

(Verily, we are both Messengers of your Lord) (20:47). which means, `both of us have been sent to you,'

(أَنْ أَرْسِلَ مَعَنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(So allow the Children of Israel to go with us.) Meaning, `let them go, free them from your captivity, subjugation and torture, for they are the believing servants of Allah, devoted to Him, and with you they are in a position of humiliating torture.' When Musa said that to him, Fir`awn turned away and ignored him completely, regarding him with scorn and thinking little of him. Saying:

(أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا)

(Did we not bring you up among us as a child) meaning, we brought you up among us, in our home and on our bed, we nourished you and did favors for you for many years, and after all that you responded to our kindness in this manner: you killed one of our men and denied our favors to you.' So he said to him:

(وَأَنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(While you were one of the ingrates.) meaning, one of those who deny favors. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam, and was the view favored by Ibn Jarir.

(قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَا إِذَا)

((Musa) said: "I did it then...") meaning, at that time,

(وَأَنَا مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ)

(when I was in error.) meaning, `before revelation was sent to me and before Allah made me a Prophet and sent me with this Message.'

(فَقَرَرْتُ مِنْكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِي رَبِّي حُكْمًا
وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ)

(So, I fled from you when I feared you. But my Lord has granted me Hukm, and made me one of the Messengers.) means, `the first situation came to an end and another took its place. Now Allah has sent me to you, and if you obey Him, you will be safe, but if you oppose Him, you will be destroyed.' Then Musa said:

(وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(And this is the past favor with which you reproach me, -- that you have enslaved the Children of Israel.) meaning, `whatever favors you did in bringing me up are offset by the evil you did by enslaving the Children of Israel and using them to do your hard labor. Is there any comparison between your favors to one man among them and the evil you have done to all of them What you have mentioned about me is nothing compared to what you have done to them.'

(قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ - قَالَ رَبُّ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ
- قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ - قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ
ءَابَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ - قَالَ إِنْ رَسُولِكُمُ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ
إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ - قَالَ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(23. Fir`awn said: "And what is the Lord of Al-`Alamin") (24. (Musa) said: "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, if you seek to be convinced with certainty.") (25. (Fir`awn) said to those around: "Do you not hear (what he says)") (26. (Musa) said: "Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!") (27. (Fir`awn) said: "Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!") (28. (Musa) said: "Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!")

**Allah tells us about the disbelief, rebellion, oppression and denial
of Fir`awn, as He says:**

(وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

((Fir`awn said:) "And what is the Lord of the `Alamin") This is because he used to say to his people:

(مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي)

(I know not that you have a god other than me.) (28:28)

(فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَاطَاعُوهُ)

(Thus he fooled his people, and they obeyed him.) (43:54) They used to deny the Creator, may He be glorified, and they believed that they had no other lord than Fir`awn. When Musa said to them: "I am the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds," Fir`awn said to him, "Who is this who you are claiming is the Lord of Al-`Alamin other than me" This is how it was interpreted by the scholars of the Salaf and the Imams of later generations. As-Suddi said, "This Ayah is like the Ayah,

(قَالَ فَمَنْ رَبُّكُمَا يَمُوسَى - قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى)

((Fir`awn) said: "Who then, O Musa, is the Lord of you two" He said: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright.") (20:49-50) Those among the philosophers and others who claimed that this was a question about the nature or substance)of Allah(are mistaken. Fir`awn did not believe in the Creator in the first place, so he was in no position to ask about the nature of the Creator; he denied that the Creator existed at all, as is apparent from the meaning, even though proof and evidence had been established against him. When Fir`awn asked him about the Lord of Al-`Alamin, Musa said:

(قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا)

((Musa) said: "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them...") meaning, the Creator, Sovereign and Controller of all that, their God Who has no partner or associate. He is the One Who has created all things. He knows the higher realms and the heavenly bodies that are in them, both those that are stationary and those that move and shine brightly. He knows the lower realms and what is in them; the oceans, continents, mountains, trees, animals, plants and fruits. He knows what is in between the two realms; the winds, birds, and whatever is in the air. All of them are servants to Him, submitting and humbling themselves before Him.

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ)

(if you seek to be convinced with certainty.) means, if you have believing hearts and clear insight. At this, Fir`awn turned to the chiefs and leaders of his state around him, and said to them -- mockingly expressing his disbelief in Musa:

(أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ)

("Do you not hear") meaning, `are you not amazed by what this man is claiming -- that you have another god other than me' Musa said to them:

(رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأُولِينَ)

(Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!) meaning, the One Who created you and your forefathers, those who came before Fir`awn and his time.

(قَالَ)

(He said) that is, Fir`awn said:

(إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمْ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ)

(Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!) meaning, there is no sense in his claim that there is any god other than me!

(قَالَ)

((Musa) said) -- to those in whose hearts Fir`awn had planted doubts:

(رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!) `He is the One Who made the east the place where the heavenly bodies rise, and made the west the place where they set; this is the system to which He has subjugated all the heavenly bodies, stationary and moving. If what Fir`awn claims is true, that he is your lord and your god, then let him turn things around so that the heavenly bodies set in the east and rise in the west.' This is similar to the Ayah,

(الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ)

(who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord, because Allah had given him the kingdom When Ibrahim said: "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death." He said, "I give life and cause death." Ibrahim said, "Verily, Allah brings the sun from the east. So cause it to rise from the west.") (2:258) So when Fir`awn was defeated in debate, he resorted to the use of his force and power, believing that this would be effective in dealing with Musa, peace be upon him, so he said, as Allah tells us:

(قَالَ لئن اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي لأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ
 الْمَسْجُونِينَ - قَالَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ - قَالَ
 فَأْتِ بِهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ
 فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ
 لِلنَّظِيرِينَ قَالَ لِلْمَلَأِ حَوْلَهُ إِنَّ هَذَا لَسِحْرٌ عَلِيمٌ
 يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ فَمَاذَا
 تَأْمُرُونَ قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَبْعَثْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ
 حَاشِرِينَ يَاأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سِحَارٍ عَلِيمٍ)

(29. He said: "If you choose a god other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners.") (30. He said: "Even if I bring you something manifest") (31. He said: "Bring it forth then, if you are of the truthful!") (32. So he threw his stick, and behold, it was a serpent, manifest.) (33. And he drew out his hand, and behold, it was white to all beholders!) (34. He said to the chiefs around him: "Verily, this is indeed a well-versed sorcerer.") (35. "He wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery: what is it then that you command") (36. They said: "Put him off and his brother (for a while), and send callers to the cities;") (37. "To bring up to you every well-versed sorcerer.")

After the Rational Proof, Fir`awn resorts to Force

When proof had been established against Fir`awn, clearly and rationally, he resorted to using force against Musa, thinking that after this there would no further room for discussion. So he said:

(لئن اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي لأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ
 الْمَسْجُونِينَ)

(If you choose a god other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners.) To this, Musa responded:

(أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ)

(Even if I bring you something manifest) meaning, clear and definitive proof.

قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ - فَأَلْقَىٰ
عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ)

(Fir`awn said: "Bring it forth then, if you are of the truthful!" So he threw his stick, and behold, it was a serpent, manifest.) meaning, it was very clear and obvious, with a huge body and a big mouth, terrifying in appearance.

(وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ)

(And he drew out his hand,) meaning, from his sleeve,

فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنّٰظِرِيْنَ)

(and behold, it was white to all beholders!) It was shining like a piece of the moon. Since Fir`awn was already doomed, he hastened to stubborn denial, and said to the chiefs around him:

(إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسِحْرٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, this is indeed a well-versed sorcerer.) One who knows a great deal of magic or witchcraft. Fir`awn was trying to convince them that this was sorcery, not a miracle. Then he provoked them against Musa, trying to make them oppose him and disbelieve in him, and said:

(يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ)

(He wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery...) meaning, `he wants to capture the people's hearts and win them over by doing this, so that they will support him, and help him and follow him, and he will defeat you in your own land and take the land from you. So advise me, what should I do with him'

قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَبْعَثْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ
- يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سِحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ)

(They said: "Put him off and his brother, and send callers to the cities; to bring up to you every well-versed sorcerer.") meaning, `delay him and his brother until you gather together all the sorcerers from every city and region of your kingdom so that they may confront him and produce something like he produces, then you will defeat him and have the victory.' So Fir`awn did as they suggested, which is what Allah decreed would happen to them, so that all the

people would gather in one place and the signs and proof of Allah would be made manifest before them all in one day.

(فَجُمِعَ السَّحَرَةُ لِمِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ - وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُجْتَمِعُونَ - لَعَلْنَا نَتَّبِعُ السَّحَرَةَ إِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ - فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَإِنَّا لَنَا لِأَجْرٍ إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ - قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ - قَالَ لَهُمْ مُوسَى أَلْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُلقُونَ - فَأَلْقَوْا حِبَلَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ وَقَالُوا بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْغَالِبُونَ - فَأَلْقَى مُوسَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ - فَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سَجْدِينَ - قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ)

(38. So, the sorcerers were assembled at a fixed time on a day appointed.) (39. And it was said to the people: "Are you (too) going to assemble") (40. "That we may follow the sorcerers if they are the winners.") (41. So, when the sorcerers arrived, they said to Fir`awn: "Will there surely be a reward for us if we are the winners") (42. He said: "Yes, and you shall then verily be of those brought near (to myself).") (43. Musa said to them: "Throw what you are going to throw!") (44. So, they threw their ropes and their sticks, and said: "By the might of Fir`awn, it is we who will certainly win!") (45. Then Musa threw his stick, and behold, it swallowed up all that they falsely showed!) (46. And the sorcerers fell down prostrate.) (47. Saying: "We believe in the Lord of Al-`Alamin.") (48. "The Lord of Musa and Harun.")

Between Musa, peace be upon him, and the Sorcerers Allah describes the actual encounter between Musa, peace be upon him, and the Egyptians in Surat Al-A`raf, Surah Ta Ha, and in this Surah.

The Egyptians wanted to extinguish the Light of Allah with their words, but Allah insisted that His Light should prevail even though the disbelievers disliked that. This is the issue of disbelief and faith; they never confront one another but faith always prevails:

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ
زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمْ الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ)

(Nay, We fling the truth against the falsehood, so it destroys it, and behold, it disappears. And woe to you for that which you ascribe.) (21:18)

(وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ)

(And say: "Truth has come and falsehood has vanished.") (17:81) The sorcerers of Egypt were the most skilled in the art of illusion, but when a huge group of them gathered from all corners of the land, and the people came together on that day whose exact numbers are known to Allah Alone, one of them said:

(لَعَلَّنَا نَتَّبِعُ السَّحَرَةَ إِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ)

(That we may follow the sorcerers if they are the winners.) They did not say: 'we will follow the truth, whether it rests with the sorcerers or with Musa;' the people were followers of the religion of their king.

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ)

(So, when the sorcerers arrived,) means, when they reached the court of Fir`awn, and a pavilion had been erected for him. There he gathered his servants, followers, administrators, and provincial leaders, and the soldiers of his kingdom. The sorcerers stood before Fir`awn, asking him to treat them well and bring them closer to him if they prevailed in this matter which he had brought them together for. They said:

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَإِنَّا لَنَا لِأَجْرٍ
إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ - قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَمِنَ
الْمُقَرَّبِينَ)

("Will there surely be a reward for us if we are the winners" He said: "Yes, and you shall then verily be of those brought near.") meaning, 'and you will be given more than what you are asking for; I will make you among those who are close to me, those who sit with me.' So they went back to their places:

قَالُوا يَمُوسَىٰ إِمَّا أَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ نَكُونَ أَوْلَ
مَنْ أَلْقَىٰ قَالَ بَلْ أَلْقُوا

(They said: "O Musa! Either you throw first or we be the first to throw" (Musa) said: "Nay, throw you (first)!") (20:65-66). Here the incident is described more briefly. Musa said to them:

أَلْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُلقُونَ فَأَلْقَوْا حِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ
وَقَالُوا بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْغَالِبُونَ

("Throw what you are going to throw!" So, they threw their ropes and their sticks, and said: "By the might of Fir`awn, it is we who will certainly win!") This is what the ignorant masses say when they do something: `this is by the virtue of So-and-so!' In Surat Al-A`raf Allah mentioned that they:

سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرَهُبُوهُمْ وَجَاءُوا
بِسِحْرِ عَظِيمٍ

(They bewitched the eyes of the people, and struck terror into them, and they displayed a great magic) (7:116). And in Surah Ta Ha He said:

فَإِذَا حِبَالُهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ
أَنَّهَا تَسْعَىٰ

(Then behold! their ropes and their sticks, by their magic, appeared to him as though they moved fast.) until Allah saying:

وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّحَرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ

(and the magician will never be successful, whatever the amount (of skill) he may attain) (20:69). And here Allah says:

فَأَلْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ

(Then Musa threw his stick, and behold, it swallowed up all that they falsely showed!) by snatching up and catching them from every corner and swallowing them up, and it did not leave any of them untouched. Allah says:

(فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(Thus truth was confirmed, and all that they did was made of no effect.) until

(رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ)

(The Lord of Musa and Harun.) (7:118-122) This was a very serious matter, furnishing decisive proof leaving no room for any excuse. Fir`awn's supporters, who sought and hoped that they would prevail over Musa, were themselves defeated. At that moment they believed in Musa and prostrated to Allah, the Lord of Al` Alamin Who sent Musa and Harun with the truth and an obvious miracle. Fir`awn was defeated in a manner the likes of which the world had never seen, but he remained arrogant and stubborn despite the clear evidence, may the curse of Allah and the angels and all of mankind be upon him. He resorted to arrogance and stubbornness and propagating falsehood. He began to issue threats against them, saying:

(إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ)

(Verily, he is your chief who has taught you magic) (20:71).

(إِنَّ هَذَا لَمَكْرٌ مَّكْرْتُمُوهُ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ)

(Surely, this is a plot which you have plotted in the city) (7:123).

(قَالَ ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَادِّنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ
الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ لَأَقْطَعَنَّ
أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ وَلَأَصْلَبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ
- قَالُوا لَا ضَيْرَ إِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ - إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ
أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطِيئَتَنَا أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(49. He said: "You have believed in him before I give you leave. Surely, he indeed is your chief, who has taught you magic! So verily, you shall come to know. Verily, I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify you all.") (50. They said: "No harm! Surely, to our Lord we are to return.") (51. "Verily, we really hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins, as we are the first of the believers.")

Between Fir`awn and the Sorcerers

His threats against them resulted only in an increase in their faith and submission to Allah, for the veil of disbelief had been lifted from their hearts and the truth became clear to them because they knew something that their people did not: that what Musa had done could not have been done by any human being unless Allah helped him, making it proof and an evidence of the truth of what he had brought from his Lord. Then Fir`awn said to them:

(ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذِنَ لَكُمْ)

(You have believed in him before I give you leave.) meaning, `you should have asked my permission for what you did, and you did not consult with me; if I had given you permission you could have done it, and if I did not allow you, you should not have done it, for I am the ruler and the one to be obeyed.'

(إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ)

(Surely, he indeed is your chief, who has taught you magic!) This is stubborn talk, and anyone can see that it is nonsense, for they had never met Musa before that day, so how could he have been their chief who taught them how to do magic No rational person would say this. Then Fir`awn threatened to cut off their hands and feet, and crucify them. They said:

(لَا ضَيْرَ)

(No harm!) meaning, `no problem, that will not harm us and we do not care.'

(إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ)

(Surely, to our Lord we are to return.) means, `the return of us all is to Allah, may He be glorified, and He will never allow the reward of anyone who has done good to be lost. What you have done to us is not hidden from Him, and He will reward us in full for that.' So they said:

(إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطِيئَاتِنَا)

(Verily, we really hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins,) `the sins we have committed and the magic you forced us to do.'

(أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(as we are the first of the believers,) means, because we are the first of our people, the Egyptians, to believe. So he killed them all.

(وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي إِنَّكَ
 مَتَّبِعُونَ - فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَاشِرِينَ
 - إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ - وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا
 لَغَائِظُونَ - وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَازِرُونَ - فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ
 مِنْ جَبَّتٍ وَعُيُونٍ - وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ - كَذَلِكَ
 وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(52. And We revealed to Musa, saying: "Depart by night with My servants, verily, you will be pursued.") (53. Then Fir`awn sent callers to (all) the cities.) (54. (Saying): "Verily, these indeed are but a small band.") (55. "And verily, they have done what has enraged us.") (56. "But we are a host all assembled, amply forewarned.") (57. So, We expelled them from gardens and springs,) (58. Treasures, and every kind of honorable place.) (59. Thus and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them.)

The Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt

After Musa stayed in Egypt for a long time, and the proof of Allah was established against Fir`awn and his chiefs, yet they were still arrogant and stubborn, then there was nothing left for them but punishment and vengeance. So Allah commanded Musa, peace be upon him, to take the Children of Israel out of Egypt by night, and take them wherever he would be commanded. So Musa, peace be upon him, did as he was commanded by his Lord, may He be glorified, and he led them forth after they had borrowed an abundance of jewelry from the people of Fir`awn. As more than one of the scholars of Tafsir have said, they left when the moon was rising, and Mujahid, may Allah have mercy on him, said that the moon was eclipsed that night. And Allah knows best. Musa asked about the grave of Yusuf (Prophet Joseph), peace be upon him, and an old woman from among the Children of Israel showed him where it was, so he took the remains with them, and it was said that they were among the things that were carried by Musa himself, may peace be upon them both. It was also said that Yusuf, peace be upon him, had left instructions in his will that if the Children of Israel ever left Egypt, they should take his remains with them. The following morning, when there was nobody to be found in the Israelite quarters, Fir`awn became angry and his anger intensified since Allah had decreed that he was to be destroyed. So he quickly sent his callers to all his cities, i.e., to mobilize his troops and bring them together, and he called out to them:

(إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ)

(Verily, these) meaning, the Children of Israel,

(لَشِرْذِمَةً قَلِيلُونَ)

(indeed are but a small band.) meaning, a small group.

(وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَائِظُونَ)

(And verily, they have done what has enraged us.) means, `every time we have heard anything about them, it has upset us and made us angry.'

(وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَازِرُونَ)

(But we are a host all assembled, amply forewarned.) means, `we are constantly taking precautions lest they betray us.' Some of the Salaf read this with the meaning, "we are constantly forewarned and forearmed. And I want to destroy them to the last man, and destroy all their lands and property." So he and his troops were punished with the very things he sought to inflict upon the Children of Israel. Allah says:

(فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ - وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ
كَرِيمٍ)

(So, We expelled them from gardens and springs, treasures, and every kind of honorable place.) meaning, they were thrown out of those blessings and into Hell, and they left behind the honorable places, gardens and rivers, wealth, provision, position and power in this world:

(كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(Thus and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them.) This is like the Ayat:

(وَأَوْرَثْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ مَشْرِقَ
الْأَرْضِ وَمَغْرِبَهَا الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا)

(And We made the people who were considered weak to inherit the eastern parts of the land and the western parts thereof which We have blessed) (7: 137).

(وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ)

(And We wished to do a favor to those who were weak in the land, and to make them rulers and to make them the inheritors) The two Ayat thereafter:)28:5-6(.

(فَأَتَّبَعُوهُمْ مُشْرِقِينَ - فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَا الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ
أَصْحَابُ مُوسَى إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ - قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ
رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ - فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى مُوسَى أَنْ اضْرِبْ
بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَانْفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطُّوْدِ
الْعَظِيمِ - وَأَزَلَفْنَا تَمَّ الْأَخْرِينَ - وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَى
وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا الْأَخْرِينَ - إِنَّ فِي
ذَلِكَ لَأَيَّةٍ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ
لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(60. So, they pursued them at sunrise.) (61. And when the two hosts saw each other, the companions of Musa said: "We are sure to be overtaken.") (62. (Musa) said: "Nay, verily with me is my Lord. He will guide me.") (63. Then We revealed to Musa (saying): "Strike the sea with your stick." And it parted, and each separate part became like huge mountain.) (64. Then We brought near the others to that place.) (65. And We saved Musa and all those with him.) (66. Then We drowned the others.) (67. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (68. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

Fir`awn's Pursuit and Expulsion of the Children of Israel, and how He and His People were drowned

More than one of the scholars of Tafsir said that Fir`awn set out with a huge group, a group containing the leaders and entire government of Egypt at that time, i.e., the decision-makers and influential figures, princes, ministers, nobles, leaders and soldiers.

(فَأَتَّبَعُوهُمْ مُشْرِقِينَ)

(So, they pursued them at sunrise.) means, they caught up with the Children of Israel at sunrise.

(فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَا الْجَمْعَانِ)

(And when the two hosts saw each other,) means, each group saw the other. At that point,

(قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ)

(the companions of Musa said: "We are sure to be overtaken.") This was because Fir`awn and his people caught up with them on the shores of the Red Sea, so the sea was ahead of them and Fir`awn and his troops were behind them. Hence they said:

(قَلَمَّا تَرَآءَا الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا
لَمُدْرَكُونَ - قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ)

("We are sure to be overtaken." (Musa) said: "Nay, verily with me is my Lord. He will guide me.") meaning, 'nothing of what you fear will happen to you, for Allah is the One Who commanded me to bring you here, and He does not go back on His promise.' Harun, peace be upon him, was in the front, with Yusha` bin Nun and a believer from the family of Fir`awn, and Musa, peace be upon him, was in the rear. More than one of the scholars of Tafsir said that they stood there not knowing what to do, and Yusha` bin Nun or the believer from the family of Fir`awn said to Musa, peace be upon him, "O Prophet of Allah, is it here that your Lord commanded you to bring us" He said: "Yes." Then Fir`awn and his troops drew near and were very close indeed. At that point Allah commanded his Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, to strike the sea with his staff, so he struck it, and it parted, by the will of Allah. Allah says:

(فَانفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(And it parted, and each separate part became like huge mountain.) meaning, like mighty mountains. This was the view of Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah and others. `Ata' Al-Khurasani said, "It refers to a pass between two mountains." Ibn `Abbas said, "The sea divided into twelve paths, one for each of the tribes." As-Suddi added, "And in it there were windows through which they could see one another, and the water was erected like walls." Allah sent the wind to the sea bed to make it solid like the land. Allah says:

(فَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَا تَخَافُ
دَرْكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ)

(and strike a dry path for them in the sea, fearing neither to be overtaken nor being afraid) (20:77). And here He says:

(وَأَزَلَقْنَا تَمَّ الْأَخْرِينَ)

(Then We brought near the others to that place.) Ibn `Abbas, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Qatadah and As-Suddi said:

(وَأَزَلَقْنَا)

(Then We brought near) means, "We brought Fir`awn and his troops near to the sea."

(وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا
الْآخَرِينَ)

(And We saved Musa and all those with him. Then We drowned the others.) meaning: `We saved Musa and the Children of Israel and whoever followed their religion, and none of them were destroyed, but Fir`awn and his troops were drowned and not one of them remained alive, but was destroyed.' Then Allah says:

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign,) meaning, this story with its wonders and tales of aid to the believing servants of Allah is definitive proof and evidence of Allah's wisdom.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.) The explanation of this phrase has already been discussed above.

(وَإِتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ - إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ - قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَنْظِلُّ لَهَا عَافِينَ -
قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ - أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ
يَضُرُّونَ - قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ
- قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - أَنْتُمْ وَعَابَاؤُكُمْ
الْأَقْدَمُونَ - فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(69. And recite to them the story of Ibrahim.) (70. When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship") (71. They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted.") (72. He said: "Do they hear you when you call") (73. "Or do they benefit you or do they cause

harm") (74. They said: "(Nay) but we found our fathers doing so.") (75. He said: "Do you observe that which you have been worshipping --") (76. "You and your ancient fathers") (77. "Verily, they are enemies to me, save the Lord of Al-`Alamin,")

How the Close Friend of Allah, Ibrahim spoke out against Shirk

Here Allah tells us about His servant, Messenger and Close Friend, Ibrahim, upon him be peace, the leader of the pure monotheists. Allah commanded His Messenger Muhammad to recite this story to his Ummah so that they could follow this example of sincerity towards Allah, putting one's trust in Him, worshipping Him Alone with no partner or associate, and renouncing Shirk and its people. Allah granted guidance to Ibrahim before, i.e., from a very early age he had denounced his people's practice of worshipping idols with Allah, may He be exalted.

(إِذْ قَالَ لِأَيِّهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ)

(When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship") meaning: what are these statues to which you are so devoted

(قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَنْظُرُ لَهَا عَكْفِينَ)

(They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted.") meaning: we are devoted to worshipping them and praying to them.

(قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكَ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ - أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكَ أَوْ
يَضُرُّونَ - قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ
(

(He said: "Do they hear you when you call Or do they benefit you or do they cause harm" They said: "(Nay) but we found our fathers doing so.") They knew that their idols could not do anything, but they had seen their fathers doing this, so they made haste to follow in their footsteps. So Ibrahim said to them:

(قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - أَنْتُمْ وَعَابَاؤُكُمْ
الْأَقْدَمُونَ - فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(Do you observe that which you have been worshipping --you and your ancient fathers Verily, they are enemies to me, save the Lord of Al-`Alamin.) meaning, `if these idols mean anything and have any influence, then let them do me any kind of harm, for I am an enemy to them and I do not care about them or think anything of them.' This is akin to the way Allah described Nuh:

(فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ)

(So devise your plot, you and your partners) (10:71). And Hud, upon him be peace, said:

(إِنْ تَقُولُ إِلَّا اعْتَرَاكَ بَعْضُ آلِهَتِنَا بِسُوءٍ قَالَ
إِنِّي أَشْهَدُ اللَّهَ وَأَشْهَدُوا أَنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ
- مِنْ دُونِهِ فَكِيدُونِي جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونَ - إِنِّي
تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ مَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ
ءَاخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ)

("I call Allah to witness and bear you witness that I am free from that which you ascribe as partners in worship. So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving creature but He has the grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the straight path) (11:54-56). rSimilarly, Ibrahim denounced their gods and idols and said:

(وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ
أَشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ)

(And how should I fear those whom you associate in worship with Allah, while you fear not that you have joined in worship with Allah) (6:81). And Allah said:

(قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrahim) until His saying;

(حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُ)

(until you believe in Allah Alone) (60:4).

(وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا
تَعْبُدُونَ - إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِين -
وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ)

(And (remember) when Ibrahim said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him Who created me; and verily, He will guide me." And he made it a Word lasting among his offspring, that they may turn back) (43:26-28). meaning: "La Ilaha Illallah."

(الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِين - وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي
وَيَسْقِين - وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِين - وَالَّذِي
يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِين - وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي
خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ)

(78. Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.) (79. And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.) (80. And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) (81. And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life.) (82. And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense.)

Ibrahim mentions Allah's Kindness towards Him

Ibrahim said, "I will not worship any but the One Who does these things:

(الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِين)

(Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.) He is the Creator Who has decreed certain things to which He guides His creation, so each person follows the path which is decreed for him. Allah is the One Who guides whomsoever He wills and leaves astray whomsoever He wills.

(وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِين)

(And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.) He is my Creator Who provides for me from that which He has made available in the heavens and on earth. He drives the clouds and causes water to fall with which He revives the earth and brings forth its fruits as provision for mankind. He sends down the water fresh and sweet so that many of those whom He has created, animals and men alike, may drink from it.

(وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَبِهِ يَشْفِينِ)

(And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) Here he attributed sickness to himself, even though it is Allah Who decrees it, out of respect towards Allah. By the same token, Allah commands us to say in the prayer,

(اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ)

(Guide us to the straight way) (1:6) to the end of the Surah. Grace and guidance are attributed to Allah, may He be exalted, but the subject of the verb with reference to anger is omitted, and going astray is attributed to the people. This is like when the Jinn said:

(وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ
أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا)

(And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a right path) (72:10) Similarly, Ibrahim said:

(وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَبِهِ يَشْفِينِ)

(And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) meaning, 'when I fall sick, no one is able to heal me but Him, Who heals me with the means that may lead to recovery'.

(وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ)

(And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life.) He is the One Who gives life and causes death, and no one besides Him is able to do that, for He is the One Who originates and repeats.

(وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ)

(And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense.) means, no one is able to forgive sins in this world or the Hereafter except Him. Who can forgive sins except Allah For He is the One Who does whatever He wills.

(رَبِّ هَبْ لِي حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ -
وَاجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ - وَاجْعَلْنِي

مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ - وَاعْفِرْ لِأَبِي إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ
الضَّالِّينَ - وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ - يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ
مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ - إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ)

(83. My Lord! Bestow Hukm on me, and join me with the righteous.) (84. And grant me an honorable mention in later generations.) (85. And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.) (86. And forgive my father, verily, he is of the erring.) (87. And disgrace me not on the Day when they will be resurrected.) (88. The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,) (89. Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart.)

The Prayer of Ibrahim for Himself and for His Father

Here Ibrahim, upon him be peace, asks his Lord to give him Hukm. Ibn `Abbas said, "This is knowledge."

(وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ)

(and join me with the righteous.) means, `make me one of the righteous in this world and the Hereafter.' This is like the words the Prophet said three times when he was dying:

«اللَّهُمَّ فِي الرَّفِيقِ الْأَعْلَى»

(O Allah, with the Exalted Companion (of Paradise)).

(وَأَجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْأَخْرِينَ)

(And grant me an honorable mention in later generations.) meaning, `cause me to be remembered in a good manner after my death, so that I will be spoken of and taken as a good example.' This is like the Ayah,

(وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْأَخْرِينَ سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(And We left for him (a goodly remembrance) among the later generations: "Salam (peace) be upon Ibrahim. Thus indeed do we reward the good doers.) (37:108-110)

(وَأَجْعَلْنِي مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ)

(And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.) meaning, `bless me in this world with honorable mention after I am gone, and in the Hereafter by making me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.'

(وَاعْفِرْ لِأَبِي)

(And forgive my father,) This is like the Ayah,

(رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ)

(My Lord! Forgive me, and my parents) (71:28). But this is something which Ibrahim, peace be upon him, later stopped doing, as Allah says:

(وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَّهَا إِيَّاهُ)

(And Ibrahim's supplication for his father's forgiveness was only because of a promise he had made to him) (9:114) until:

(إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, Ibrahim was Awwah and was forbearing) (9:114). Allah stopped Ibrahim from asking for forgiveness for his father, as He says:

(قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ)

(Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrahim and those with him), until His saying:

(وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ)

(but I have no power to do anything for you before Allah.) (60:4),

(وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ)

(And disgrace me not on the Day when they will be resurrected.) means, `protect me from shame on the Day of Resurrection and the Day when all creatures, the first and the last, will be raised.' Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said that the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَأَىٰ أَبَاهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَيْهِ الْغَبْرَةُ
وَالْقَتْرَةُ»

(Ibrahim will see his father on the Day of Resurrection, covered with dust and darkness.)
According to another narration, also from Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, the
Prophet said:

«يَلْقَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَبَاهُ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّكَ وَعَدْتَنِي
أَنَّكَ لَا تُخْزِينِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ:
إِنِّي حَرَمْتُ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ»

(Ibrahim will meet his father and will say: "O Lord, You promised me that You would not
disgrace me on the Day when all creatures are resurrected." And Allah will say to him: "I have
forbidden Paradise to the disbelievers.") He also recorded this in the Hadiths about the
Prophets, upon them be peace, where the wording is:

«يَلْقَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَبَاهُ آزَرَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَعَلَىٰ وَجْهِ
آزَرَ قَتْرَةٌ وَغَبْرَةٌ، فَيَقُولُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ
لَا تَعْصِينِي، فَيَقُولُ أَبُوهُ: قَالِيَوْمَ لَا أُعْصِيكَ،
فَيَقُولُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّكَ وَعَدْتَنِي أَنْ لَا
تُخْزِينِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ، فَأَيُّ خِزْيٍ أَخْزَىٰ مِنْ أَبِي
الْأَبْعَدِ فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ: إِنِّي حَرَمْتُ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى
الْكَافِرِينَ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ انظُرْ تَحْتَ
رَجْلِكَ، فَيَنْظُرُ، فَإِذَا هُوَ بِذِيخٍ مُتَلَطِّخٍ، فَيُؤْخَذُ
بِقَوَائِمِهِ فَيُلْقَىٰ فِي النَّارِ»

(Ibrahim will meet his father Azar on the Day of Resurrection, and there will be dust and
darkness on Azar's face. Ibrahim will say to him, "Did I not tell you not to disobey me" His father

will say to him: "Today I will not disobey you." Ibrahim will say: "O Lord, You promised me that You would not disgrace me on the Day when they are resurrected, but what disgrace can be greater than seeing my father in this state" Allah will say to him: "I have forbidden Paradise to the disbelievers." Then it will be said: "O Ibrahim! Look beneath your feet." So he will look and there he will see (that his father was changed into) a male hyena covered in dung, which will be caught by the legs and thrown in the Fire.) This was also recorded by Abu `Abdur-Fahman An-Nasa'i in the Tafsir of his Sunan Al-Kubra.

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ)

(The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,) means, a man's wealth will not protect him from the punishment of Allah, even if he were to pay a ransom equivalent to an earthful of gold.

(وَلَا بَنُونَ)

(nor sons) means, 'or if you were to pay a ransom of all the people on earth.' On that Day nothing will be of any avail except faith in Allah and sincere devotion to Him, and renunciation of Shirk and its people. Allah says:

(إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ)

(Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart.) meaning, free from any impurity or Shirk. Ibn Srin said, "The clean heart knows that Allah is true, that the Hour will undoubtedly come and that Allah will resurrect those who are in the graves." Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said, "The clean heart is the sound heart." This is the heart of the believer, for the heart of the disbeliever and the hypocrite is sick. Allah says:

(فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ)

(In their hearts is a disease) (2:10). Abu `Uthman An-Nisaburi said, "It is the heart that is free from innovation and is content with the Sunnah."

(وَأَزَلِفَتْ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ - وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ
لِلْغَاوِينَ - وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - مِنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ -
فَكَبَّبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ - وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ
أَجْمَعُونَ - قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ - تَاللَّهِ إِنْ

كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
 - وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ - فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ
 - وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ - قُلُوا أَنْ لَنَا كَرَّةٌ فَنَكُونُ مِنَ
 الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ
 مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(90. And Paradise will be brought near to those who had Taqwa.) (91. And the (Hell) Fire will be placed in full view of the astray.) (92. And it will be said to them: "Where are those that you used to worship.") (93. "Instead of Allah Can they help you or help themselves") (94. Then they will be thrown on their faces into it (the Fire), they and the astray.) (95. And all of the hosts of Iblis together.) (96. They will say while contending therein,) (97. "By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error,) (98. "When we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists;" (99. "And none has brought us into error except the criminals.") (100. "Now we have no intercessors,") (101. "Nor a close friend.") (102. "(Alas!) If we only had a chance to return, we shall truly be among the believers!") (103. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (104. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

Those Who have Taqwa and the Astray on the Day of Resurrection, and the Arguments and Sorrow of the Erring

(وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ)

(And Paradise will be brought near) means, it will be brought close to its people, adorned and decorated for them to behold it. Its people are the pious who preferred it to whatever was in this world, and strove for it in this world.

(وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ)

(And the (Hell) Fire will be placed in full view of the astray.) meaning, it will be shown to them and a neck will stretch forth from it, moaning and sighing, and their hearts will reach their throats. It will be said to its people by way of reproach and rebuke:

(وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
 هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ)

(Where are those that you used to worship instead of Allah Can they help you or help themselves) meaning, `the gods and idols whom you used to worship instead of Allah cannot help you today, and they cannot even protect themselves. You and they are fuel for Hell today, which you will surely enter.'

(فَكُبِّبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ)

(Then they will be thrown on their faces into it (the Fire), they and the astray.) Mujahid said, "This means, they will be hurled into it." Others said: "They will be thrown on top of one another, the disbelievers and their leaders who called them to Shirk. "

(وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ)

(And all of the hosts of Iblis together.) they will all be thrown into it.

(قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ - تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(They will say while contending therein, "By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error, when we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists.") The weak ones among them will say to their arrogant leaders: `Verily, we were following you; can you avail us anything from the Fire' Then they will realize that themselves are to blame and will say: a

(تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error, when we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists.) meaning, `we obeyed your commands as we should have obeyed the commands of the Lord of the all that exists, and we worshipped you along with the Lord of all that exists.'

(وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ)

(And none has brought us into error except the criminals.) meaning, `nobody called us to do that except the evildoers.'

(فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ)

(Now we have no intercessors.) This is like the Ayah which tells us that they will say:

فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلْ
غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ

(...now are there any intercessors for us that they might intercede on our behalf Or could we be sent back so that we might do deeds other than those deeds which we used to do) (7:53). Similarly, in this Surah, Allah tells us that they will say:

(فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ - وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ)

(Now we have no intercessors, nor a close friend.)

(فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

((Alas!) If we only had a chance to return, we shall truly be among the believers!) They will wish that they could come back to this world so that they could do deeds of obedience to their Lord -- as they claim -- but Allah knows that if they were to come back to this world, they would only go back to doing forbidden things, and He knows that they are liars. Allah tells us in Surah Sad about how the people of Hell will argue with one another, as He says:

(إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَحَقٌّ تَخَاصُمُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ)

(Verily, that is the very truth -- the mutual dispute of the people of the Fire!) (38:64) Then He says:

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) meaning, in the dispute of Ibrahim with his people and his proof of Tawhid there is a sign, i.e., clear evidence that there is no God but Allah.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(yet most of them are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ - إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ - فَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ
أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا)

(105. The people of Nuh denied the Messengers.) (106. When their brother Nuh said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (107. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (108. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (109. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.") (110. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.")

Nuh's preaching to His People, and Their Response

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Nuh, peace be upon him, who was the first Messenger sent by Allah to the people of earth after they started to worship idols. Allah sent him to forbid that and to warn people of the consequences of idol worship. But his people belied him and continued their evil practice of worshipping idols besides Allah. Allah revealed that their disbelieving in him was akin to disbelieving in all the Messengers, So Allah said:

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ)

(The people of Nuh belied the Messengers. When their brother Nuh said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") meaning, `do you not fear Allah when you worship others instead of Him'

(إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ)

(I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.) means, `I am the Messenger of Allah to you, faithfully fulfilling the mission with which Allah has sent me. I convey the Messages of my Lord to you, and I do not add anything to them or take anything away from them.,

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me. No reward do I ask of you for it;) means, `I do not want any payment for the advice I give you; I will save my reward for it with Allah. '

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) `It is clear to you that I am telling the truth and that I am faithfully fulfilling the mission with which Allah has entrusted me.'

(قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ - قَالَ وَمَا
عِلْمِي بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ - إِنَّ حِسَابَهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى
رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ - وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ -
إِن أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ)

(111. They said: "Shall we believe in you, when the inferior follow you") (112. He said: "And what knowledge have I of what they used to do") (113. "Their account is only with my Lord, if you could (but) know.") (114. "And I am not going to drive away the believers.") (115. "I am only a plain warner.")

The Demand of the People of Nuh and His Response

They said: "We do not believe in you, and we will not follow you and become equal to the meanest of the people, who follow you and believe in you, and they are the lowest among us."

(قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ - قَالَ وَمَا
عِلْمِي بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(They said: "Shall we believe in you, when the inferior follow you" He said: "And what knowledge have I of what they used to do") meaning, `what does it have to do with me if they follow me No matter what they used to do before, I do not have to check on them and examine their background; all I have to do is accept it if they believe in me; whatever is in their hearts is for Allah to know.'

(إِنَّ حِسَابَهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ - وَمَا أَنَا
بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Their account is only with my Lord, if you could (but) know. And I am not going to drive away the believers.) It seems that they asked him to drive these people away, then they would follow him, but he refused to do that, and said:

(وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - إِن أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ
(

(And I am not going to drive away the believers. I am only a plain warner.) meaning, 'I have been sent as a warner, and whoever obeys me and follows me and believes in me, then he belongs to me and I to him, whether he is noble or common, upper-class or lower-class.'

(قَالُوا لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ يُّوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ
- قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّ قَوْمِي كَذَّبُون - فَأَفْتَحْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ
فَقْهًا وَنَجِّنِي وَمَنْ مَعِيَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ
وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِّ الْمَشْحُون - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدُ
الْبَاقِينَ إِنِّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةٌ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(116. They said: "If you cease not, O Nuh you will surely be among those stoned.") (117. He said: "My Lord! Verily, my people have denied me.") (118. "Therefore judge You between me and them, and save me and those of the believers who are with me.") (119. And We saved him and those with him in the laden ship.) (120. Then We drowned the rest thereafter.) (121. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (122. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

His People's Threat, Nuh's Prayer against Them, and Their Destruction

Nuh stayed among his people for a long time, calling them to Allah night and day, in secret and openly. The more he repeated his call to them, the more determined were they to cling to their extreme disbelief and resist his call. In the end, they said:

(لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ يُّوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ)

(If you cease not, O Nuh you will surely be among those stoned.) meaning, 'if you do not stop calling us to your religion,'

(لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ)

(you will surely be among those stoned.) meaning, 'we will stone you.' At that point, he prayed against them, and Allah responded to his prayer. Nuh said:

(رَبِّ إِنِّ قَوْمِي كَذَّبُوْنِ فَافْتَحْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتْحًا)

(My Lord! Verily, my people have denied me. Therefore judge You between me and them.) This is like the Ayah:

(فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ)

(Then he invoked his Lord (saying): "I have been overcome, so help (me)!")(54:10) And Allah says here:

(فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِكِ الْمَشْحُونِ - ثُمَّ
أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدَ الْبَاقِينَ)

(And We saved him and those with him in the laden ship. Then We drowned the rest thereafter.) The "laden ship" is one that is filled with cargo and the couples, one pair from every species, that were carried in it. This Ayah means: 'We saved Nuh and all of those who followed him, and We drowned those who disbelieved in him and went against his commands, all of them.'

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ عَادُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ
أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ - إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ أَتَّبُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيحٍ آيَةً
تَعْبَثُونَ)

وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ - وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُمْ
بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَتَّقُوا الَّذِي
أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَمٍ وَبَنِينَ وَجَبَّتِ
وَعُيُونَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(123. `Ad denied the Messengers.) (124. When their brother Hud said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (125. "Verily, I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (126. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (127. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.") (128. "Do you build on every Ri` an Ayah for your amusement") (129. "And do you get for yourselves Masani` as if you will live therein forever") (130. "And when you seize (somebody), seize you (him) as tyrants") (131. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (132. "And have Taqwa of Him, fear Him Who has aided you with all (good things) that you know.") (133. "He has aided you with cattle and children.") (134. "And gardens and springs.") (135. "Verily, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day.")

Hud's preaching to His People ` Ad

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Hud, when he called his people `Ad. His people used to live in the Ahqaf, curved sand-hills near Hadramawt, on the borders of Yemen. They lived after the time of Nuh, as Allah says in Surat Al-A`raf:

وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلْنَا خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ
وَزَادَكُمْ فِي الْخَلْقِ بَسْطَةً)

(And remember that He made you successors after the people of Nuh and increased you amply in stature) (7:69). This refers to the fact that they were physically strong and well-built, and very violent, and very tall; they had also been given a great deal of provisions, wealth, gardens, rivers, sons, crops and fruits. Yet despite all of that, they worshipped others besides Allah. So Allah sent Hud, one of their own, as a Messenger bringing them good news and delivering warnings. He called them to worship Allah alone, and he warned them of Allah's wrath and punishment if they were to go against him and treating him harshly. He said to them, as Nuh had said to his people:

(أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ ءَايَةً تُعْبَثُونَ)

(Do you build on every Ri` an Ayah for your amusement) The scholars of Tafsir differed over the meaning of the word Ri`. In brief, they said that it refers to an elevated location at a well-known crossroads, where they would build a huge, dazzling, sturdy structure, this is why he said:

(أَتَّبُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيْعٍ ءَايَةً)

(Do you build on every Ri` an Ayah) i.e., a well-known landmark,

(تَعْبُونَ)

(for your amusement) meaning, `you are only doing that for the purpose of frivolity, not because you need it, but for fun and to show off your strength.' So their Prophet, peace be upon him, denounced them for doing that, because it was a waste of time and exhausted people's bodies for no purpose, and kept them busy with something that was of no benefit in this world or the next. He said:

(وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ)

(And do you get for yourselves Masani` as if you will live therein forever) Mujahid said, "This means fortresses built up strong and high and structures that are built to last."

(لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ)

(as if you will live therein forever) means, `so that you may stay there forever, but that is not going to happen, because they will eventually cease to be, just as happened in the case of those who came before you.'

(وَإِذَا بَطِشْتُمْ بَطِشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ)

(And when you seize (somebody), seize you (him) as tyrants) They are described as being strong, violent and tyrannical.

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) `Worship your Lord and obey your Messenger.' Then Hud began reminding them of the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them. He said:

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ - أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَمٍ
وَبَنِينَ - وَجَبَّتِ وَعُيُونَ - إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ
عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(And have Taqwa of Him, Who has aided you with all that you know. He has aided you with cattle and children, and gardens and springs. Verily, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day.)

meaning, 'if you disbelieve and oppose (your Prophet).' So he called them to Allah with words of encouragement and words of warning, but it was to no avail.

(قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعَضْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِّنَ
الْوَعِظِينَ - إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ - وَمَا نَحْنُ
بِمُعَذَّبِينَ)

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ
أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(136. They said: "It is the same to us whether you preach or be not of those who preach.") (137. "This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients,") (138. "And we are not going to be punished.") (139. So they denied him, and We destroyed them. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (140. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the Almighty, the Most Merciful.)

The Response of the People of Hud, and Their Punishment

Allah tells us how the people of Hud responded to him after he had warned them, encouraged them, and clearly explained the truth to them.

(قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعَضْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِّنَ
الْوَعِظِينَ)

(They said: "It is the same to us whether you preach or be not of those who preach.") meaning, 'we will not give up our ways.'

(وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَارِكِي آلِهَتِنَا عَنْ قَوْلِكَ وَمَا نَحْنُ
لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And we shall not leave our gods for your (mere) saying! And we are not believers in you) (11:53). This is how it was, as Allah says:

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

(Verily, those who disbelieve, it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe) (2:6).

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Truly, those, against whom the Word of your Lord has been justified, will not believe) (10:96-97). And they said:

(إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients.) Some scholars read this: "Khalq". According to Ibn Mas`ud and according to `Abdullah bin `Abbas -- as reported from Al-`Awfi -- and `Alqamah and Mujahid, they meant, "What you have brought to us is nothing but the tales (Akhlaq) of the ancients." This is like what the idolators of Quraysh said:

(وَقَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ
بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا)

(And they say: "Tales of the ancients, which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon.") (25:5) And Allah said:

(وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ
وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ ءَاخِرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا ظُلْمًا
وَزُورًا وَقَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(Those who disbelieve say: "This is nothing but a lie that he has invented, and others have helped him in it. In fact, they have produced an injustice and a lie." And they say: "Tales of the ancients...") (25:4-5)

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَآذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ
الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(And when it is said to them: "What is it that your Lord has sent down" They say: "Tales of the ancient!") (16:24). Some other scholars recited it,

(إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients,) "as Khuluq," meaning their religion. What they were following was the religion of the ancients, their fathers and grandfathers, as if they were saying: "We are following them, we will live as they lived and die as they died, and there will be no resurrection and no judgement." Hence they said:

(وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ)

(And we are not going to be punished.) Allah's saying;

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ)

(So they denied him, and We destroyed them.) meaning, they continued to disbelieve and stubbornly oppose Allah's Prophet Hud, so Allah destroyed them. The means of their destruction has been described in more than one place in the Qur'an: Allah sent against them a strong and furious wind, i.e., a fiercely blowing wind that was intensely cold. Thus the means of their destruction was suited to their nature, for they were the strongest and fiercest of people, so Allah overpowered them with something that was even stronger and fiercer than them, as Allah says:

(أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ - إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ)

(Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with `Ad of Iram Possesors of the pillars) (89:6-7). This refers to the former `Ad, as Allah says:

(وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الْأُولَى)

(And that it is He Who destroyed the former `Ad) (53:50). They were descendents of Iram bin Sam bin Nuh,

(ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ)

(Possesors of the pillars) They used to live among pillars. Those who claim that Iram was a city take this idea from Isra'iliyyat narrations, from the words of Ka`b and Wahb, but there is no real basis for that. Allah says:

(الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلَهَا فِي الْبَلَدِ)

(The like of which were not created in the land) (89:8). meaning, nothing like this tribe was created in terms of might, power and tyranny. If what was meant was a city, it would have said, "The like of which was not built in the land." And Allah says:

فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ
وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي
خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ
(

(As for `Ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: "Who is mightier than us in strength" See they not that Allah Who created them was mightier in strength than them. And they used to deny Our Ayat!) (41:15) And Allah says:

وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَأَهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ)

(And as for `Ad, they were destroyed by a furious violent wind!) until His saying:

(حُسُومًا)

(in succession) (69:6-7) meaning, consecutively (i. e., seven nights and eight days).

فَقَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أُعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ
خَاوِيَةٍ)

(so that you could see men lying overthrown (destroyed), as if they were hollow trunks of date palms!) (69:7) means, they were left as headless bodies, because the wind would come and carry one of them, then drop him on his head, so that his brains were spilled out, his head was broken and he was thrown aside, as if they were uprooted stems of date-palms. They used to build fortresses in the mountains and caves, and they dug ditches half as deep as a man is tall, but that did not help them against the command of Allah at all.

إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ)

(Verily, the term given by Allah, when it comes, cannot be delayed) (71:4). Allah says here:

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ)

(So they denied him, and We destroyed them.)

(كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
صَالِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(141. Thamud denied the Messengers.) (142. When their brother Salih said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (143. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (144. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (145. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of Al-`Alamin.")

Salih and the People of Thamud

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Salih, whom He sent to his people Thamud. They were Arabs living in the city of Al-Hijr -- which is between Wadi Al-Qura and Greater Syria. Their location is well known. In our explanation of Surat Al-A`raf, we mentioned the Hadiths which tell how the Messenger of Allah passed by their dwelling place when he wanted to launch a raid on Syria. He went as far as Tabuk, then he went back to Al-Madinah to prepare himself for the campaign. Thamud came after `Ad and before Ibrahim, peace be upon him. Their Prophet Salih called them to Allah, to worship Him alone with no partner or associate, and to obey whatever commands were conveyed to them, but they refused, rejecting him and opposing him. He told them that he did not seek any reward from them for his call to them, but that he would seek the reward for that with Allah. Then he reminded them of the blessings of Allah.

(أَتُرْكُونَ فِي مَا هَاهُنَا ءَامِنِينَ - فِي جَبَّتٍ
وَعُيُونٍ - وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ -
وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرَاهِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ الَّذِينَ
يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ)

(146. "Will you be left secure in that which you have here") (147. "In gardens and springs.") (148. "And crops and date palms with soft clusters.") (149. "And you hew out in the mountains, houses with great skill.") (150. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (151. "And follow not the command of the extravagant,") (152. Who make mischief in the land, and reform not.")

A Reminder to Them of their Circumstances and the Blessings

They enjoyed Salih preached to them, warning them that the punishment of Allah could overtake them and reminding them of the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them, by giving them ample provision and making them safe from all kinds of dangers, giving them gardens and flowing springs, and bringing forth for them crops and fruits.

(وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعَهَا هَضِيمٌ)

(and date palms with soft clusters.) Al-`Awfi narrated from Ibn `Abbas, "Ripe and rich." `Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn `Abbas that this meant growing luxuriantly. Isma`il bin Abi Khalid narrated from `Amr bin Abi `Amr -- who met the Companions -- from Ibn `Abbas that this means, "When it becomes ripe and soft." This was narrated by Ibn Abi Hatim, then he said: "And something similar was narrated from Abu Salih."

(وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرَاهِينَ)

(And you hew out in the mountains, houses with great skill.) Ibn `Abbas and others said, "With great skill." According to another report from him: "They were greedy and extravagant." This was the view of Mujahid and another group. There is no contradiction between the two views, because they built the houses which they carved in the mountains as a form of extravagant play, with no need for them as dwelling places. They were highly skilled in the arts of masonry and stone-carving, as is well known to anyone who has seen their structures. So, Salih said to them:

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) Pay attention to that which could benefit you in this world and the Hereafter; worshipping your Lord Who created you, who granted you provisions so that you could worship Him alone and glorify Him morning and evening.

(وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ - الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ)

(And follow not the command of the extravagant, who make mischief in the land, and reform not.) meaning, their chiefs and leaders, who called them to Shirk, disbelief and opposition to the truth.

(قَالُوا إِيْمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسْحَرِينَ - مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بَآيَةٍ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - قَالَ هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَعْلُومٍ - وَلَا

تَمَسُّوْهَا بِسُوْءٍ فَيَأْخُذْكُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ عَظِيْمٍ -
 فَعَقَرُوْهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا نَدِيْمِيْنَ - فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ إِنْ
 فِيْ ذَٰلِكَ لَأَيَّةٌ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ)
 وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الرَّحِيْمُ-

(153. They said: "You are only of those bewitched!") (154. "You are but a human being like us. Then bring us a sign if you are of the truthful.") (155. He said: "Here is a she-camel: it has a right to drink (water), and you have a right to drink (water) (each) on a day, known.") (156. "And touch her not with harm, lest the torment of a Great Day should seize you.") (157. But they killed her, and then they became regretful.) (158. So, the torment overtook them. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (159. And verily, your Lord He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

The Response of Thamud, Their Demand for a Sign, and Their Punishment

Allah tells us how Thamud responded to their Prophet Salih, upon him be peace, when he called them to worship their Lord, may He be glorified.

(قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِيْنَ)

(They said: "You are only of those bewitched!") Mujahid said, "They meant he was one affected by witchcraft." Then they said:

(مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا)

(You are but a human being like us.) meaning, `how can you receive Revelation when we do not' This is like the Ayah where they are described as saying:

(أَعْلَقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌّ -
 سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مِّنَ الْكَذَّابِ الْأَشِرِّ)

("Is it that the Reminder is sent to him alone from among us Nay, he is an insolent liar!" Tomorrow they will come to know who is the liar, the insolent one!) (54:26-27) Then they asked him for a sign to prove that what he brought to them from their Lord was the truth. A crowd of them gathered and demanded that he immediately bring forth from the rock a she-camel that was ten months pregnant, and they pointed to a certain rock in their midst. Allah's

Prophet Salih made them promise that if he responded to their request, they would believe in him and follow him. So they agreed to that. The Prophet of Allah Salih, peace be upon him, stood and prayed, then he prayed to Allah to grant them their request. Then the rock to which they had pointed split open, revealing a she-camel that was ten months pregnant, exactly as they had requested. So some of them believed, but most of them disbelieved.

(قَالَ هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ
(

(He said: "Here is a she-camel: it has a right to drink (water), and you have a right to drink (water) (each) on a day, known.) meaning, 'she will drink from your water one day, and on the next day you will drink from it.'

(وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(And touch her not with harm, lest the torment of a Great Day should seize you.) He warned them of the punishment of Allah if they should do her any harm. The she-camel stayed among them for a while, drinking the water, eating leaves and grazing, and they benefitted from her milk which they took in sufficient quantities for every one to drink his fill. After this had gone on for a long time, and the time for their destruction drew near, they conspired to kill her:

(فَعَقَرُوهَا فَاصْبَحُوا نَدِيمِينَ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ)

(But they killed her, and then they became regretful. So, the torment overtook them.) Their land was shaken by a strong earthquake, and there came to them an overwhelming Sayhah (shout) which took their hearts from their places. They were overtaken by events which they were not expecting, so they were left (dead), lying prostrate in their homes.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
لُوطُ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَأَطِيعُونَ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(160. The people of Lut denied the Messengers.) (161. When their brother Lut said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (162. "Verily, I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (163. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (164. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.")

Lut and His Call

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Lut, peace be upon him. He was Lut bin Haran bin Azar, the nephew of Ibrahim Al-Khalil, upon him be peace. Allah sent him to a mighty nation during the lifetime of Ibrahim, peace be upon them both. They lived in Sadum (Sodom) and its environs, where Allah destroyed them and turned the area into a putrid, stinking lake, which is well-known in the land of Al-Ghur)the Jordan Valley(, bordering the mountains of Jerusalem, between the mountains and the land of Al-Karak and Ash-Shawbak. He called them to Allah, to worship Him alone with no partner or associate, and to obey the Messenger whom Allah sent to them. He forbade from disobeying Allah and committing the sin that they had invented which was unknown on earth before their time; intercourse with males instead of with females. Allah said:

(أَتَأْتُونَ الذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ - وَتَدْرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ
لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ -
قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهَ يَلُوطُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ -
قَالَ إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ)

رَبِّ نَجْنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ- فَنجَيْنَهُ وَأَهْلَهُ
أَجْمَعِينَ- إِلَّا عَجُوزاً فِي الْغَيْرِينَ- ثُمَّ دَمَرْنَا
الْآخِرِينَ- وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ
الْمُنذَرِينَ- إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ- وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ-)

(165. "Go you in unto the males of Al-`Alamin (people),") (166. "And leave those whom Allah has created for you to be your wives Nay, you are a trespassing people!") (167. They said: "If

you cease not, O Lut, verily, you will be one of those who are driven out!") (168. He said: "I am indeed of those who disapprove with severe anger and fury your behavior.") (169. "My Lord! Save me and my family from what they do.") (170. So, We saved him and his family, all,) (171. Except an old woman among those who remained behind.) (172. Then afterward We destroyed the others.) (173. And We rained on them a rain, and how evil was the rain of those who had been warned!) (174. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (175. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

Lut's Denunciation of His People's Deeds, Their Response and Their Punishment

The Prophet of Allah forbade them from committing evil deeds and intercourse with males, and he taught them that they should have intercourse with their wives whom Allah had created for them. Their response was only to say:

(لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَه يُلُوطُ)

(If you cease not, O Lut,) meaning, `if you do not give up what you have brought,'

(لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ)

(verily, you will be one of those who are driven out!) meaning, `we will expel you from among us.' This is like the Ayah,

(فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِّنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَّتَطَهَّرُونَ)

(There was no other answer given by his people except that they said: "Drive out the family of Lut from your city. Verily, these are men who want to be clean and pure!") (27:56). When he saw that they would not give up their ways, and that they were persisting in their misguidance, he declared his innocence of them, saying:

(إِنِّي لَعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ)

(I am, indeed, of those who disapprove with severe anger and fury) `Of those who are outraged, I do not like it and I do not accept it, and I have nothing to do with you. ' Then he prayed to Allah against them and said:

(رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(My Lord! Save me and my family from what they do.) Allah says:

فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي
الْغَيْرِينَ)

(So, We saved him and his family, all. Except an old woman among those who remained behind.) This was his wife, who was a bad old woman. She stayed behind and was destroyed with whoever else was left. This is similar to what Allah says about them in Surat Al-A`raf and Surat Hud, and in Surat Al-Hijr, where Allah commanded him to take his family at night, except for his wife, and not to turn around when they heard the Sayhah as it came upon his people. So they patiently obeyed the command of Allah and persevered, and Allah sent upon the people a punishment which struck them all, and rained upon them stones of baked clay, piled up. Allah says:

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الْآخَرِينَ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا)

(Then afterward We destroyed the others. And We rained on them a rain) until Allah's saying;

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(And verily, your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ
شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ)

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ
إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ -)

(176. The companions of Al-Aykah denied the Messengers.) (177. When Shu`ayb said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (178. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (179. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (180. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of Al-`Alamin.")

Shu`ayb and His Preaching to the Dwellers of Al-Aykah

The companions of Al-Aykah were the people of Madyan, according to the most correct view. The Prophet of Allah Shu`ayb was one of them, but it does not say here, their brother Shu`ayb, because they called themselves by a name denoting their deification of Al-Aykah, which was a tree which they used to worship; it was said that it was a group of trees which were tangled, like trees in a thicket. For this reason, when Allah said that the companions of Al-Aykah denied the Messengers, He did not say, "When their brother Shu`ayb said to them." Rather, He said:

(إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ)

(When Shu` ayb said to them) He is not described as belonging to them because of the meaning that was inherent in the name given to them even though he was their brother by blood. Some people did not notice this point, so they thought that the dwellers of Al-Aykah were different from the people of Madyan, and claimed that Shu` ayb was sent to two nations; some said that he was sent to three.

(أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ)

(The companions of Al-Aykah) were the people of Shu` ayb. This was the view of Ishaq bin Bishr. Someone besides Juwaybir said, "The dwellers of Al-Aykah and the people of Madyan are one and the same." And Allah knows best. Although there is another opinion that they were different nations with two identities, the correct view is that they were one nation, but they are described differently in different places. Shu` ayb preached to them and commanded them to be fair in their weights and measures, the same as is mentioned in the story of Madyan, which also indicates that they were the same nation.

(أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ - وَزِنُوا
بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ)

(وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي
الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ-)

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْحِيلَةَ الْأُولِينَ-)

(181. "Give full measure, and cause no loss (to others).") (182. "And weigh with the true and straight balance.") (183. "And defraud not people by reducing their things, nor do evil, making corruption and mischief in the land.") (184. "And have Taqwa of Him Who created you and the generations of the men of old.")

The Command to give Full Measure

Allah commanded them to give full measure, and forbade them to give short measure. He said:

(أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ)

(Give full measure, and cause no loss.) meaning, 'when you give to people, give them full measure, and do not cause loss to them by giving them short measure, while taking full measure when you are the ones who are taking. Give as you take, and take as you give.'

(وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ)

(And weigh with the true and straight balance.) The balance is the scales.

(وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ)

(And defraud not people by reducing their things,) means, do not shortchange them.

(وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ)

(nor do evil, making corruption and mischief in the land.) means, by engaging in banditry. This is like the Ayah,

(وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَاطٍ تُوعِدُونَ)

(And sit not on every road, threatening) (7:86).

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْحَيَلَةَ الْأُولِينَ)

(And have Taqwa of Him Who created you and the generations of the men of old.) Here he is frightening them with the punishment of Allah Who created them and created their forefathers. This is like when Musa, peace be upon him, said:

(رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأُولِينَ)

(Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!) (26:26). Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, As-Suddi, Sufyan bin `Uyaynah and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said:

(وَالْحَيَلَةَ الْأُولِينَ)

(the generations of the men of old.) means, He created the early generations. And Ibn Zayd recited:

(وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبَلًا كَثِيرًا)

(And indeed he (Shaytan) did lead astray a great multitude of you) (36:62).

(قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ)
وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ-
(
فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ
الصَّادِقِينَ-))
قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ-))
فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ-))
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ- وَإِنَّ
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ-))

(185. They said: "You are only one of those bewitched!") (186. "You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars!") (187. "So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful!") (188. He said: "My Lord is the Best Knower of what you do.") (189. But they denied him, so the torment of the Day of Shadow (a gloomy cloud) seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) (190. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (191. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

The Response of Shu`ayb's People, Their Disbelief in Him and the coming of the Punishment upon Them

Allah tells us how his people responded, and how it was like the response of Thamud to their Messenger -- for they were of like mind -- when they said:

(إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ)

(You are only one of those bewitched!) meaning, `you are one of those who are affected by witchcraft.'

(وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَّظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ
(

(You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars!) means, `we think you are deliberately lying to us in what you say, and Allah has not sent you to us.'

(فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(So cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us,) Ad-Dahhak said: "One side of the heavens." Qatadah said: "A piece of the heaven." As-Suddi said: "A punishment from heaven." This is like what the Quraysh said, as Allah tells us:

(وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ 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) until:

(أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا أَوْ
تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا)

(Or you cause the heaven to fall upon us in pieces, as you have pretended, or you bring Allah and the angels before (us) face to face.") (17:90-92)

(وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هٰذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ
فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(And (remember) when they said: "O Allah! If this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky....") (8:32). Similarly, these ignorant disbelievers said:

(فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful!)

(قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(He said: "My Lord is the Best Knower of what you do.") means, 'Allah knows best about you, and if you deserve that, He will punish you therewith, and He will not treat you unjustly.' So this is what happened to them -- as they asked for -- an exact recompense. Allah says:

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(But they denied him, so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) This is what they asked for, when they asked for a part of the heaven to fall upon them. Allah made their punishment in the form of intense heat which overwhelmed them for seven days, and nothing could protect them from it. Then He sent a cloud to shade them, so they ran towards it to seek its shade from the heat. When all of them had gathered underneath it, Allah sent sparks of fire and flames and intense heat upon them, and caused the earth to convulse beneath them, and He sent against them a mighty Sayhah which destroyed their souls. Allah says:

(إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) Allah has mentioned how they were destroyed in three places in the Qur'an, in each of which it is described in a manner which fits the context. In Surat Al-A`raf He says that the earthquake seized them, and they lay (dead), prostrate in their homes. This was because they said:

(لنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَشُعَيْبُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَكَ مِنَ
قَرْيَتِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا)

("We shall certainly drive you out, O Shu`ayb, and those who have believed with you from our town, or else you (all) shall return to our religion.") (7:88). They had sought to scare the Prophet of Allah and those who followed him, so they were seized by the earthquake. In Surah Hud, Allah says:

(وَأَخَذَتِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ)

(And As-Sayhah seized the wrongdoers) (11:94). This was because they mocked the Allah's Prophet when they said:

أَصْلَوْكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ تَتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ
تَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ
الرَّشِيدُ

("Does your Salah command that we give up what our fathers used to worship, or that we give up doing what we like with our property Verily, you are the forbearer, right-minded!") (11:87). They had said this in a mocking, sarcastic tone, so it was befitting that the Sayhah should come and silence them, as Allah says:

فَأَخَذْتَهُمُ الصَّيْحَةَ

(So As-Saihah overtook them) (15:73).

وَأَخَذَتِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ

(And As-Saihah seized the wrongdoers) (11:94). And here, they said:

فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ

(So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us,) in a stubborn and obstinate manner. So, it was fitting that something they never thought would happen should befall them:

فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ

(so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) Muhammad bin Jarir narrated from Yazid Al-Bahili: "I asked Ibn ` Abbas about this Ayah:

فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ

(so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them.) He said: `Allah sent upon them thunder and intense heat, and it terrified them)so they entered their houses and it pursued them to the innermost parts of their houses and terrified them further(, and they ran fleeing from their houses into the fields. Then Allah sent upon them clouds which shaded them from the sun, and they found it cool and pleasant, so they called out to one another until they had all gathered beneath the cloud, then Allah sent fire upon them.' Ibn ` Abbas said, ` That was the torment of the Day of Shadow, indeed that was the torment of a Great Day."