, for instance, Allah the Exalted said,

(يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَيُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(He trusts (yu'minu) in Allah, and trusts (yu'minu) in the believers.) (9: 61)

Prophet Yusuf's brothers said to their father,

(وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَّنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صَادِقِينَ)

(But you will never believe us even when we speak the truth) (12:17).

Further, the word Iman is sometimes mentioned along with deeds, such as Allah said,

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ)

(Save those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds) (95:6).

However, when Iman is used in an unrestricted manner, it includes beliefs, deeds, and statements of the tongue. We should state here that Iman increases and decreases.

There are many narrations and Hadiths on this subject, and we discussed them in the beginning of our explanation of Sahih Al-Bukhari, all favors are from Allah. Some scholars explained that Iman means Khashyah (fear of Allah). For instance, Allah said;

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ)

(Verily, those who fear their Lord unseen (i.e. they do not see Him, nor His punishment in the Hereafter)) (67:12), and,

(مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ)

(Who feared the Most Gracious (Allah) in the Ghayb (unseen) and brought a heart turned in repentance (to Him and absolutely free from every kind of polytheism)) (50: 33).

Fear is the core of Iman and knowledge, just as Allah the Exalted said,

(إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ)

(It is only those who have knowledge among His servants that fear Allah) (35:28).

The Meaning of Al-Ghayb

As for the meaning of Ghayb here, the Salaf have different explanations of it, all of which are correct, indicating the same general meaning. For instance, Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi quoted Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, reporting from Abu Al-`Aliyah about Allah's statement, i

(يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ)

((Those who) have faith in the Ghayb), "They believe in Allah, His angels, Books, Messengers, the Last Day, His Paradise, Fire and in the meeting with Him. They also believe in life after death and in Resurrection. All of this is the Ghayb." Qatadah bin Di`amah said similarly.

Sa`id bin Mansur reported from `Abdur-Rahman bin Yazid who said, "We were sitting with `Abdullah bin Mas`ud when we mentioned the Companions of the Prophet and their deeds being superior to our deeds. `Abdullah said, `The matter of Muhammad was clear for those who saw him. By He other than Whom there is no God, no person will ever acquire a better type of faith than believing in Al-Ghayb.' He then recited,

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ)

(Alif Lam Mim. This is the Book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance for the Muttaqin. Those who believe in the Ghayb), until,

(المُفْلِحُونَ)

(the successful). " Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduwyah and Al-Hakim, in his Mustadrak, recorded this Hadith. Al-Hakim commented that this Hadith is authentic and that the Two Shaykhs - Al-Bukhari and Muslim - did not collect it, although it meets their criteria.

Ahmad recorded a Hadith with similar meaning from Ibn Muhayriz who said: I said to Abu Jumu`ah, "Narrate a Hadith for us that you heard from the Messenger of Allah." He said, "Yes. I will narrate a good Hadith for you. Once we had lunch with the Messenger of Allah . Abu `Ubaydah, who was with us, said, `O Messenger of Allah! Are people better than us We embraced Islam with you and performed Jihad with you.' He said,

«نَعَمْ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ بَعْدِكُمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِي وَلَمْ يَرَوْنِي»

(Yes, those who will come after you, who will believe in me although they did not see me.)"

This Hadith has another route collected by Abu Bakr bin Marduwyah in his Tafsir, from Salih bin Jubayr who said: `Abu Jumu`ah Al-Ansari, the Companion of the Messenger of Allah , came to Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) to perform the prayer. Raja' bin Haywah was with us, so when Abu Jumu`ah finished, we went out to greet him. When he was about to leave, he said, "You have a gift and a right. I will narrate a Hadith for you that I heard from the Messenger of Allah. " We said, "Do so, and may Allah grant you mercy." He said, "We were with the Messenger of Allah, ten people including Mu`adh bin Jabal. We said, "O Messenger of Allah! Are there people who will acquire greater rewards than us We believed in Allah and followed you.' He said,

«مَا يَمْنَعُكُمْ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ
يَأْتِيكُمْ بِالْوَحْيِ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ، بَلْ قَوْمٌ بَعْدَكُمْ يَأْتِيهِمْ
كِتَابٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ لَوْحَيْنِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَيَعْمَلُونَ بِمَا
فِيهِ، أُولَئِكَ أَكْبَرُ مِنْكُمْ أَجْرًا مَرَّتَيْنِ»

(What prevents you from doing so, while the Messenger of Allah is among you, bringing you the revelation from heaven There are people who will come after you and who will be given a book

between two covers (the Qur'an), and they will believe in it and implement its commands. They have a greater reward than you, even twice as much.)"

(وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ)

(And perform Salah, and spend out of what we have provided for them)

Meaning of Iqamat As-Salah

Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ)

(And perform the Salah), means, "Perform the prayer with all of the obligations that accompany it." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said, "Iqamat As-Salah means to complete the bowings, prostrations, recitation, humbleness and attendance for the prayer." Qatadah said, "Iqamat As-Salah means to preserve punctuality, and the ablution, bowings, and prostrations of the prayer." Muqatil bin Hayyan said Iqamat As-Salah means "To preserve punctuality for it, as well as completing ones purity for it, and completing the bowings, prostrations, recitation of the Qur'an, Tashahhud and blessings for the Prophet . This is Iqamat As-Salah."

The Meaning of "Spending" in this Ayah

Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn ` Abbas said,

(وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ)

(And spend out of what We have provided for them) means, "The Zakah due on their wealth." As-Suddi said that Abu Malik and Abu Salih narrated from Ibn ` Abbas, as well as Murrah from Ibn Mas` ud and other Companions of the Messenger of Allah , that,

(وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ)

(And spend out of what We have provided for them) means, "A man's spending on his family. This was before the obligation of Zakah was revealed." Juwaybir narrated from Ad-Dahhak, "General spending (in charity) was a means of drawing nearer to Allah, according to one's discretion and capability. Until the obligation of charity was revealed in the seven Ayat of Surat Bara'ah (chapter 9), were revealed. These abrogated the previous case."

In many instances, Allah mentioned prayer and spending wealth together. Prayer is a right of Allah as well as a form of worshipping Him. It includes singling Him out for one's devotion, praising Him, glorifying Him, supplicating to Him, invoking Him, and it displays one's dependence upon Him. Spending is form of kindness towards creatures by giving them what will benefit them, and those people most deserving of this charity are the relatives, the wife, the

servants and then the rest of the people. So all types of required charity and required spending are included in Allah's saying,

(وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ)

(And spend out of what we have provided for them). The Two Sahihs recorded that Ibn ` Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ، وَصَوْمَ رَمَضَانَ، وَحَجَّ الْبَيْتِ»

(Islam is built upon five (pillars): Testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the prayer, giving Zakah, fasting Ramadan and Hajj to the House.)

There are many other Hadiths on this subject.

The Meaning of Salah

In the Arabic language, the basic meaning of Salah is supplication. In religious terminology, Salah is used to refer to the acts of bowing and prostration, the remaining specified acts associated with it, specified at certain times, with those known conditions, and the characteristics, and requirements that are well-known about it.

(وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَيَآخِرَةَ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ)

(4. And who have faith in what is revealed to you and in what was revealed before you, and in the Hereafter they are certain.)

Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ)

(And who have faith in what is revealed to you and in what was revealed before you.) means, "They believe in what Allah sent you with, and in what the previous Messengers were sent with, they do not distinguish between (believing) them, nor do they reject what they brought from their Lord."

(وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ)

(And in the Hereafter they are certain) that is the resurrection, the standing (on the Day of Resurrection), Paradise, the Fire, the reckoning and the the Scale that weighs the deeds (the Mizan). The Hereafter is so named because it comes after this earthly life.

Attributes of the Believers

The people described here (2:4) are those whom Allah described in the preceding Ayah,

(الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ)

(Those who have faith in the Ghayb and perform Salah, and spend out of what we have provided for them.)

Mujahid once stated, "Four Ayat at the beginning of Surat Al-Baqarah describe the believers, two describe the disbelievers, and thirteen describe the hypocrites." The four Ayat mentioned in this statement are general and include every believer, whether an Arab, non-Arab, or a person of a previous Scripture, whether they are Jinns or humans. All of these attributes complement each other and require the existence of the other attributes. For instance, it is not possible that one believes in the Unseen, performs the prayer and gives Zakah without believing in what the Messenger of Allah and the previous Messengers were sent with. The same with certainty in the Hereafter, this is not correct without that, for Allah has commanded the believers,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ءَامِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي
أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ)

(O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and His Messenger, and the Book (the Qur'an) which He has revealed to the Messenger, and the Book which He sent down to those before (him)) (4:136),

وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ
إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ

(And argue not with the People of the Book, unless it be in (a way) that is better, except with such of them as do wrong; and say (to them): "We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you; our Ilah (God) and your Ilah (God) is One (i.e. Allah)" (29:46),

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ ءَامِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ

(O you who have been given the Book (Jews and Christians)! Believe in what We have revealed (to Muhammad) confirming what is (already) with you) (4:47), and,

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا
التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

(Say (O Muhammad): "O People of the Book (Jews and Christians)! You have nothing until you act according to the Tawrah (Torah), the Injil (Gospel), and what has (now) been revealed to you from your Lord (the Qur'an).") (5:68).

Also, Allah the Exalted described the believers;

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ

(The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) "We make no distinction between any of His Messengers") (2: 285), and,

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ
مِّنْهُمْ

(And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and make no distinction between any of them (Messengers)) (4:152),

This is a sample of the Ayat that indicate that the true believers all believe in Allah, His Messengers and His Books.

The faithful among the People of the Book, have a special significance here, since they believe in their Books and in all of the details related to that, so when such people embrace Islam and sincerely believe in the details of the religion, then they will get two rewards. As for the others, they can only believe in the previous religious teachings in a general way. For instance, the Prophet stated,

«إِذَا حَدَّثَكُمْ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ فَلَا تُكَدِّبُوهُمْ وَلَا
تُصَدِّقُوهُمْ وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا: آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا
وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ»

(When the People of the Book narrate to you, neither reject nor affirm what they say. Rather, say, 'We believe in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to you.')

However, the faith that many Arabs have in the religion of Islam as it was revealed to Muhammad might be more complete, encompassing and firmer than the faith of the People of the Book who embraced Islam. Therefore, if the believers in Islam among the People of the Book gain two rewards, other Muslims who have firmer Islamic faith might gain an equal reward that compares to the two the People of the Book gain (upon embracing Islam). And Allah knows best.

(أُولَئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُقْلِحُونَ)

(5. They are on guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful.)

Guidance and Success are awarded to the Believers

Allah said,

(أُولَئِكَ)

(They are) refers to those who believe in the Unseen, establish the prayer, spend from what Allah has granted them, believe in what Allah has revealed to the Messenger and the Messengers before him, believe in the Hereafter with certainty, and prepare the necessary requirements for the Hereafter by performing good deeds and avoiding the prohibitions. Allah then said,

(عَلَىٰ هُدًى)

(On guidance) meaning, they are (following) a light, guidance, and have insight from Allah,

(وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ)

(And they are the successful) meaning, in this world and the Hereafter. They shall have what they seek and be saved from the evil that they tried to avoid. Therefore, they will have rewards, eternal life in Paradise, and safety from the torment that Allah has prepared for His enemies.

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

-(6. Verily, those who disbelieve, it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe.)

Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(Verily, those who disbelieve) meaning, covered the truth and hid it. Since Allah has written that they would do so, it does not matter if you (O Muhammad) warn them or not, they would still have disbelieved in what you were sent with. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ -
وَلَوْ جَاءَتْهُمْ كُلُّ آيَةٍ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ)

(Truly, those against whom the Word (wrath) of your Lord has been justified, will not believe. Even if every sign should come to them, until they see the painful torment) (10:96-97).

About the rebellious People of the Book, Allah said,

وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَتَّبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ

(And even if you were to bring to the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) all the Ayat, they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction)) (2:5).

These Ayat indicate that whomever Allah has written to be miserable, they shall never find anyone to guide them to happiness, and whomever Allah directs to misguidance, he shall never find anyone to guide him. So do not pity them - O Muhammad - deliver the Message to them. Certainly, whoever among them accepts the Message, then he shall gain the best rewards. As for those who turn away in rejection, do not feel sad for them or concerned about them, for

فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ

(Your duty is only to convey (the Message) and on Us is the reckoning) (13: 40), and,

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ نَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ

(But you are only a warner. And Allah is a Wakil (Disposer of affairs, Trustee, Guardian) over all things) (11:12).

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said about Allah's statement,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

(Verily, those who disbelieve, it is the same to them whether you (O Muhammad) warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe) "That the Messenger of Allah was eager for all the people to believe and follow the guidance he was sent with. Allah informed him that none would believe except for those whom He decreed happiness for in the first place, and none would stray except those who Allah has decreed to do so in the first place."

(خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى
أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشْوَةً وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(7. Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes there is a covering. Theirs will be a great torment).

Meaning of Khatama

As-Suddi said that,

(خَتَمَ اللَّهُ)

(Khatama Allah) means, "Allah has sealed." Qatadah said that this Ayah means, "Shaytan controlled them when they obeyed him. Therefore, Allah sealed their hearts, hearing and sight, and they could neither see the guidance nor hear, comprehend or understand." Ibn Jurayj said that Mujahid said,

(خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ)

(Allah has set a seal on their hearts), "A stamp. It occurs when sin resides in the heart and surrounds it from all sides, and this submersion of the heart in sin constitutes a stamp, meaning a seal." Ibn Jurayj also said that the seal is placed on the heart and the hearing. In addition, Ibn Jurayj said, that `Abdullah bin Kathir narrated that Mujahid said, "The stain is not as bad as the stamp, the stamp is not as bad as the lock which is the worst type." Al-A`mash said, "Mujahid demonstrated with his hand while saying, `They used to say that the heart is just like this - meaning the open palm. When the servant commits a sin, a part of the heart will be rolled up - and he rolled up his index finger. When the servant commits another sin, a part of the heart will be rolled up' - and he rolled up another finger, until he rolled up all of his fingers. Then he said, `Then, the heart will be sealed.' Mujahid also said that this is the description of the Pan (refer to 83:14)."

Al-Qurtubi said, "The Ummah has agreed that Allah has described Himself with sealing and closing the hearts of the disbelievers, as a punishment for their disbelief. Similarly, Allah said,

(بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ)

(Nay, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts because of their disbelief) (4:155)."

He then mentioned the Hadith about changing the hearts, (in which the Prophet supplicated),

«يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قُلُوبَنَا عَلَى دِينِكَ»

(O You Who changes the hearts, make our hearts firm on Your religion.)

He also mentioned the Hadith by Hudhayfah recorded in the Sahih, in which the Messenger of Allah said,

«تُعْرَضُ الْفِتْنُ عَلَى الْقُلُوبِ كَالْحَصِيرِ عُوْدًا
عُوْدًا، فَأَيُّ قَلْبٍ أَشْرَبَهَا نُكِتَ فِيهِ نُكْتَةٌ سَوْدَاءٌ
وَأَيُّ قَلْبٍ أَنْكَرَهَا نُكِتَ فِيهِ نُكْتَةٌ بَيْضَاءٌ حَتَّى
تَصِيرَ عَلَى قَلْبَيْنِ: عَلَى أْبْيَضَ مِثْلِ الصَّفَاءِ، فَلَا
تَضُرُّهُ فِتْنَةٌ مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَالْآخِرُ
أَسْوَدُ مُرْبَادًا كَالْكُوزِ مُجْحِيًّا لَا يَعْرِفُ مَعْرُوفًا
وَلَا يُنْكِرُ مُنْكَرًا»

(The Fitan (trials, tests) are offered to the hearts, just as the straws that are sewn into a woven mat, one after another. Any heart that accepts the Fitan, then a black dot will be engraved on it. Any heart that rejects the Fitan, then a white dot will be engraved on it. The hearts will therefore become two categories: white, just like the barren rock; no Fitnah shall ever harm this category as long as the heavens and earth still exist. Another category is black, just as the cup that is turned upside down, for this heart does not recognize righteousness or renounce evil.)

Ibn Jarir said, "The truth regarding this subject is what the authentic Hadith from the Messenger of Allah stated. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا أَدْنَبَ ذَنْبًا كَانَتْ نُكْتَةٌ سَوْدَاءَ فِي
قَلْبِهِ، فَإِنْ تَابَ وَنَزَعَ وَاسْتَعْتَبَ صَقَلَ قَلْبُهُ وَإِنْ
زَادَ زَادَتْ حَتَّى تَعْلُوَ قَلْبَهُ، فَذَلِكَ الرَّانُ الَّذِي قَالَ
اللَّهُ تَعَالَى:

(كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ)

(When the believer commits a sin, a black dot will be engraved on his heart. If he repents, refrains and regrets, his heart will be polished again. If he commits more errors, the dots will increase until they cover his heart. This is the Ran (stain) that Allah described,

(كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ)

(Nay! But on their hearts is the Ran (stain) which they used to earn)" (83:14).

At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah recorded this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi said that it is Hasan Sahih.

The Meaning of Ghishawah

Reciting the Ayah,

(خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ)

(Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing), then pausing, then continuing with,

(وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشْوَةٌ)

(And on their eyes there is a Ghishawah (covering)) is accurate, for the stamp is placed on the heart and the hearing while the Ghishawah, the covering, is appropriately placed on the eyes. In his Tafsir, As-Suddi said that Ibn ` Abbas and Ibn Mas` ud said about Allah's statement,

(خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ)

(Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing), "So that they neither understand nor hear. Allah also said that He placed a covering on their sight, meaning eyes, and so, they do not see."

The Hypocrites

We mentioned that four Ayat in the beginning of Surat Al-Baqarah described the believers. The two last Ayat (2:6-7) describe the disbelievers. Afterwards, Allah begins to describe the hypocrites who show belief and hide disbelief. Since the matter of the hypocrites is vague and many people do not realize their true reality, Allah mentioned their description in detail. Each of the characteristics that Allah used to described them with is a type of hypocrisy itself. Allah revealed Surat Bara'ah (chapter 9) and Surat Al-Munafiqun (chapter 63) about the hypocrites. He also mentioned the hypocrites in Surat An-Nur (24) and other Surahs, so that their description would be known and their ways and errors could be avoided. Allah said,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَيَالِيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ - يُخَدِّعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ)

(8. And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they do not believe). (9. They try to deceive Allah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!)

Meaning of Nifaq

Nifaq means to show conformity - or agreement - and to conceal evil. Nifaq has several types: Nifaq in the creed that causes its people to reside in Hell for eternity, and Nifaq in deed, which is one of the major sins, as we will explain soon, Allah willing. Ibn Jurayj said of the hypocrite that, "His actual deeds are different from what he publicizes, what he conceals is different from what he utters, his entrance and presence are not the same as his exit and absence."

The Beginning of Hypocrisy

The revelations about the characteristics of the hypocrites were revealed in Al-Madinah, this is because there were no hypocrites in Makkah. Rather the opposite was the situation in Makkah, since some people were forced to pretend that they were disbelievers, while their hearts concealed their faith. Afterwards, the Messenger of Allah migrated to Al-Madinah, where the Ansar from the tribes of Aws and Khazraj resided. They used to worship idols during the pre-Islamic period of ignorance, just as the rest of the Arab idolators. Three Jewish tribes resided in Al-Madinah, Banu Qaynuqa` -allies of Al-Khazraj, Banu An-Nadir and Banu Qurayzah-allies of the Aws. Many members of the Aws and Khazraj tribes embraced Islam. However, only a few Jews embraced Islam, such as `Abdullah bin Salam. During the early stage in Al-Madinah, there weren't any hypocrites because the Muslims were not strong enough to be feared yet. On the contrary, the Messenger of Allah conducted peace treaties with the Jews and several other Arab tribes around Al-Madinah. Soon after, the battle of Badr occurred and Allah gave victory to Islam and its people. `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul was a leader in Al-Madinah. He was Al-Khazraj's chief, and during the period of Jahiliyyah he was the master of both tribes - Aws and Khazraj. They were about to appoint him their king when the Message reached Al-Madinah, and many in Al-Madinah embraced Islam. Ibn Salul's heart was filled with hatred against Islam and its people. When the battle of Badr took place, he said, "Allah's religion has become apparent." So he pretended to be Muslim, along with many of those who were just like him, as well as many among the People of the Book. It was then that hypocrisy began in Al-Madinah and among the surrounding nomad tribes. As for the Emigrants, none of them were hypocrites, since they emigrated willingly (seeking the pleasure of Allah). Rather, when a Muslim would emigrate from Makkah, he would be forced to abandon all of his wealth, offspring and land; he would do so seeking Allah's reward in the Hereafter.

The Tafsir of Ayah 2:8

Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَيَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they do not believe) "This refers to the hypocrites among the Aws and Khazraj and those who behaved as they did."

This is how Abu Al-` Aliyah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and As-Suddi explained this Ayah. Allah revealed the characteristics of the hypocrites, so that the believers would not be deceived by their outer appearance, thus saving the believers from a great evil. Otherwise, the believers might think that the hypocrites were believers, when in reality they are disbelievers. To consider the sinners as righteous people is extremely dangerous, Allah said,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَيَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they do not believe) meaning, they utter these false statements only with their tongues, just as Allah said,

(إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ)

(When the hypocrites come to you (O Muhammad), they say: "We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah." Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger) (63:1).

This Ayah means that the hypocrites utter these statements only when they meet you, not because they actually believe what they are saying. The hypocrites emphasize their belief in Allah and the Last Day with their words, when that is not the case in reality. Therefore, Allah stated that the hypocrites lie in their testimony of creed, when He said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ كَذِبُونَ)

(And Allah bears witness that the hypocrites are indeed liars.) (63:1), and,

(وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(while in fact they believe not)

Allah said,

(يُخَدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا)

(They try to deceive Allah and those who believe). The hypocrites show belief outwardly while concealing disbelief. They think that by doing this, they will mislead Allah, or that the statements they utter will help them with Allah, and this is an indication of their total ignorance. They think that such behavior will deceive Allah, just as it might deceive some of the believers. Similarly, Allah said,

(يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ
لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ أَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ
الْكَذِبُونَ)

(On the Day when Allah will resurrect them all together; then they will swear to Him as they swear to you. And they think that they have something (to stand upon). Verily, they are liars!) (58:18). Hence, Allah refuted their way by saying,

(وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ)

(While they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!) Allah stated that the hypocrites only deceive themselves by this behavior, although they are unaware of this fact. Allah also said,

(إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ)

(Verily, the hypocrites try to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them) (4:142).

Also, Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Ibn Jurayj commented on Allah's statement,

(إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ)

(Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them), "The hypocrites pronounce, 'There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah' seeking to ensure the sanctity of their blood and money, all the while concealing disbelief." Sa`id said that Qatadah said,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَيَالِيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ - يُخَدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ)

(And of mankind, there are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they believe not. They try to deceive Allah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!) "This is the description of a hypocrite. He is devious, he says the truth with his tongue and defies it with his heart and deeds. He wakes up in a condition other than the one he goes to sleep in, and goes to sleep in a different condition than the one he wakes up in. He changes his mind just like a ship that moves about whenever a wind blows."

(فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ)

(10. In their hearts is a disease and Allah has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies.)

The Meaning of 'Disease' in this Ayah

As-Suddi narrated from Abu Malik and (also) from Abu Salih, from Ibn `Abbas, and (also) Murrâh Al-Hamdani from Ibn Mas`ud and other Companions that this Ayah,

(فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ)

(In their hearts is a disease) means, 'doubt', and,

(فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا)

(And Allah has increased their disease) also means 'doubt'. Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah also said similarly. `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam commented on,

(فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ)

(In their hearts is a disease), "A disease in the religion, not a physical disease. They are the hypocrites and the disease is the doubt that they brought to Islam.

(فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا)

(And Allah has increased their disease) meaning, increased them in shameful behavior." He also recited,

(فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَتْهُمْ رِجْسًا إِلَىٰ رِجْسِهِمْ)

(As for those who believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice. But as for those in whose hearts is a disease, it will add disgrace to their disgrace.) (9:124-125) and commented, "Evil to their evil and deviation to their deviation." This statement by `Abdur-Rahman is true, and it constitutes a punishment that is compatible to the sin, just as the earlier scholars stated. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَءَاتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ)

(While as for those who accept guidance, He increases their guidance and grants them their piety) (47:17).

Allah said next,

(بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ)

(Because they used to tell lies). The hypocrites have two characteristics, they lie and they deny the Unseen.

The scholars who stated that the Prophet knew the hypocrites of his time have only the Hadith of Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman as evidence. In it the Prophet gave him the names of fourteen hypocrites during the battle of Tabuk. These hypocrites plotted to assassinate the Prophet during the night on a hill in that area. They planned to excite the Prophet's camel, so that she would throw him down the hill. Allah informed the Prophet about their plot, and the Prophet told Hudhayfah their names.

As for the other hypocrites, Allah said about them,

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ
الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ
نَعْلَمُهُمْ

(And among the bedouins around you, some are hypocrites, and so are some among the people of Al-Madinah who persist in hypocrisy; you (O Muhammad) know them not, We know them) (9:101), and,

لَئِن لَّمْ يَنْتَهِ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ
وَالْمُرْجِفُونَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ لَنُغْرِيَنَّكَ بِهِمْ ثُمَّ لَا
يُجَاوِرُونَكَ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا - مَلْعُونِينَ أَيْنَمَا ثُقِفُوا
أُخِذُوا وَقُتِلُوا قَتِيلًا)

(If the hypocrites, and those in whose hearts is a disease, and those who spread false news among the people in Al-Madinah do not cease, We shall certainly let you overpower them, then they will not be able to stay in it as your neighbors but a little while. Accursed, they shall be seized wherever found, and killed with a (terrible) slaughter) (33:60-61).

These Ayat prove that the Prophet was not informed about each and everyone among the hypocrites of his time. Rather, the Prophet was only informed about their characteristics, and he used to assume that some people possessed these characteristics. Similarly, Allah said,

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَاعْرِفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ
وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ

(Had We willed, We could have shown them to you, and you should have known them by their marks; but surely, you will know them by the tone of their speech!) (47:30).

The most notorious hypocrite at that time was `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul; Zayd bin Arqam - the Companion - gave truthful testimony to that effect. In addition, `Umar bin Al-Khattab once mentioned the matter of Ibn Salul to the Prophet , who said,

«إِنِّي أَكْرَهُ أَنْ تَتَحَدَّثَ الْعَرَبُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا يَقْتُلُ
أَصْحَابَهُ»

(I would not like the Arabs to say to each other that Muhammad is killing his Companions.)

Yet, when Ibn Salul died, the Prophet performed the funeral prayer for him and attended his funeral just as he used to do with other Muslims. It was recorded in the Sahih that the Prophet said,

«إِنِّي خَيْرْتُ فَأَخْتَرْتُ»

(I was given the choice (to pray for him or not), so I chose.)

In another narration, the Prophet said,

«لَوْ أَعْلَمُ أَنِّي لَوْ زِدْتُ عَلَى السَّبْعِينَ يُعْفَرُ لَهُ
لَزِدْتُ»

(If I knew that by asking (Allah to forgive Ibn Salul) more than seventy times that He would forgive him, then I would do that.)

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا
نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ - أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِن
لَا يَشْعُرُونَ)

(11. And when it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on the earth," they say: "We are only peacemakers.") (12. Verily, they are the ones who make mischief, but they perceive not.)

Meaning of Mischief

In his Tafsir, As-Suddi said that Ibn `Abbas and Ibn Mas`ud commented,

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا
نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ)

(And when it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on the earth," they say: "We are only peacemakers.") "They are the hypocrites. As for,

(لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ)

("Do not make mischief on the earth"), that is disbelief and acts of disobedience." Abu Ja`far said that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that Abu Al-`Aliyah said that Allah's statement,

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ)

(And when it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on the earth,"), means, "Do not commit acts of disobedience on the earth. Their mischief is disobeying Allah, because whoever disobeys Allah on the earth, or commands that Allah be disobeyed, he has committed mischief on the earth. Peace on both the earth and in the heavens is ensured (and earned) through obedience (to Allah)." Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah said similarly.

Types of Mischief that the Hypocrites commit

Ibn Jarir said, "The hypocrites commit mischief on earth by disobeying their Lord on it and continuing in the prohibited acts. They also abandon what Allah made obligatory and doubt His religion, even though He does not accept a deed from anyone except with faith in His religion and certainty of its truth. The hypocrites also lie to the believers by saying contrary to the doubt and hesitation their hearts harbor. They give as much aid as they can, against Allah's loyal friends, and support those who deny Allah, His Books and His Messengers. This is how the hypocrites commit mischief on earth, while thinking that they are doing righteous work on earth."

The statement by Ibn Jarir is true, taking the disbelievers as friends is one of the categories of mischief on the earth. Allah said,

(وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ
تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ)

(And those who disbelieve are allies of one another, if you do not do this (help each other), there will be turmoil and oppression on the earth, and great mischief.) (8:73), In this way Allah severed the loyalty between the believers and the disbelievers. Similarly, Allah said,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ
مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا)

(O you who believe! Do not take disbelievers as Awliya' (protectors or helpers or friends) instead of believers. Do you wish to offer Allah a manifest proof against yourselves) (4: 144).

Allah then said,

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ
تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا)

(Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth of the Fire; no helper will you find for them) (4:145).

Since the outward appearance of the hypocrite displays belief, he confuses the true believers. Hence, the deceitful behavior of the hypocrites is an act of mischief, because they deceive the believers by claiming what they do not believe in, and because they give support and loyalty to the disbelievers against the believers.

If the hypocrite remains a disbeliever (rather than pretending to be Muslim), the evil that results from him would be less. Even better, if the hypocrite becomes sincere with Allah and makes the statements that he utters conform to his deeds, he will gain success. Allah said,

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا
نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ)

(And when it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on the earth," they say: "We are only peacemakers.") meaning, "We seek to be friends with both parties, the believers and the disbelievers, and to have peace with both parties." Similarly, Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said,

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا
نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ)