

«أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِأَفْضَلِ مِنْ دَرَجَةِ الصِّيَامِ،
وَالصَّلَاةِ، وَالصَّدَقَةِ؟»

(Should I tell you what is better than the grade of fasting, praying and Sadaqah) They said, "Yes, O Allah's Messenger!" He said,

«إِصْلَاحُ ذَاتِ الْبَيْنِ»

(Bringing reconciliation between people.) He also said,

«وَفَسَادُ ذَاتِ الْبَيْنِ هِيَ الْحَالِقَةُ»

(Spoiling the relationship (between people) is the destroyer.) Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi also recorded this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih". Allah said,

(وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ)

(and he who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah,) with sincerity and awaiting the reward with Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored,

(فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا)

(We shall give him a great reward.) meaning, an immense, enormous and tremendous reward.

The Punishment for Contradicting and Opposing the Messenger and Following a Path Other than That of the Believers

Allah's statement,

(وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَى)

(And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the right path has been shown clearly to him.) refers to whoever intentionally takes a path other than the path of the Law revealed to the Messenger, after the truth has been made clear, apparent and plain to him. Allah's statement,

(وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(and follows other than the believers' way,) refers to a type of conduct that is closely related to contradicting the Messenger . This contradiction could be in the form of contradicting a text (from the Qur'an or Sunnah) or contradicting what the Ummah of Muhammad has agreed on. The Ummah of Muhammad is immune from error when they all agree on something, a miracle that serves to increase their honor, due to the greatness of their Prophet. There are many authentic Hadiths on this subject. Allah warned against the evil of contradicting the Prophet and his Ummah, when He said, e

(نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّى وَنُصَلِّهِ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا)

(We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell --- what an evil destination!) meaning, when one goes on this wicked path, We will punish him by making the evil path appear good in his heart, and will beautify it for him so that he is tempted further. For instance, Allah said,

(فَدَرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَدِّبُ يَهْدَا الْحَدِيثَ سَتَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(Then leave Me Alone with such as belie this Qur'an. We shall punish them gradually from directions they perceive not),

(فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ)

(So when they turned away (from the path of Allah), Allah turned their hearts away), and,

(وَنَدَرُهُمْ فِي طُعْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ)

(And We shall leave them in their trespass to wander blindly). Allah made the Fire the destination of such people in the Hereafter. Indeed, the path of those who avoid the right guidance will only lead to the Fire on the Day of Resurrection, as evident by Allah's statements,

(احْشُرُوا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَأَزْوَاجَهُمْ)

((It will be said to the angels): "Assemble those who did wrong, together with their companions (from the devils)), and,

(وَرَأَى الْمُجْرِمُونَ النَّارَ فَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مُوَاقِعُوهَا
وَلَمْ يَجِدُوا عَنْهَا مَصْرَفًا)

(And the criminals, shall see the Fire and apprehend that they have to fall therein. And they will find no way of escape from there).

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ
ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا
بَعِيدًا - إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنثًا وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ
إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا - لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ
عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا - وَلَا ضِلَالَهُمْ وَلَا مَنِيَّتَهُمْ
وَلَا مَرْتَهُمْ فَلْيَبْتَئِكُنَّ آدَانَ الْأَنْعَمِ وَلَا مَرْتَهُمْ
فَلْيَغَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا - يَعِدُهُمْ
وَيَمْنِيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا -
أُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَحِيصًا -
وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا)

(116. Verily, Allah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners (in worship) with Him, but He forgives whom He wills, sins other than that, and whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed far away.) (117. They invoke nothing but female deities besides Him (Allah), and they invoke nothing but Shaytan, a persistent rebel!) (118. Allah cursed him. And he Shaytan said: "I will take an appointed portion of your servants.") (119. "Verily, I will

mislead them, and surely, I will arouse in them false desires; and certainly, I will order them to slit the ears of cattle, and indeed I will order them to change the nature created by Allah." And whoever takes Shaytan as a Wali instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss.) (120. He Shaytan makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires; and Shaytan's promises are nothing but deceptions.) (121. The dwelling of such (people) is Hell, and they will find no way of escape from it.) (122. And those who believe and do righteous good deeds, We shall admit them to the Gardens under which rivers flow (i.e. in Paradise) to dwell therein forever. Allah's promise is the truth; and whose words can be truer than those of Allah)

Shirk Shall not be Forgiven, in Reality the Idolators Worship Shaytan

We talked about Allah's statement,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ

(Verily, Allah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners (in worship) with Him, but He forgives whom He wills, sins other than that,) before and mentioned the relevant Hadiths in the beginning of this Surah. Allah's statement,

وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلًّا بَعِيدًا

(and whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed far away.) means, he will have taken other than the true path, deviated from guidance and righteousness, destroyed himself in this life and the Hereafter, and lost contentment in this life and the Hereafter. Juwaybir said that Ad-Dahhak said about Allah's statement,

إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنْتًا

(They invoke nothing but female deities besides Him (Allah),) "The idolators claimed that the angels are Allah's daughters, saying, `We only worship them so that they bring us closer to Allah.' So they took the angels as gods, made the shapes of girls and decided, `These (idols) resemble the daughters of Allah (i.e., the angels), Whom we worship. "' This is similar to Allah's statements,

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ

(Have you then considered Al-Lat and Al-`Uzza)

(وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنثًا)

(And they make the angels who themselves are servants of the Most Gracious (Allah) females) and,

(وَجَعَلُوا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْجِنَّةِ نَسَبًا)

(And they have invented a kinship between Him and the Jinn). Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَّرِيدًا)

(and they invoke nothing but Shaytan, a persistent rebel!) means, Shaytan has commanded them to do this and made it seem fair and beautiful in their eyes. Consequently, they are worshipping Shaytan in reality, just as Allah said in another Ayah,

(أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا آدَمُ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ)

(Did I not command you, O Children of Adam, that you should not worship Shaytan) Allah said that, on the Day of Resurrection, the angels shall proclaim about the idolators who worshipped them in this life:

(بَلْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْجِنَّ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِهِمْ مُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Nay, but they used to worship the Jinn; most of them were believers in them). Allah's statement,

(لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ)

(Allah cursed him), means, He expelled him and banished him from His mercy and His grace.

(لَا تَخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا)

(I will take an appointed portion of your servants) means, a fixed and known share. Muqatil bin Hayyan commented, "From every one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine will go to the Fire and one to Paradise."

(وَلَا ضِلَّاهُمْ)

(Verily, I will mislead them) from the true path,

(وَلَا مَنِّيَّهُمْ)

(and surely, I will arouse in them false desires;) tempting them to feign repentance, arousing false hopes in them, encouraging them to delay and procrastinate with righteous deeds, deceiving them.

(وَلَا مَرَّتَهُمْ فَلْيُبْتِئَنَّ آذَانَ الْاَنْعَمِ)

(and certainly, I will order them to slit the ears of cattle,) meaning, slitting their ears to designate them as Bahirah, Sa'ibah, and a Wasilah, as Qatadah and As-Suddi stated.

(وَلَا مَرَّتَهُمْ فَلْيُغَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللّٰهِ)

(And indeed I will order them to change the nature created by Allah.) means tattooing, according to Al-Hasan bin Abi Al-Hasan Al-Basri. In his Sahih, Muslim recorded the prohibition of tattooing the face, which in one of its wordings states: "May Allah curse whoever does this." It is also recorded in the Sahih that Ibn Mas'ud said, "May Allah curse those who have tattoos and those who do it, who pluck their (facial) hairs and the one who does it for them, and those who make spaces between their teeth for the purpose of beauty, changing what Allah has created." He then said, "Why should not I curse whom the Messenger of Allah has cursed, when the Book of Allah commands it," referring to the Ayah,

(وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ
فَانْتَهُوا)

(And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it)). Allah's statement,

(وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ
خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا)

(And whoever takes Shaytan as a Wali (protector or helper) instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss.) means, he will have lost this life and the Hereafter. Indeed, this is a type of loss that cannot be compensated or restored. Allah's statement,

(يَعِدُّهُمْ وَيُمْنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُّهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا
(

(He Shaytan makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires;) explains the true reality. Surely, Shaytan deceitfully promises his supporters and tempts them into believing that they are winners in this and the Hereafter. This is why Allah said,

(وَمَا يَعِدُّهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا)

(and Shaytan's promises are nothing but deceptions.) Allah states that on the Day of Return,

(وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ
وَعَدَ الْحَقُّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي
عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ)

(And Shaytan will say when the matter has been decided: "Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you), until,

(إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, there is a painful torment for the wrongdoers.) Allah's statement,

(أُولَئِكَ)

(of such (people)) refers to those who like and prefer what Shaytan is promising and assuring them of,

(مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ)

(The dwelling of such (people) is Hell), as their destination and abode on the Day of Resurrection,

(وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَحِيصًا)

(and they will find no way of escape from it.), meaning, they will not be able to avoid, avert, evade or elude the Hellfire.

The Reward of Righteous Believers

Allah then mentions the condition of the content righteous believers and the perfect honor they will earn in the end. Allah said,

(وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ)

(And those who believe and do righteous good deeds,) meaning, their hearts were truthful and their limbs obedient with the righteous acts they were commanded, all the while abandoning the evil they were prohibited from doing.

(سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ)

(We shall admit them to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)) meaning, they will think of where they want these rivers to flow and they will flow there,

(خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا)

(to dwell therein forever), without end or being removed from it.

(وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا)

(Allah's promise is the truth), meaning, this is a true promise from Allah, and verily, Allah's promise shall come to pass. Allah then said,

(وَمَنْ أٰصْدَقُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ قِيْلًا)

(and whose words can be truer than those of Allah) meaning, none is more truthful in statement and narration than Allah. There is no deity worthy of worship, or Lord except Him. The Messenger of Allah used to proclaim in his speech,

«إِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كَلَامُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ
هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ
مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بَدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بَدْعَةٍ
ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ»

(The most truthful speech is Allah's Speech, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The worst matters are the newly invented (in religion), every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a heresy, and every heresy is in the Fire.)

(لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيٍّ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ
سُوءًا أَوْ يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا
نَصِيرًا - وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
أَنْتَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا
يُظَلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا - وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ
وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا
وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا - وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُحِيطًا)

(123. It will not be in accordance with your desires, nor those of the People of the Scripture, whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof, and he will not find any protector or helper besides Allah.) (124. And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a believer, such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a Naqir, will be done to them.) (125. And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face (himself) to Allah; and he is a Muhsin (a doer of good). And follows the religion of Ibrahim the Hanif (Monotheist). And Allah did take Ibrahim as a Khalil (an intimate friend)!) (126. And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is Ever Encompassing all things.)

**Success is Only Achieved by Performing Righteous Deeds, not
Wishful Thinking**

Qatadah said, "We were told that the Muslims and the People of the Scriptures mentioned their own virtues to each other. People of the Scriptures said, 'Our Prophet came before your Prophet and our Book before your Book. Therefore, we should have more right to Allah than you have.' Muslims said, 'Rather, we have more right to Allah than you, our Prophet is the Final Prophet and our Book supersedes all the Books before it.' Allah sent down,

(لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيَّ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ
سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ)

(It will not be in accordance with your desires (Muslims), nor those of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof),

(وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ
مُحْسِنٌ)

(And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face (himself) to Allah; and he is a Muhsin.) Allah then supported the argument of the Muslims against their opponents of the other religions." Similar statements were attributed to As-Suddi, Masruq, Ad-Dahhak and Abu Salih. Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on this Ayah 4:123, "The followers of various religions disputed, the people of the Tawrah said, 'Our Book is the best Book and our Prophet (Musa) is the best Prophet.' The people of the Injil said similarly, the people of Islam said, 'There is no religion except Islam, our Book has abrogated every other Book, our Prophet is the Final Prophet, and you were commanded to believe in your Books and adhere to our Book.' Allah judged between them, saying, o

(لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيَّ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ
سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ)

(It will not be in accordance with your desires, nor those of the People of the Scripture, whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof)." This Ayah indicates that the religion is not accepted on account of wishful thinking or mere hopes. Rather, the accepted religion relies on what resides in the heart and which is made truthful through actions. It is not true that when one utters a claim to something, he attains it merely on account of his claim. It is not true that every person who claims to be on the truth is considered as such, merely on account of his words, until his claim gains merit with proof from Allah. Hence Allah's statement,

لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ
سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ)

(It will not be in accordance with your desires, nor those of the People of the Scripture, whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof), meaning safety will not be acquired by you or them just by wishful thinking. Rather, the key is in obeying Allah and following what He has legislated through the words of His honorable Messengers. This is why Allah said afterwards,

(مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ)

(whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof,) Similarly, Allah said,

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ - وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ)

(So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom, shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom, shall see it.) and it was reported that when these Ayat were revealed, they became hard on many Companions. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `A'ishah said, "I said, `O Messenger of Allah! I know the hardest Ayah in the Qur'an.' He said, `What is it, O `A'ishah!' I said,

(مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ)

(whoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof,) He said,

«هُوَ مَا يُصِيبُ الْعَبْدَ الْمُؤْمِنَ، حَتَّى النَّكْبَةِ
يُنْكَبُهَا»

(That is what strikes the believing servant, even the problems that bother him.)" Ibn Jarir and Abu Dawud also recorded this Hadith. Sa`id bin Mansur recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "When the Ayah,

(مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ)

(whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof,) was revealed, it was hard on Muslims. The Messenger of Allah said to them,

«سَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا، فَإِنَّ فِي كُلِّ مَا يُصَابُ بِهِ
الْمُسْلِمُ كَقَارَةٍ، حَتَّى الشَّوْكَةِ يُشَاكُهَا، وَالنَّكْبَةَ
يُنْكَبُهَا»

(Be steadfast and seek closeness. Everything that afflicts the Muslim, even the thorn that pierces his skin and the hardship he suffers, will be an expiation for him.)" This is the wording collected by Ahmad through Sufyan bin `Uyaynah. Muslim and At-Tirmidhi also recorded it. Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَجِدُ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا)

(and he will not find any protector or helper besides Allah,) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said; "Unless he repents and Allah forgives him." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded it. Allah then said,

(وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنْثَى
وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ)

(And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a believer). Allah mentions the recompense for evil actions and that He will surely inflict its punishment on the servant, either in this life, which is better for him, or in the Hereafter, we seek refuge with Allah from this end. We also beg Allah for our well-being in this life and the Hereafter and for His forgiveness, mercy and pardon. Allah then mentions His kindness, generosity and mercy in accepting the good deeds from His servants, whether male or female, with the condition that they embrace the faith. He also stated that He will admit the believers into Paradise and will not withhold any of their righteous deeds, even the weight of a Naqir - speck on the back of a date-stone. Earlier, we discussed the Fatil - the scaly thread in the long slit of a date-stone, and both of these, along with the Qitmir -- the thin membrane over the date-stone were mentioned in the Qur'an. Allah then said,

(وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ)

(And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face to Allah.) meaning, performs the good actions in sincerity for his Lord with faith and awaiting the reward with Allah,

(وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ)

(and he is a Muhsin) following the correct guidance that Allah legislated in the religion of truth which He sent His Messenger with. These are the two conditions, in the absence of which no deed will be accepted from anyone; sincerity and correctness. The work is sincere when it is performed for Allah alone and it becomes correct when it conforms to the Shari`ah. So, the deed becomes outwardly correct with following the Sunnah and inwardly correct with sincerity. When any deed lacks either of these two conditions, the deed becomes null and void. For instance, when one lacks the pillar of sincerity in his work, he becomes a hypocrite who shows off for people. Whoever does not follow the Shari`ah, he becomes an ignorant, wicked person. When one combines both pillars, his actions will be the deeds of the faithful believers whose best deeds are accepted from them and their errors erased. Consequently, Allah said,

(وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا)

(And follows the religion of Ibrahim the Hanif (Monotheist).) referring to Muhammad and his following, until the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

(إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا
النَّبِيُّ)

(Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him, and this Prophet), and,

(ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا
كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ)

(Then, We have sent the Revelation to you (saying): "Follow the religion of Ibrahim the Hanif (Monotheist) and he was not of the Mushrikin). The Hanif, intentionally and with knowledge, avoids Shirk, he goes attentively to the truth, allowing no one to hinder him or stop him from it.

Ibrahim is Allah's Khalil

Allah's statement,

(وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا)

(And Allah did take Ibrahim as a Khalil (an intimate friend)!) encourages following Ibrahim Al-Khalil, because he was and still is an Imam whose conduct is followed and imitated. Indeed, Ibrahim reached the ultimate closeness to Allah that the servants seek, for he attained the grade of Khalil, which is the highest grade of love. He acquired all this due to his obedience to His Lord, just as Allah has described him,

(وَأَبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّى)

(And of Ibrahim, the one who fulfilled),

(وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ)

(And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrahim tried him with (certain) commands, which he fulfilled), and,

(إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَنِئًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ)

(Verily, Ibrahim was an Ummah, obedient to Allah, a Hanif, and he was not one of the Mushrikin). Al-Bukhari recorded that `Amr bin Maymun said that when Mu`adh came back from Yemen, he led them in the Fajr prayer and recited,

(وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا)

(And Allah did take Ibrahim as a Khalil!) One of the men present commented, "Surely, the eye of Ibrahim's mother has been comforted." Ibrahim was called Allah's Khalil due to his Lord's great love towards him, on account of the acts of obedience he performed that Allah loves and prefers. We should mention here that in the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri said that when the Messenger of Allah gave them his last speech, he said,

«أَمَّا بَعْدُ، أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ فَلَوْ كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذًا مِنْ أَهْلِ
الْأَرْضِ خَلِيلًا، لَاتَّخَذْتُ أَبَا بَكْرٍ ابْنَ أَبِي قُحَافَةَ
خَلِيلًا، وَلَكِنْ صَاحِبِكُمْ خَلِيلُ اللَّهِ»

(O people! If I were to take a Khalil from the people of the earth, I would have taken Abu Bakr bin Abi Quhafah as my Khalil. However, your companion (meaning himself) is the Khalil of

Allah.) Jundub bin `Abdullah Al-Bajali, `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Al-`As and `Abdullah bin Mas`ud narrated that the Prophet said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَخَذَنِي خَلِيلًا، كَمَا أَخَذَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا»

(Allah has chosen me as His Khalil, just as He has chosen Ibrahim as His Khalil.) Allah's statement,

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

(And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth.) means, everything and everyone are His property, servants and creation, and He has full authority over all of this. There is no one who can avert Allah's decision or question His judgment. He is never asked about what He does due to His might, ability, fairness, wisdom, compassion and mercy. Allah's statement,

وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا

(And Allah is Ever Encompassing all things.) means, His knowledge encompasses everything and nothing concerning His servants is ever hidden from Him. Nothing, even the weight of an atom, ever escapes His observation in the heavens and earth, nor anything smaller or bigger than that.

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُقْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُبْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ فِي يَتِمَى النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ وَتَرْغَبُونَ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الْوِلْدَانِ وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَىٰ بِالْقِسْطِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا

(127. They ask your legal instruction concerning women. Say: "Allah instructs you about them, and about what is recited unto you in the Book concerning the orphan girls whom you give not what they deserve and yet whom you desire to marry, and the children who are weak and oppressed, and that you stand firm for justice to orphans. And whatever good you do, Allah is Ever All-Aware of it.)

The Ruling Concerning Female Orphans

Al-Bukhari recorded that `A'ishah said about the Ayah,

(وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ)

(They ask your instruction concerning women. Say, "Allah instructs you about them...") until,

(وَتَرَّ غُبُونٌ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ)

(whom you desire to marry...) "It is about the man who is taking care of a female orphan, being her caretaker and inheritor. Her money is joined with his money to such an extent, that she shares with him even the branch of a date that he has. So he likes (for material gain) to marry her himself, and hates to marry her to another man who would have a share in his money, on account of her share in his money. Therefore, he refuses to let her marry anyone else. So, this Ayah was revealed." Muslim also recorded it. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `A'ishah said, "The people asked Allah's Messenger (about orphan girls), so Allah revealed,

(وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُبَلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ)

(They ask your instruction concerning women. Say, "Allah instructs you about them and about what is recited unto you in the Book...") What is meant by Allah's saying, 'And about what is recited unto you in the Book' is the former verse which said,

(وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ)

(If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry (other) women of your choice.)" `A'ishah said, "Allah's statement,

(وَتَرَّ غُبُونٌ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ)

(whom you desire to marry...) also refers to the desire of the guardian not to marry an orphan girl under his supervision when she lacks property or beauty. The guardians were forbidden to marry their orphan girls possessing property and beauty without being just to them, as they generally refrain from marrying them (when they are neither beautiful nor wealthy)." The basis of this is recorded in Two Sahihs. Consequently, when a man is the caretaker of a female orphan, he might like to marry her himself. In this case, Allah commands him to give her a

suitable dowry that other women of her status get. If he does not want to do that, then let him marry other women, for Allah has made this matter easy for Muslims. Sometimes, the caretaker does not desire to marry the orphan under his care, because she is not attractive to his eye. In this case, Allah forbids the caretaker from preventing the female orphan from marrying another man for fear that her husband would share in the money that is mutually shared between the caretaker and the girl. `Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said, "During the time of Jahiliyyah, the caretaker of a female orphan would cover her with his rope, and when he did that, no man would marry her. If she was beautiful and he desired to marry her, he married her and took control of her wealth. If she was not beautiful, he did not allow her to marry until she died, and when she died he inherited her money. Allah prohibited and outlawed this practice. " He also said about Allah's statement,

(وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الْوِلْدَانِ)

(and the children who are weak and oppressed,) that during the time of Jahiliyyah, they used to deny young children and females a share of inheritance. So Allah's statement,

(لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ)

(you give not what they deserve) thus prohibiting this practice and designating a fixed share for each,

(لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثِيَيْنِ)

(To the male, a portion equal to that of two females..) whether they were young or old, as Sa`id bin Jubayr and others stated. Sa`id bin Jubayr said about Allah's statement,

(وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَى بِالْقِسْطِ)

(and that you stand firm for justice to orphans.) "Just as when she is beautiful and wealthy you would want to marry her and have her for yourself, so when she is not wealthy or beautiful, marry her and have her for yourself." Allah's statement,

(وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا)

(And whatever good you do, Allah is Ever All-Aware of it.) encourages performing the good deeds and fulfilling the commandments, and states that Allah is knowledgeable of all of this and He will reward for it in the best and most perfect manner.

(وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَفَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزاً أَوْ إِعْرَاضاً
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحاً
وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ وَإِنْ
نَحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبيراً)

(وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ
حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمِيلِ فَتَدْرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ
وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفوراً رَحِيماً
- وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
وَسِعاً حَكِيماً)

(128. And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves; and making peace is better. And human souls are swayed by greed. But if you do good and have Taqwa, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.) (129. You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire, so do not incline too much to one of them so as to leave the other hanging. And if you do justice, and do all that is right and have Taqwa, then Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) (130. But if they separate (by divorce), Allah will provide abundance for everyone of them from His bounty. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Wise.)

The Ruling Concerning Desertion on the Part of the Husband

Allah states, and thus legislates accordingly, that sometimes, the man inclines away from his wife, sometimes towards her and sometimes he parts with her. In the first case, when the wife fears that her husband is steering away from her or deserting her, she is allowed to forfeit all or part of her rights, such as provisions, clothing, dwelling, and so forth, and the husband is allowed to accept such concessions from her. Hence, there is no harm if she offers such concessions, and if her husband accepts them. This is why Allah said,

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحاً)

(there is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves;) He then said,

(وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ)

(and making peace is better) than divorce. Allah's statement,

(وَأَحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ)

(And human souls are swayed by greed.) means, coming to peaceful terms, even when it involves forfeiting some rights, is better than parting. Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Sawdah feared that the Messenger of Allah might divorce her and she said, `O Messenger of Allah! Do not divorce me; give my day to `A'ishah.' And he did, and later on Allah sent down,

(وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَفَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزاً أَوْ إِعْرَاضاً
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا)

(And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no sin on them both) Ibn `Abbas said, "Whatever (legal agreement) the spouses mutually agree to is allowed.". At-Tirmidhi recorded it and said, "Hasan Gharib". In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that `A'ishah said that when Sawdah bint Zam`ah became old, she forfeited her day to `A'ishah, and the Prophet used to spend Sawdah's night with `A'ishah. There is a similar narration also collected by Al-Bukhari. Al-Bukhari also recorded that `A'ishah commented;

(وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَفَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزاً أَوْ إِعْرَاضاً)

(And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part), that it refers to, "A man who is married to an old woman, and he does not desire her and wants to divorce her. So she says, `I forfeit my right on you.' So this Ayah was revealed."

Meaning of 'Making Peace is Better

Allah said,

(وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ)

(And making peace is better). `Ali bin Abi Talhah related that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah refers to, "When the husband gives his wife the choice between staying with him or leaving him, as this is better than the husband preferring other wives to her." However, the apparent wording of the Ayah refers to the settlement where the wife forfeits some of the rights she has over her husband, with the husband agreeing to this concession, and that this settlement is

better than divorce. For instance, the Prophet kept Sawdah bint Zam`ah as his wife after she offered to forfeit her day for `Aishah. By keeping her among his wives, his Ummah may follow this kind of settlement. Since settlement and peace are better with Allah than parting, Allah said,

(وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ)

(and making peace is better). Divorce is not preferred with Allah. The meaning of Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا)

(But if you do good and have Taqwa, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do) if you are patient with the wife you dislike and treat her as other wives are treated, then Allah knows what you do and will reward you for it perfectly. Allah's statement,

(وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ)

(You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire,) means, O people! You will never be able to be perfectly just between wives in every respect. Even when one divides the nights justly between wives, there will still be various degrees concerning love, desire and sexual intimacy, as Ibn `Abbas, `Ubaydah As-Salmi, Mujahid, Al-Hasan Al-Basri and Ad-Dahhak bin Muzahim stated. Imam Ahmad and the collectors of the Sunan recorded that `Aishah said, "The Messenger of Allah used to treat his wives equally and proclaim,

«اللَّهُمَّ هَذَا قَسْمِي فِيمَا أَمْلِكُ، فَلَا تَلْمَنِي فِيمَا تَمْلِكُ وَلَا أَمْلِكُ»

(O Allah! This is my division in what I own, so do not blame me for what You own and I do not own) referring to his heart. This was the wording that Abu Dawud collected, and its chain of narrators is Sahih. Allah's statement,

(فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ)

(so do not incline too much to one of them) means, when you like one of your wives more than others, do not exaggerate in treating her that way,

(فَتَدْرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ)

(so as to leave the other hanging.) referring to the other wives. Ibn ` Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that Mu`allaqah hanging means, "She is neither divorced nor married." Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

**«مَنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ امْرَأَتَانِ فَمَالَ إِلَىٰ إِحْدَاهُمَا، جَاءَ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَحَدُ شِقَيْهِ سَاقِطٌ»**

(Whoever has two wives and inclines to one of them (too much), will come on the Day of Resurrection with one of his sides dragging.) Allah's statement,

**(وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا
رَحِيمًا)**

(And if you do justice, and do all that is right and have Taqwa, then Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) The Ayah states: If you do justice and divide equally in what you have power over, while fearing Allah in all conditions, then Allah will forgive you the favoritism that you showed to some of your wives. Allah then said,

**(وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
وَسِعًا حَكِيمًا)**

(But if they separate (divorce), Allah will provide abundance for everyone of them from His bounty. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Wise.) This is the third case between husband and wife, in which divorce occurs. Allah states that if the spouses separate by divorce, then Allah will suffice them by giving him a better wife and her a better husband. The meaning of,

(وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَسِعًا حَكِيمًا)

(And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Wise.) is: His favor is tremendous, His bounty is enormous and He is All-Wise in all His actions, decisions and commandments.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ
وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّكُمْ أَنْ
اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا - وَلِلَّهِ مَا
فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا
- إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ قَدِيرًا - مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ
الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا)

(131. And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And verily, We have recommended to the People of the Scripture before you, and to you that you have Taqwa of Allah. But if you disbelieve, then unto Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allah is Ever Rich (free of any needs), Worthy of all praise.) (132. And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient as Disposer of affairs.) (133. If He wills, He can take you away, O people, and bring others. And Allah is Ever All-Potent over that.) (134. Whoever desires the rewards of this life, then with Allah is the reward of this worldly life and of the Hereafter. And Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.)

The Necessity of Taqwa of Allah

Allah states that He is the Owner of the heavens and earth and that He is the Supreme Authority over them. Hence Allah's statement,

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَإِيَّكُمْ)

(And verily, We have recommended to the People of the Scripture before you, and to you) meaning, We have recommended to you what We recommended to the People of Scriptures; Taqwa of Allah, by worshipping Him Alone without partners. Allah then said,

(وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ)

(But if you disbelieve, then unto Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth). In another Ayah, Allah said that Musa said to his people,

(إِن تَكْفُرُوا أَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَإِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ)

("If you disbelieve, you and all on the earth together, then verily, Allah is Rich (free of any need), Owner of all praise."). Allah said,

(فَكْفُرُوا وَتَوَلَّوْا وَاسْتَعْنَى اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ)

(So they disbelieved and turned away. But Allah was not in need (of them). And Allah is Rich (free of any need), Worthy of all praise) meaning, He is far too Rich than to need His servants, and worthy of all praise in all His decisions and commandments. The meaning of Allah's statement,

(وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى
بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا)

(And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.) He has perfect watch over every soul, knowing what it deserves, He is the Watcher, and Witness of all things. Allah's statement,

(إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ قَدِيرًا)

(If He wills, He can take you away, O people, and bring others. And Allah is Ever All-Potent over that.) means, He is able to take you away and replace you with other people if you disobey Him. In a similar Ayah, Allah said,

(الْفُقَرَاءُ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا)

(And if you turn away, He will exchange you for some other people and they will not be your likes) Allah's statement,

(مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ)

(Whoever desires the rewards of this life, then with Allah is the reward of this worldly life and of the Hereafter.) means, O those whose ultimate desire is this life, know that Allah owns the rewards of this life and the Hereafter. Therefore, if you ask Allah for both, He will enrich you, award you and suffice for you. As Allah said,

(فَإِذَا قُضِيَتْ مَنَسِكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ
ءَابَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا
ءَاتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ -
وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا ءَاتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي
الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا)

(But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter. And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!" For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned),

(مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ)

(Whosoever desires (by his deeds) the reward of the Hereafter, We give him increase in his reward), and

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَجَلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ
لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ

(Whoever desires the quick-passing (transitory enjoyment of this world), We readily grant him what We will for whom We like) until,

انظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ

(See how We prefer one above another (in this world)). So Allah said here,

وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

(And Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ
شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا
فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلَوُوا أَوْ
تُعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

(135. O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a better Protector to both. So follow not the lusts, lest you may avoid justice; and if you Talwu or Tu`ridu, it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.)

Commanding Justice and Conveying the Witness for Allah

Allah commands His believing servants to stand up for justice and fairness and not to deviate from it, right or left. They should not fear the blame of anyone or allow anyone to prevent them from doing something for the sake of Allah. They are also required to help, support and aid each other for Allah's sake. Allah's statement,

(شُهَدَاءِ لِلَّهِ)

(as witnesses to Allah) is similar to His statement,

(وَأَقِيمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ)

(And establish the testimony for Allah). Testimony should be delivered precisely, for the sake of Allah, thus making the testimony correct, truly just, and free of alterations, changes or deletions. This is why Allah said,

(وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(even though it be against yourselves,) meaning, give correct testimony, and say the truth when you are asked about it, even if harm will effect you as a consequence. Indeed, Allah shall make a way out and give relief for those who obey Him in every matter. Allah's statement,

(أَوْ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ)

(or your parents, or your kin,) means, even if you have to testify against your parents and kin, do not compromise for their sake. Rather, give the correct and just witness even if they are harmed in the process, for the truth presides above everyone and is preferred to everyone. Allah's statement,

(إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا)

(be he rich or poor, Allah is a better Protector to both.) means, do not favor someone (in your testimony) because he is rich, or feel pity for him because he is poor, for Allah is their caretaker, a better Protector of them than you, and has better knowledge of what is good for them. Allah's statement,

(فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا)

(So follow not the lusts, lest you may avoid justice;) means, let not desire, lust or the hatred you have against others, lure you into injustice in your affairs. Rather, stand for justice in all situations. Allah said;

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ۤأَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۖ اَعْدِلُوا
هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ

(And let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety) when the Prophet sent `Abdullah bin Rawahah to collect the tax on the fruits and produce of the Jews of Khaybar, they offered him a bribe so that he would go easy on them. He said; "By Allah! I have come to you from the dearest of the creation to me (Muhammad), and you are more hated by me than an equivalent number of apes and swine. However, my love for him (the Prophet) and hatred for you shall not prevent me from being just with you." On that, they said, "This (justice) is the basis which the heavens and earth were created. " We will mention this Hadith later in Surat Al-Ma'idah (chapter 5) Allah willing. Allah's statement afterwards,

وَإِن تَلَّوْا أَوْ تُعْرَضُوا

(and if you Talwu or Tu`ridu) means, "Distort your testimony and change it", according to Mujahid and several others among the Salaf. Talwu, includes distortion and intentional lying. For instance, Allah said,

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُنَ ٱلسِّنَّةَ بِٱلْكَتَابِ

(And verily, among them is a party who Yalwuna (distort) the Book with their tongues (as they read)). Tu`ridu, includes hiding and withholding the testimony. Allah said,

وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ ۤءَآثِمٌ قَلْبُهُۥ

(Who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful) The Prophet said,

«خَيْرُ الشُّهَدَاءِ الَّذِي يَأْتِي بِشَهَادَتِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُسْأَلَ»

(The best witness is he who discloses his testimony before being asked to do so.) Allah then warned,

فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

(Verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.) and will reward or punish you accordingly.

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ءَامِنُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِى
أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلَٰئِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلًّٰلًا بَعِيدًا)

(136. O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and His Messenger, and the Book (the Qur'an) which He has sent down to His Messenger, and the Scripture which He sent down to those before; and whosoever disbelieves in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away.)

The Order to Have Faith after Believing

Allah commands His faithful servants to adhere to all the elements of faith, its branches, pillars and cornerstones. This is not stated as mere redundancy, but from the view of completing faith and the continual maintenance of it. For instance, the believer proclaims in every prayer,

(اٰهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ)

(Guide us to the straight way.) which means, make us aware of the straight path and increase us in guidance and strengthen us on it. In this Ayah 4:136 , Allah commands the believers to believe in Him and in His Messenger, just as He said elsewhere,

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَءَامِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ)

(O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah, and believe in His Messenger,). Allah's statement,

(وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ)

(and the Book which He has sent down to His Messenger,) refers to the Qur'an, while,

(وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِى أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ)

(and the Scripture which He sent down to those before (him);) refers to the previously revealed divine Books. Allah then said,

وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا

(and whosoever disbelieves in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away.) meaning, he will have deviated from the correct guidance and strayed far away from its path.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ ءَامَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا
ثُمَّ اٰزْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَعْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَلَا
لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيْلًا - بَشِّرِ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ بِاَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا
اَلِيْمًا)

(الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ اَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُوْنِ
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اٰيْتَعُوْنَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَاِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلّٰهِ
جَمِيْعًا - وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ اَنْ اِذَا
سَمِعْتُمْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيَسْتَهْزِءُ بِهَا فَلَا
تَقْعُدُوْا مَعَهُمْ حَتّٰى يَخْرُجُوْا فِيْ حَدِيْثٍ غَيْرِهِ
اِنَّكُمْ اِذَا مَثَلْتُمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ جٰمِعُ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَالْكَافِرِيْنَ
فِيْ جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيْعًا)

(137. Verily, those who believe, then disbelieve, then believe (again), and (again) disbelieve, and go on increasing in disbelief; Allah will not forgive them, nor guide them on the (right) way.) (138. Give to the hypocrites the tidings that there is for them a painful torment.) (139. Those who take disbelievers for friends instead of believers, do they seek honor with them Verily, then to Allah belongs all honor). (140. And it has already been revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with

them, until they engage in talk other than that; certainly in that case you would be like them. Surely, Allah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell.)

Characteristics of the Hypocrites and Their Destination

Allah states that whoever embraces the faith, reverts from it, embraces it again, reverts from it and remains on disbelief and increases in it until death, then he will never have a chance to gain accepted repentance after death. Nor will Allah forgive him, or deliver him from his plight to the path of correct guidance. This is why Allah said,

(لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًا)

(Allah will not forgive them, nor guide them on the (right) way). Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that his father said that Ahmad bin `Abdah related that Hafs bin Jami' said that Samak said that `Ikrimah reported that Ibn `Abbas commented;

(ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوا كُفْرًا)

(and go on increasing in disbelief), "They remain on disbelief until they die." Mujahid said similarly. Allah then said,

(بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا)

(Give to the hypocrites the tidings that there is for them a painful torment.) Hence, the hypocrites have this characteristic, for they believe, then disbelieve, and this is why their hearts become sealed. Allah describes the hypocrites as taking the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers, meaning they are the disbelievers' supporters in reality, for they give them their loyalty and friendship in secret. They also say to disbelievers when they are alone with them, "We are with you, we only mock the believers by pretending to follow their religion." Allah said, while chastising them for being friends with the disbelievers,

(أَيَبْتَغُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ)

(do they seek honor, with them) Allah then states that honor, power and glory is for Him Alone without partners, and for those whom Allah grants such qualities to. Allah said,

(مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا)

(Whosoever desires honor, then to Allah belong all honor), and,

(وَاللَّهُ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ
الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(But honor belongs to Allah, and to His Messenger, and to the believers, but the hypocrites know not). The statement that honor is Allah's Alone, is meant to encourage the servants to adhere to their servitude to Allah and to be among His faithful servants who will gain victory in this life and when the Witnesses stand up to testify on the Day of Resurrection. Allah's statement,

(وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ
اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّى
يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِثْلُهُمْ)

(And it has already been revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in talk other than that; certainly in that case you would be like them.) The Ayah means, if you still commit this prohibition after being aware of its prohibition, sitting with them where Allah's Ayat are rejected, mocked at and denied, and you sanction such conduct, then you have participated with them in what they are doing. So Allah said,

(إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِثْلُهُمْ)

((But if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them.) concerning the burden they will earn. What has already been revealed in the Book -- as the Ayah says -- is the Ayah in Surat Al-An`am 6 , which was revealed in Makkah,

(وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا
فَاعْرُضْ عَنْهُمْ)

(And when you see those who engage in false conversation about Our verses (of the Qur'an) by mocking at them, stay away from them). Muqatil bin Hayyan said that this Ayah 4:140 abrogated the Ayah in Surat Al-An`am, referring to the part that says here,

(إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِثْلُهُمْ)

((But if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them), and Allah's statement in Al-An`am,

وَمَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
وَلَكِنْ ذِكْرَى لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ)

(Those who fear Allah, keep their duty to Him and avoid evil, are not responsible for them (the disbelievers) in any case, but (their duty) is to remind them, that they may have Taqwa). Allah's statement,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ
جَمِيعًا)

(Surely, Allah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell.) means, just as the hypocrites participate in the Kufr of disbelievers, Allah will join them all together to reside in the Fire for eternity, dwelling in torment, punishment, enchained, restrained and in drinking boiling water.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ
قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعَكُمْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا)

(141. Those who wait and watch about you; if you gain a victory from Allah, they say: "Were we not with you" But if the disbelievers gain a success, they say (to them): "Did we not gain mastery over you and did we not protect you from the believers" Allah will judge between you (all) on the Day of Resurrection. And never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers.)

Hypocrites Wait and Watch what Happens to Muslims

Allah states that the hypocrites watch and await the harm that occurs to the believers, awaiting the time when the Muslim circumstances and religion are dissolved and the state of Kufr takes over.

(فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(if you gain a victory from Allah) triumph, aid and booty,

(قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ)

(they say, "Were we not with you") trying to come closer to the believers with this statement. However,

(وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ)

(But if the disbelievers gain a success,) by gaining victory over the believers sometimes, just as occurred during Uhud, for surely, the Messengers are tested, but the final victory is theirs.

(قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعَكُمْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(they say (to them), "Did we not gain mastery over you and did we not protect you from the believers") meaning, did we not help you in secret and try our best to confuse the believers and weaken their resolve, until you gained victory over them This statement of the hypocrites is an attempt to strengthen relations with the disbelievers, because they pretend to be friends with both parties so that they will be safe from their harm, due to their weak faith and lack of certainty. Allah said,

(قَالَ اللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(Allah will judge between you (all) on the Day of Resurrection) meaning, by what He knows about you, O hypocrites. Therefore, do not be deceived by being shaded under the protection of Islamic Law in this life, which is such only out of Allah's wisdom. Surely, on the Day of Resurrection, your pretending shall not benefit you, because on that Day, the secrets of the souls will be disclosed and the contents of the hearts will be collected. Allah said,

(وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا)

(And never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers). `Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Yasi` Al-Kindi said, "A man came to `Ali bin Abi Talib and said, `What about this Ayah,

(وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا)

(And never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers.) `Ali said, `Come closer, come closer. Allah will judge between you on the Day of Resurrection, and He will not grant victory for the disbelievers over the believers.' " Ibn Jurayj recorded that `Ata' Al-Khurasani said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا

(And never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers.) "Will occur on the Day of Resurrection." As-Suddi recorded that Abu Malik Al-Ashja`i said that it occurs on the Day of Resurrection. As-Suddi said that "way" means, proof. It is possible that the meaning of, `and never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers', is in this life by being unable to exterminate the believers completely, although they sometimes gain victory over some Muslims. However, the Final Triumph will be for the believers in this life and the Hereafter. Allah said,

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا

(Verily, We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe in the worldly life) This provides a rebuttal to the wishes of the hypocrites for the destruction of the believers, and their loyalty to the disbelievers, fearing for themselves if they are victorious. In another Ayah, Allah said,

فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسْرِعُونَ فِيهِمْ

(And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease (of hypocrisy), they hurry to their friendship), until,

(نَدِيمِينَ)

(Regretful)

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا
قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ
وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا - مُدْبِدِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا

إِلَى هَوَآءٍ وَلَا إِلَى هَوَآءٍ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ
تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا)

(142. Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for Salah, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allah but little.) (143. (They are) swaying between this and that, belonging neither to these nor to those; and he whom Allah sends astray, you will not find for him a way.)

The Hypocrites Try to Deceive Allah and Sway Between Believers and Disbelievers

In the beginning of Surat Al-Baqarah 2 , we mentioned Allah's statement,

(يُخَدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا)

(They (think to) deceive Allah and those who believe). Here, Allah states,

(إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ)

(Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them.) There is no doubt that Allah can never be deceived, for He has perfect knowledge of the secrets and what the hearts conceal. However, the hypocrites, due to their ignorance, scarce knowledge and weak minds, think that since they were successful in deceiving people, using Islamic Law as a cover of safety for themselves, they will acquire the same status with Allah on the Day of Resurrection and deceive Him too. Allah states that on that Day, the hypocrites will swear to Him that they were on the path of righteousness and correctness thinking that such statement will benefit them with Allah. For instance, Allah said,

(يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ
لَكُمْ)

(On the Day when Allah will resurrect them all together; then they will swear to Him as they swear to you) Allah's statement,

(وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ)

(but it is He Who deceives them) means, He lures them further into injustice and misguidance. He also prevents them from reaching the truth in this life and on the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

(يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنْفِقُونَ وَالْمُنْفِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
انظرونا نقتبس من نوركم)

(On the Day when the hypocrites men and women will say to the believers: "Wait for us! Let us get something from your light!" It will be said: "Go back to your rear! Then seek a light!") until,

(وَيْسَ الْمَصِيرُ)

(And worst indeed is that destination). A Hadith states;

«مَنْ سَمِعَ سَمَعَ اللَّهُ بِهِ، وَمَنْ رَأَى رَأَى اللَّهَ
بِهِ»

(Whoever wants to be heard of, Allah will make him heard of, and whoever wants to be seen, Allah will show him.) Allah's statement,

(وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى)

(And when they stand up for Salah, they stand with laziness). This is the characteristic of the hypocrites with the most honored, best and righteous act of worship, the prayer. When they stand for prayer, they stand in laziness because they neither truly intend to perform it nor do they believe in it, have humility in it, or understand it. This is the description of their outward attitude! As for their hearts, Allah said,

(يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ)

(to be seen of men) meaning, they do not have sincerity when worshipping Allah. Rather, they show off to people so that they gain closeness to them. They are often absent from the prayers that they can hide away from, such as the `Isha' prayer and the Dawn prayer that are prayed in darkness. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أثْقَلُ الصَّلَاةِ عَلَى الْمُنَافِقِينَ صَلَاةُ الْعِشَاءِ
 وَصَلَاةُ الْفَجْرِ، وَلَوْ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِيهِمَا لَأَتَوْهُمَا
 وَلَوْ حَبْوًا، وَلَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ أَنْ أَمُرَ بِالصَّلَاةِ فَتُقَامَ، ثُمَّ
 أَمُرَ رَجُلًا فَيُصَلِّيَ بِالنَّاسِ، ثُمَّ أَنْطَلِقَ مَعِيَ
 بِرِجَالٍ مَعَهُمْ حُزْمٌ مِنْ حَطَبٍ، إِلَى قَوْمٍ لَأِ
 يَشْهَدُونَ الصَّلَاةَ، فَأَحْرَقَ عَلَيْهِمْ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِالنَّارِ»

. (The heaviest prayers on the hypocrites are the `Isha' and Dawn prayers. If they know their rewards, they will attend them even if they have to crawl. I was about to order someone to pronounce the Adhan for the prayer, then order someone to lead the prayer for the people, then order some men to collect fire-wood (fuel); then I would burn the houses around men who did not attend the (compulsory congregational) prayer.) In another narration, the Prophet said,

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَوْ عَلِمَ أَحَدُهُمْ أَنَّهُ يَجِدُ عَرَقًا
 سَمِينًا أَوْ مِرْمَاتَيْنِ حَسَنَتَيْنِ، لَشَهِدَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَلَوْ لَأِ
 مَا فِي الْبُيُوتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالذَّرِيَّةِ لَحَرَّقْتُ
 عَلَيْهِمْ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِالنَّارِ»

(By Him, in Whose Hand my soul is, if anyone of them had known that he would get a bone covered with good meat or two (small) pieces of meat between two ribs, he would have turned up for the prayer, and had it not been that the houses have women and children in them, I would burn their homes around them.) Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(And they do not remember Allah but little) means, during the prayer they do not feel humbleness or pay attention to what they are reciting. Rather, during their prayer, they are inattentive, jesting and avoid the good that they are meant to receive from prayer. Imam Malik reported that Al-`Ala' bin `Abdur-Rahman said that Anas bin Malik said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«تِلْكَ صَلَاةُ الْمُنَافِقِ، تِلْكَ صَلَاةُ الْمُنَافِقِ، تِلْكَ صَلَاةُ الْمُنَافِقِ، تِلْكَ صَلَاةُ الْمُنَافِقِ، يَجْلِسُ يَرْقُبُ الشَّمْسَ، حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَتْ بَيْنَ قَرْنَيْ الشَّيْطَانِ، قَامَ فَنَقَرَ أَرْبَعًا، لَا يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا»

(This is the prayer of the hypocrite, this is the prayer of the hypocrite, this is the prayer of the hypocrite. He sits watching the sun until when it goes down between the two horns of the devil, he stands up pecks out four Rak`ahs (for `Asr) without remembering Allah during them except little.) Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i also recorded it. At-Tirmidhi said "Hasan Sahih". Allah's statement,

(مُذَبْذِبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ)

((They are) swaying between this and that, belonging neither to these) means that the hypocrites are swaying between faith and disbelief. So they are neither with believers inwardly or outwardly nor with disbelievers inwardly or outwardly. Rather, they are with the believers outwardly and with the disbelievers inwardly. Some of them would suffer fits of doubt, leaning towards these sometimes and towards those sometimes,

(كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا)

(Whenever it flashes for them, they walk therein, and when darkness covers them, they stand still). Mujahid said;

(مُذَبْذِبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ)

((They are) swaying between this and that, belonging neither to these) "The Companions of Muhammad ,

(وَلَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ)

(nor to those): the Jews." Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Umar said that the Prophet said,

«مَثَلُ الْمُنَافِقِ كَمَثَلِ الشَّاةِ الْعَائِرَةِ بَيْنَ الْغَنَمَيْنِ،
تَعِيرُ إِلَى هَذِهِ مَرَّةً، وَإِلَى هَذِهِ مَرَّةً، وَلَا تَدْرِي
أَيَّتَهُمَا تَتَّبَعُ»

(The example of the hypocrite is the example of the sheep wandering between two herds, sometimes she goes to one of them, and sometimes the other, confused over whom she should follow.) Muslim also recorded it. This is why Allah said afterwards,

(وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا)

(and he whom Allah sends astray, you will not find for him a way.) meaning, whomever He leads astray from the guidance,

(فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا)

(For him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the right path)) because,

(مَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ)

(Whomsoever Allah sends astray, none can guide him). So the hypocrites whom Allah has led astray from the paths of safety will never find a guide to direct them, nor someone to save them. There is none who can resist Allah's decision, and He is not asked about what He does, while they all will be asked.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ
مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا - إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ
مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا - إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا
وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ
فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا - مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَدَائِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ
وَأَمَنْتُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَكِيرًا عَلِيمًا)

(144. O you who believe! Do not take disbelievers as friends instead of believers. Do you wish to offer Allah a manifest Sultan against yourselves) (145. Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth (grade) of the Fire; no helper will you find for them.) (146. Except those who repent, do righteous good deeds, depend on Allah, and purify their religion for Allah, then they will be with the believers. And Allah will grant the believers a great reward.) (147. Why should Allah punish you if you have thanked (Him) and have believed in Him. And Allah is Ever All-Appreciative (of good), All-Knowing.)

The Prohibition of Wilayah with the Disbelievers

Allah forbids His believing servants from taking the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers. This includes being friends and associates of the disbelievers, advising them, being intimate with them and exposing the secrets of the believers to them. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ
إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً وَيُحَدِّثْكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ)

(Let not the believers take the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers, and whoever does that, will never be helped by Allah in any way, except if you indeed fear a danger from them. And Allah warns you against Himself). meaning, He warns you against His punishment if you fall into what He has prohibited. This is why Allah said here,

(أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا)

(Do you wish to offer Allah a manifest Sultan against yourselves) meaning, proof against you that warrants receiving His torment. Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Ibn `Abbas commented;

(سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا)

(manifest Sultan), "The word Sultan in the Qur'an means proof. " There is an authentic chain of narration for this statement, which is also the saying of Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi, Ad-Dahhak, As-Suddi and An-Nadr bin `Arabi.

The Hypocrites and the Friends of Disbelievers are in the Lowest Depth of the Fire, Unless they Repent

Allah then states that,

(إِنَّ الْمُنْفِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ)

(Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire;) on the Day of Resurrection due to their tremendous Kufr. Al-Walibi `Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said,

(فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ)

(in the lowest depths (grade) of the Fire;) means, in the bottom of the Fire. Other scholars said that the Fire has ever lower depths just as Paradise had ever higher grades. Ibn Jarir recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said that,

(إِنَّ الْمُنْفِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ)

(Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths (grade) of the Fire), "Inside coffins of Fire that surround them, for they are closed and sealed in them." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that when Ibn Mas`ud was asked about the hypocrites, he said, "They will be placed in coffins made of fire and they will be closed in them in the lowest depth of the Fire."

(وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا)

(no helper will you find for them.) to save them from their misery and painful torment. Allah then states that whoever among the hypocrites repents in this life, Allah will accept his repentance and sorrow, if his repentance were sincere and he then follows it by performing righteous deeds, all the while depending on his Lord. Allah said, a

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ)

(Except those who repent (from hypocrisy), do righteous good deeds, depend on Allah, and purify their religion for Allah) replacing showing off with sincerity, so that their good deeds will benefit them, even if they were minute.

(فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(then they will be with the believers.) on the Day of Resurrection,

(وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا)

(And Allah will grant to the believers a great reward.) Allah then states that He is too Rich to need anyone and that He only punishes the servants because of their sins,

(مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَءَامَنْتُمْ)

(Why should Allah punish you if you have thanked (Him) and have believed in Him.) by correcting your actions and having faith in Allah and His Messenger ,

(وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَكِيرًا عَلِيمًا)

(And Allah is Ever All-Appreciative (of good), All-Knowing.) Allah appreciates those who appreciate Him, and has knowledge of those whose hearts believe in Him, and He will give them perfect reward.

(لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا - إِن تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا قَدِيرًا)

(148. Allah does not like that the evil should be uttered in public except by him who has been wronged. And Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (149. Whether you disclose a good deed or conceal it, or pardon an evil, verily, Allah is Ever Pardoning, All-Powerful.)

The Permission to Utter Evil in Public, For One Who Was Wronged

Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn ` Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ)

(Allah does not like that the evil should be uttered in public) "Allah does not like that any one should invoke Him against anyone else, unless one was wronged. In this case, Allah allows one to invoke Him against whoever wronged him. Hence Allah's statement,

(إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ)

(except by him who has been wronged.) Yet, it is better for one if he observes patience." Al-Hasan Al-Basri commented, "One should not invoke Allah (for curses) against whoever wronged him. Rather, he should supplicate, `O Allah! Help me against him and take my right from him." In another narration, Al-Hasan said, "Allah has allowed one to invoke Him against whoever wronged him without transgressing the limits." `Abdul-Karim bin Malik Al-Jazari said about this Ayah; "When a man curses you, you could curse him in retaliation. But if he lies about you, you may not lie about him.

(وَلَمَنْ انتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ سَبِيلٍ)

(And indeed whosoever takes revenge after he has suffered wrong, for such there is no way (of blame) against them.)" Abu Dawud recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«المُسْتَبَّانِ مَا قَالَا، فَعَلَى الْبَادِيِّ مِنْهُمَا مَا لَمْ يَعْتَدِ الْمَظْلُومُ»

(Whatever words are uttered by those who curse each other, then he who started it will carry the burden thereof, unless the one who was wronged transgresses the limit.) Allah said,

(إِنْ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا)

(Whether you disclose a good deed, or conceal it, or pardon an evil; verily, Allah is Ever Pardoning, All-Powerful.) Meaning when you, mankind, admit to a good favor done to you, or conceal it, and forgive those who wrong you, then this will bring you closer to Allah and increase your reward with Him. Among Allah's attributes is that He forgives and pardons His servants, although He is able to punish them. Hence Allah's statement,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا قَدِيرًا)

(Verily, Allah is Ever Pardoning, All-Powerful.) It was reported that some of the angels who carry Allah's Throne praise Him saying, "All praise is due to You for Your forbearing even though You have perfect knowledge (in all evil committed)." Some of them supplicate, "All praise is due to You for Your forgiving even though You have perfect ability (to punish)." An authentic Hadith states,

«مَا نَقَصَ مَالٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ، وَلَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا
بِعَفْوٍ إِلَّا عِزًّا، وَمَنْ تَوَاضَعَ لِلَّهِ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ»

(No charity shall ever decrease wealth, and Allah will only increase the honor of a servant who pardons, and he who is humble for Allah's sake, then Allah will elevate his grade.)

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ
يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ
وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ
سَبِيلًا - أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا - وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ أُولَئِكَ سَوْفَ
يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا)

(150. Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers saying, "We believe in some but reject others," and wish to adopt a way in between.) (151. They are in truth disbelievers. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment.) (152. And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and make no distinction between any of them (Messengers), We shall give them their rewards; and Allah is Ever Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

Believing in Some Prophets and Rejecting Others is Pure Kufir

Allah threatens those who disbelieve in Him and in His Messengers, such as the Jews and Christians, who differentiate between Allah and His Messengers regarding faith. They believe in some Prophets and reject others, following their desires, lusts and the practices of their forefathers. They do not follow any proof for such distinction, because there is no such proof. Rather, they follow their lusts and prejudices. The Jews, may Allah curse them, believe in the Prophets, except `Isa and Muhammad, peace be upon them. The Christians believe in the Prophets but reject their Final and Seal, and the most honored among the prophets, Muhammad, peace be upon him. In addition, the Samirah (Samaritans) do not believe in any Prophet after Yuwsha` (Joshua), the successor of Musa bin `Imran. The Majus (Zoroastrians) are said to believe only in a Prophet called Zoroaster, although they do not believe in the law he brought them casting it behind them, and Allah knows best. Therefore, whoever rejects only one of Allah's Prophets, he will have disbelieved in all of them, because it is required from mankind to believe in every prophet whom Allah sent to the people of the earth. And whoever rejects one Prophet, out of envy, bias and personal whim, he only demonstrates that his faith in other Prophets is not valid, but an act of following desire and whim. This is why Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ)

(Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers...) Thus, Allah describes these people as disbelievers in Allah and His Messengers;

(وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ)

(and wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers) in faith,

(وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا)

(saying, "We believe in some but reject others," and wish to adopt a way in between.) Allah then describes them;

(أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا)

(They are in truth disbelievers.) meaning, their disbelief in the Prophet they claim to believe in is clear. This is because their claimed faith in a certain Messenger is not true, for had they truly believed in him, they would have believed in other Messengers, especially if the other Messenger has a stronger proof for his truthfulness. Or at least, they would have strived hard to acquire knowledge of the truth of the other Messenger. Allah said,

(وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا)

(And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment.) This is just punishment for belittling the Prophets whom they disbelieved in, by ignoring what the Prophet brought to them from Allah, and because they are interested in the insignificant possessions of this world. Or, their behavior could be the result of their disbelief in the Prophet after they were aware of his truth, just as the Jewish rabbis did during the time of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah . The Jews envied the Messenger because of the great prophethood that Allah gave him, and as a consequence, they denied the Messenger, defied him, became his enemies and fought against him. Allah sent humiliation upon them in this life, that shall be followed by disgrace in the Hereafter,

وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدُّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبِ
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ

(And they were covered with humiliation and misery, and they drew on themselves the wrath of Allah.) in this life and the Hereafter. Allah's statement,

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ
مِّنْهُمْ

(And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and make no distinction between any of them,) This refers to the Ummah of Muhammad who believe in every Book that Allah has revealed and in every Prophet whom Allah has sent. Allah said,

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ بِمَا اُنزِلَ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ كُلُّهُمْ ءَامَنَ بِاللّٰهِ

(The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. All of them believe in Allah.) (2:285). Allah then states that He has prepared great rewards for them, tremendous favor and a handsome bounty,

اُولٰٓئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ اَجْرَهُمْ

(We shall give them their rewards;) because of their faith in Allah and His Messengers,

وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا

(and Allah is Ever Forgiving, Most Merciful.) for their sin, if they have any.

(يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَن ذَلِكَ وَعَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُطْنًا مُّبِينًا - وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا)

(153. The People of the Scripture (Jews) ask you to cause a book to descend upon them from heaven. Indeed, they asked Musa for even greater than that, when they said: "Show us Allah in public," but they were struck with a bolt of lightning for their wickedness. Then they worshipped the calf even after Al-Bayyinah had come to them. (Even) so We forgave them. And We gave Musa a clear proof of authority.) (154. And for their covenant, We raised over them the mount and (on the other occasion) We said: "Enter the gate prostrating (or bowing) with humility;" and We commanded them: "Transgress not on the Sabbath (Saturday)." And We took from them a firm covenant.)

The Stubbornness of the Jews

Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi, As-Suddi and Qatadah said that the Jews asked the Messenger of Allah to cause a book to come down to them from heaven, just as the Tawrah was sent down to Musa. Ibn Jurayj said that the Jews asked the Messenger to cause books to come down to them addressed to so-and-so among them, testifying to the truth of what he was sent with. The Jews only asked for this because of their stubbornness, defiance, rejection and disbelief. The disbelievers of Quraysh also asked for similar things from the Prophet, as is mentioned in Surat Al-Isra',

(وَقَالُوا لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَبُوعًا)

(And they say: "We shall not believe in you, until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us;") (17:90) Allah said,

(فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ
جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ)

(Indeed, they asked Musa for even greater than that, when they said, "Show us Allah in public," but they were struck with a bolt of lightning for their wickedness.) injustice, transgression, defiance and rebellion. This part was explained in Surat Al-Baqarah,

(وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى اللَّهَ
جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ الصَّعِقَةُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ - ثُمَّ
بَعَثْنَاكَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ)

(And (remember) when you said: "O Musa! We shall never believe in you until we see Allah plainly." But you were struck by a bolt of lightning while you were looking. Then We raised you up after your death, so that you might be grateful.) (2:55,56) Allah's statement,

(ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ)

(Then they worshipped the calf even after Al-Bayyinah had come to them.) meaning, after they witnessed the tremendous miracles and unequivocal proofs at the hand of Musa in Egypt. They also witnessed the demise of their enemy, Fir`awn and his soldiers, when they all drowned in the sea. Yet soon after, when they passed by a people who were worshipping idols, they said to Musa,

(اجْعَلْ لَنَا إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ)

(Make for us a god as they have gods.) Allah explains the story of the Jews worshipping the calf in Surat Al-A`raf (7) and Surah Ta Ha (20) after Musa went to meet with his Lord. When Musa returned, Allah decreed that in order for the Jews to earn accepted repentance, then those who did not worship the calf would have to kill those who worshipped it. They complied with this command, and Allah resurrected them afterwards. Allah said here,

(فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَعَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِينًا)

((Even) so We forgave them. And We gave Musa a clear proof of authority.) Allah then said,

(وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ)

(And for their covenant, We raised over them the mount,) This was when they refrained from implementing the rulings of the Tawrah and refused what Musa brought them from Allah. So Allah raised the mountain above their heads and they were ordered to prostrate, which they did. Even so, they were looking above when they were prostrating for fear that the mountain might fall on them,

(وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظِلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ)

(And (remember) when We raised the mountain over them as if it had been a canopy, and they thought that it was going to fall on them. (We said): "Hold firmly to what We have given you.") Allah then said,

(وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا)

(and We said, "Enter the gate prostrating (or bowing) with humility;") meaning that they also defied this command in word and action. They were commanded to enter Bayt Al-Quds (in Jerusalem) while bowing and saying "Hittah", meaning: `O Allah! take from us our sin of abandoning Jihad.' This was the cause of their wandering in the desert of Tih for forty years. Yet, they entered the House while crawling on their rear ends and saying `Hintah (a wheat grain) in Sha` rah (the hair)'.
(وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ)

(and We commanded them, "Transgress not the Sabbath (Saturday).") meaning, We commanded them to honor the Sabbath and honor what Allah prohibited them on that day.

(وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا)

t(And We took from them a firm covenant.) meaning, strong covenant. They rebelled, transgressed and committed what Allah prohibited by using deceit and trickery, as is mentioned in Surat Al-A` raf (7),

(وَسَأَلْنَهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ)

(And ask them about the town that was by the sea.)

(فِيمَا نَقَضِهِمْ مِيثَقَهُمْ وَكَفَرَهُمْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ
الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا -
وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَنًا عَظِيمًا -
وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ
اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ
الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ
إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا - بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ
إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا)

(وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لِيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ
وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا)

(155. Because of their breaking the covenant, and their rejecting the Ayat of Allah, and their killing the Prophets unjustly, and their saying: "Our hearts are Ghulf," nay, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts because of their disbelief, so they believe not but a little.) (156. And because of their disbelief and uttering against Maryam a grave false charge.) (157. And because of their saying, "We killed Al-Masih `Isa, son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah," but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared as that to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not.) (158. But Allah raised him up unto Himself. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.) (159. And there is none of the People of the Scripture, but must believe in him, before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he will be a witness against them.)

The Crimes of the Jews

The sins mentioned here are among the many sins that the Jews committed, which caused them to be cursed and removed far away from right guidance. The Jews broke the promises and vows that Allah took from them, and also rejected Allah's Ayat, meaning His signs and proofs, and the miracles that they witnessed at the hands of their Prophets. Allah said,