

سُورَةُ الْكَافِرَاتِ

Sūrah Al-Kahf

(THE CAVE)

Sūrah Kahf, also revealed at Makkah, answers two of the three questions put to the Holy Prophet^{SAW} by the non believers of Makkah under the direction of the Jews of Madinah. The third question pertaining to Rūḥ was answered in Sūrah Banī Isrāīl rather briefly. The other two questions are answered here in detail. However, these details do not cover the exact chronological occurrence of the events or the exact geographical locations where they took place. They also do not give out the exact number of people involved. This is because the Qurān does not focus on history or geography but on its objective of inviting mankind to **Allah** and its reformation. If the recounting of any event supports this cause, it is revealed accordingly. At times segments of a particular incident are mentioned at different occasions as examples to facilitate understanding. Often a single event has also been repeatedly mentioned to serve the same purpose.

The learned Commentators have rated this Sūrah as highly meritorious and blessed and its recitation as a shield against various evils. It may be recited daily or on Fridays, or its opening and last Āyāt may be memorized and repeated as a protection against evil.

Section 1

In the Name of **Allah**

The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.

1. All praise to **Allah** Who has sent down to **His** bondman the Book, and allowed no crookedness therein.

2. Straightforward, that it may warn of a severe violence from before **Him**, and bring glad tidings to the believers who work righteous works that theirs shall be a goodly wage.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ
وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا ﴿١﴾

فِيمَا لِنُذِرَ بِأَسَاسٍ دَائِمٍ لَدُنْهُ
وَيُبَشِّرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ
الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ﴿٢﴾

3. They will abide there forever.
4. And that it may warn those who say: **Allah** has taken a son.
5. No knowledge they have of it, nor had their fathers. Odious is the word that comes from their mouths; they utter not but a lie.
6. You are, as if going to kill yourself over their footsteps out of sorrow for they do not believe in this discourse.
7. We have made whatever is on the earth as an adornment of it, that We test them – which of them is best in work.
8. And We are going to make whatsoever is on it a bare soil.
9. Do you think that the people of the cave and the inscription were of **Our Signs** a marvel?
10. Recall when the youths took themselves to the cave and said: O our **Rabb!** Grant to us Mercy from before **You** and prepare for us in our affair a right course.
11. Therefore We put a covering over their ears in the cave for a number of years.
12. Thereafter We raised them up that We might know which of the two parties was best at reckoning the time that they had tarried.

مَكِّيِّينَ فِيهِ أَبَدًا ﴿٣﴾

وَيُنذِرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا ﴿٤﴾

مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا لِآبَائِهِمْ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ إِنْ يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا ﴿٥﴾

فَلَمَّا كَبُرَتْ بَنِيكَ عَلَىٰ عَائِشَتِهِمْ إِنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا ﴿٦﴾

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴿٧﴾

وَإِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا ﴿٨﴾

أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا ﴿٩﴾

إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةَ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَعَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحِمَةٌ وَهِيَ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشْدًا ﴿١٠﴾

فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَىٰ آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا ﴿١١﴾

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَى لِعَالِيئِنَّا أَمَدًا ﴿١٢﴾

Secrets of Revelation

A succinct account of the story unfolds that these men were natives of a city, ruled by Roman Emperor Decius (Dagianus). The Commentators identify it as the city of Undulus (Spain). Others assert that it was a city of Asia Minor, while some mention a place in the South of Palestine called Āpla near the present day Uqaba. All these are, however, mere conjectures and none presents a definite answer. Monastic living was considered to be highly meritorious in Christianity and a large number of people used to spend a lifetime in caverns. Many human skeletons have been recovered from such caverns from different locations. But it cannot be determined whether these remains are of the same Men of the Cave as mentioned in the Qurān.

According to some scholars *Raqīm* is a valley in which lies this Cave, while some surmise that it is the name of their settlement. The modern historians have also carried out a research but the outcome is nothing definite. All that they have been able say with some degree of authenticity is that the Men of Cave were a few young men, belonging to the affluent families of the kingdom and were all Christians. Their King was a tyrant, and the nation as a whole had taken to idol worship. These young men abhorred the ways of their nation, and upon witnessing idol worship at a national ceremony they decided to separate from their people. But someone informed the King who summoned and reprimanded them, and gave them a last chance to either revert to polytheism or face execution. So instead of reverting to disbelief they preferred to take refuge in the wilderness. They hid themselves inside the Cave and sought the protection of **Allah**. They were put to a comfortable slumber by the Most Merciful, which lasted for three hundred and nine years.

In the meantime the world outside had changed. A believing ruler named Bedosus had taken over the country. **Allah** woke them up. As they went to the marketplace to buy some food, the people in the market were amazed to see the coins they offered. The news was carried to the King and the event became a manifestation of Divine Omnipotence and an evidence to Resurrection. When they departed from the King's Court and returned to the Cave, **Allah** let death prevail and no one ever saw them thereafter. This was a summary of the event. What Qurān has revealed about it is indeed the truth and worth pondering over.

First of all is the mention of **Allah's** Magnificence and **His** Glory as well as **His** Great Favour. All praise and excellence belongs to **Him**. **He** revealed unto **His** bondsman a Book which is far above the slightest of doubts of being

inclined or partial towards anyone. Be it rhetoric or intrinsic excellence, this Book determines a straight path without being influenced or biased by any event, class of people or any other thing. It discourses the truth rather explicitly and warns the erring and the disobedient of the dire consequences. It conveys glad tidings of rewards to those who have been blessed with faith; who not only claim to be believers but also act righteously in accord with the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, which is what faith demands. Such believers will be rewarded amply and will enjoy these rewards eternally. Besides, all those who hold that **Allah** has begotten children are being reprimanded over their words. For what they utter is indeed a grave blasphemy. They utter something of which they have no knowledge; nor did their ancestors have any evidence of it. Such people are indeed great liars.

The Holy Prophet's^{SAW} Compassion for Mankind

In spite of all the blasphemy and impudence displayed by the non believers, the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} kind-heartedness towards them is such as if their deprivation from faith would aggrieve him to death. So he is being comforted by **Allah** that he should not take it upon his heart, for this world is a place of trial and no one will be forced into faith. Is this not a great favour that **Allah** has sent such a clement Messenger^{SAW} and blessed mankind with the glorious Qurān? Now it is upon them to decide which way they wish to choose. So the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must not feel anguished for them.

Wealth and Possessions are a Source of Adornment

And **We** have created so much on earth for its beautification and adornment, that it attracts people. But the sole purpose of life is not to excel in worldly gains. Rather the world has been created as a trial to see who overcomes these hurdles to act righteously and prefers to obey **Allah** and **His** Prophet^{SAW} to pursuing worldly affluence. All this buzz of life is until a time pre ordained. Eventually everything will be destroyed and the earth levelled up.

So O Reader! In your opinion, is the tale of the Men of Cave the most incredible wonder of **Our** Omnipotence? Absolutely not! Rather the creation of heavens and earth, the programming of an infinitely vast multi functional system and its continuous running are far more amazing feats, to which people do not attach any importance. They still fail to acknowledge the Magnificence of the Creator. Is the preservation of a few men more amazing or the sustenance of a universe?

The story revolves around a small group of young men who refused to capitulate to a tyrant's ungodly demand. They sacrificed all their worldly

possessions for their faith and took refuge in the Cave. They called out to **Allah**: "Our **Rabb**! Shower us with **Your** Mercy and make the right way easy for us." They meant that when they had abandoned the world for **His** Sake and had taken to the Cave, **He** may be kind enough to make them triumph in their mission and let not the infidels overpower them.

The Condition for Acceptance of a Prayer.

This proves that a prayer made purely for a gain in **Dīn**, without coveting any worldly benefits with the spirit of attaining **Allah**'s Nearness is definitely answered, even though what is asked may seem logically an improbability. So **Allah** in order to free them of all worries, fears and necessities of temporal life put them to deep slumber which lasted for over three centuries. **He** then awakened them to see as to who amongst them could guess the duration of their siesta in the lap of Divine Mercy, and also to establish a great Sign for the mankind adducing a proof to **His** Omnipotence.

Section 2

13. We recount to you their tidings with truth. They were certain youths who believed in their **Rabb**, and **We** increased them in guidance.

تَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ
إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى ﴿١٣﴾

14. We braced their hearts when they stood forth and said: our **Rabb** is the **Rabb** of the heavens and the earth; never we shall call upon a god beside **Him**, for then we shall be saying an abomination.

وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا
لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطْنَا ﴿١٤﴾

15. These, our people, have taken for themselves gods beside **Him** why then do they not bring for them a clear authority? Who does a great wrong than he, who fabricates a lie against **Allah**?

هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً
لَوْلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ بَيِّنٍ
فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ﴿١٥﴾

16. And now when you have withdrawn yourselves from

وَأِذِ اعْتَرَزْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأَوْا

them and what they worship, except Allah, take yourselves to the cave; your Rabb will unfold for you some of His Mercy, and will prepare an easy arrangement of your affair for you.

17. And you would see the rising sun veering away from their cave on the right, and the setting sun passing them on the left, while they were in the spacious part of the cave; that is of the Signs of Allah. Whom Allah guides, he is the guided indeed, and whom He sends astray, for him you will never find a directing friend.

إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ
وَيَهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مِرْفَقًا ﴿١٦﴾

وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزْوُرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ
ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ
وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لِيَهْدِيَ
اللَّهُ فَهْوَالِ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَن يُضِلِلْ فَلَن تَجِدَ
لَهُ مَوْئِلًا مَّرِيدًا ﴿١٧﴾

Secrets of Revelation

So, O' Prophet^{SAW} We will reveal unto you the factual account of the Men of Cave, as people have certainly added lot of concoctions. The revealed reality is that they were a number of young men who became believers. And as they accepted the Magnificence of their Provider with a sincere heart, He enhanced in them the capacity to seek the path of guidance. They also became extremely conscious of the difference between piety and evil. This realization was so effective that it forced them to abjure from evil and adopt piety.

The Hallmark of Faith

Here the hallmark of faith is stated, that if one is sincere, he is blessed with faith and awareness. He then not only begins to discern the difference between virtue and evil but also toils to practise piety at all costs. Persistent indulgence in sin as a believer is probably a symptom of lack in sincerity, for sincerity always yields obedience. And sincerity is a faculty of the Qalb. That is why the Şūfis always laid great emphasis on Zīkr-e-Qalbi. For those who practise

Zikr, the yardstick for assessment is also the same, that is, they should develop love for virtue and hatred for the evil.

Another Reward for Sincerity

‘We strengthened their hearts through a special link’. This is the second reward for sincerity; while guidance refers to recognition of virtue, the strengthening and linking of the Qalb refers to that courage of the heart, whereby it learns to persevere on **Allah**’s obedience no matter what the stakes are!

Link (Rābta)

On the sublime path of Suluk once the Laṭāif brighten up and the Qalb is enlightened, the Shaikh with his Tawajjuh and care establishes a link between the lights of a seeker’s Qalb and the ‘Arsh. As a result the seeker experiences a state that when his heart says **Allah** the light it emits reaches out to the ‘Arsh. This is known as ‘link’ and when it becomes strong it serves as a stairway for the Rūḥ. The Rūḥ can then embark on its journey to the celestial world, and the first station on this journey is called Aḥadiyat. It has been mentioned earlier that the effects of this state of the Qalb, in practical life, are that a seeker prefers to obey **Allah** even if he has to lay down his life for it.

So when the hearts of the Men of the Cave were blessed with such a link they refused to accept anyone as worthy of worship except their **Rabb, Who** is the Sustainer of the Universe and only **He** is Gracious enough to be adored. **He** rightfully deserves to be worshipped, which was not only their opinion but also the truth, they said. And, if **Allah** forbid, they too were to speak against **Him** as the rest of the nation did, still it would not affect **His** Grandeur but only prove their insanity and ignorance.

Youngsters Need More Tawajjuh

It is prove here that reformation of habits is easier for youngsters than the elderly. Besides, the spirit to achieve a goal at all costs vanes with old age. Therefore, for a revolutionary change it is imperative to give attention to the younger generation. It may be noted that the majority of those who embraced Islam in the early years were youngsters.

The Men of Cave had denounced the polytheistic rituals and heretic precepts of their nation, which indulged in idol worship without any logic or evidence to justify their act. Whereas the creation and sustenance of the universe is

enough proof of **Allah's** Magnificence. And what did their idols create and whom did they provide for; being themselves inferior things shaped out of clay and stone!

Polytheistic Rituals and Innovations Amount to Accusing the Almighty

There can be no bigger transgression than ascribing lies to **Allah**, that is, associating rewards with rituals when Shari'ah provides no such evidence. It amounts to accusing **Allah** for it is only **His** prerogative to declare a practice as meritorious. And **His** Prophets^{AS} simply convey what they have been instructed to. So anyone who invents rituals and innovations indeed lies over **Allah** and accuses **Him**, which is such a grave crime that to be in the company of such a person is indeed perilous, as **Allah's** doom may seize him any moment. Hence the Men of the Cave decided not to live with their people. They alienated themselves from their ungodly nation, denouncing their fake gods and ungodly rituals, even though it meant abandoning all the comforts of the world. The homely atmosphere, friendships, kinship, luxuries and comforts could all be sacrificed, they believed. And they preferred a cavern over the comforts of their homes in order to keep away from the erring lot.

Leaving a Place Where Allah's Worship - Impeded is a Prophetic Practice

This indeed is the law and also a practice of all the Prophets^{AS}, that a settlement where worshipping **Allah** becomes impossible or the belief and faith are endangered must be deserted as wilderness is better than such a settlement. Herein lies an important lesson for those who are ever ready to sell off their property and settle in Europe or other Western countries. Anyway, the stalwart believers of the Cave decided to take shelter in a cavern for **Allah's** sake firmly believing that **He** would enrich them with **His** Mercy and provide for their comfort by **His** Omnipotence.

The Divine Rewards for Men of the Cave and their Karamah.

When they had relinquished the means of comfort within their control only out of the apprehension that these might waiver them from **Allah's** Path, **He** made subservient to them these means which were otherwise beyond their control. For instance, they had abandoned their homes, and **Allah** blocked the scorching heat of the sun for them even under the open sky. O' Reader! You will notice that the sun avoids casting its rays on them, both at sunrise and sunset, so that the light may not bother them. And they are resting in the cleft, not in a covered shelter.

Based on this Āyah, many scholars have tried to determine the direction of the Cave, that if it were facing North or South, it could have been saved from receiving sunlight. Some relied on mathematical rules to determine the detailed dimensions of the Cave, to prove their point. But the truth is that the event is super natural and Allah identifies it as a symbol of His Omnipotence and a Karamah of His devoted servants. Allah declares it as a great Sign of His Omnipotence that a few men stay in the open and the weather and climate cast no effects on them. Not only the sun light but also the transition of seasons did not affect them for three hundred and nine years so much so that even their clothing remained intact and clean. Rain, dust, heat or cold nothing affected them, nor did the stormy winds bother them. Allah, the Almighty had commanded all the natural forces, over which they had no control, to protect them; an evidence manifest of His Omnipotence.

It must be remembered that believing in Allah from the very core of one's heart is the only source of acquiring excellence. Only he who develops a relationship with Him is blessed with guidance. And whoever is deprived by Allah, that is, his heart is void of sincerity for Him, is accursed to wander in waywardness. He finds no solace, nor a guide who may direct him towards the right path. In other words, finding a Shaikh is also entirely by Allah's Grace.

Section 3

18. And you would have deemed them awake whereas they were asleep, and We turned them over on the right and the left, while their dog stretched forth his two fore legs on the threshold. Had you looked at them you would have surely turned away from them in fright and would have been filled with awe of them.

وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ
الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَكَلْبُهُم بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ
بِالْوَصِيدِ لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ
فِرَارًا وَلَمَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعبًا ﴿١٨﴾

19. Likewise We raised them up that they might question among themselves. There spoke a speaker from amongst them: how long have you stayed? They said: we have stayed a day or

وَكَذَلِكَ بَعَثْنَا لَهُمْ إِنْسَاءً لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ
قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا
أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ

part of a day. They said: your **Rabb** knows best how long you have stayed; now send one of you with this your money in the city, and let him find which food is the cleaner there, and let him bring you a provision for that, and let him be circumspect, and let him by no means discover you to anyone.

20. Verily they, if they come to know of you, would stone you or make you revert to their faith, and lo! Then you shall never fare well.

21. And likewise We caused their affair to be lit upon that they might realise that **Allah's** Promise is true, and that the Hour! There is no doubt about it. Recall when they were disputing among themselves regarding their affair, and then they said: build over them a building – their **Rabb** is the Best Knower about them – then those who prevailed in their affair said: surely we shall raise over them a place of worship.

22. Presently they will say: they were three, the fourth being their dog. And they will say: they were five, the sixth being their dog – guessing at the unknown – and they will say: they were seven, the eighth being their dog. Say you: my **Rabb** is the best knower of their number;

فَاتَّبَعُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ
هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى
طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ
وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿١١﴾

لَهُمْ إِنْ يَبْظَهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ
أَوْ يُعِيدُوا كُفْرَكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ
وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُوا إِذَا أَبَدًا ﴿١٢﴾

وَكَذَلِكَ أَخْرَجْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ
اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَزَّعُونَ
بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بُيُوتًا رُبُّهُمْ
أَعْلَمُ بِهَذَا الَّذِي كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ
لَنَسْجِدَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْجِدًا ﴿١٣﴾

سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ
خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ
سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ
مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تَحَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَّةً ظَهَرَ
وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿١٤﴾

none knows that except only a few; so debate not you regarding their number except an outward debating, and ask not anyone regarding them.

Secrets of Revelation

Anyone taking a look at the sleepers is sure to assume that they are awake. This connotes that even the normal signs of sleep were not betrayed by their disposition, like closed eyes, relaxed body or changed breathing. Rather the centuries long slumber was just for their comfort and for the manifestation of **Allah's Powers**. The sleep did not even have its normal impact on them yet they remained asleep. And as they slept the Almighty **Himself** made them turn sides, sometimes to the left and sometimes to the right.

A Strange State of Allah's Nearness

This shows that they enjoy a special Divine Favour. They are not only shielded against external effects like those of weather, and never fatigue due to over sleeping, but also the functions of their physical bodies like turning sides are performed by **Allah Himself**. He makes them turn their sides every now and then.

This is the state the righteous friends of **Allah** desire whereby all their activities are dedicated completely to **Allah**. And this is attained as one gets nearer to **Him**. This is explained by a saying of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} according to which when a person attains **Allah's** Nearness, a stage comes when **Allah** becomes his limbs and senses.

Company of Righteous itself is a Source of Receiving Mercy

The Men of Cave were exceptionally blessed people. When they left the town their pet dog followed them too. **Allah's** Mercy did not let even the dog perish and preserved it against the effects of times and weather. So it sat comfortably at the mouth of the Cave. The Commentators deduce that when a dog associated with the righteous did not remain deprived, imagine how much a believer can attain in such a company?

According to Al-Bukhari, once the Holy Prophet^{SAW} was coming out of the mosque's door when a Companion^{RAU} asked him as to when the Yaum al Qayamah would be. He, in turn, asked him as to how much had he prepared

for the Day? The questioner felt embarrassed and added that he did not have much to bank on insofar as Ṣalāt, Fasting and Zakāt were concerned but his entire asset was the love of Allah and His Prophet^{SAW}. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} replied that the one whom he had loved will accompany him on Yaum al Qayamah. Hadhrat Ans^{RAU} once said that after embracing Islam nothing gave him more comfort than the above saying of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, for he loved Allah, the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, Hadhrāt Abu Bakr and ‘Umar^{RAU}, and hence hoped to be in their company eternally.

Allah created an aura of awesomeness for the protection of the Men of Cave whereby if anyone was to stop by the Cave to peep in, he would be terrified and run away. This was yet another super natural phenomenon. The infidels who searched for their hideout, instead of causing any harm to the sleepers, would retreat in terror.

After centuries, the sleepers were awakened from their slumber. Now the question arose, how long had they been sleeping for they all felt hungry. They had slept for centuries without any food but as soon as they awoke they felt hungry as usual. So they asked one another how long had they slept. Some of them thought that it was only for a day, or for most of the day because they were feeling hungry. This again was a Karamah that three centuries failed to make them perceive the span. Finally, they concluded that only Allah knew how long they had been sleeping and it was a futile discussion. It was better to send someone to the city to buy pure and permissible food. It was imperative that the person who went accomplished his mission very stealthily, for if they were caught, they would either be stoned to death or forced back into their ungodly religion, resulting in their eternal deprivation. This indicates that the Cave was located near the city. Some important points to take note of are listed

(1) To Earn for Fulfilment of Needs is not Against Tawakkul

Allah has appreciated their spirit of Tawakkul, but they too had money for purchasing their needs. So having lawful money is not against the spirit of Tawakkul.

(2) Pure and Permissible Food

Since their nation indulged in polytheism, making offerings to idols and eating unlawful food, they made sure that whoever was to go to the market must be extra careful in buying food that it was pure and permissible. If permissible meat was not available, he must buy vegetables or any other pure food. In other words, where forbidden

food is generally consumed and sold it is not proper to eat without investigating. Muslim living in the Western Countries must be very careful in this regard.

The jurists of Islam assert that it is permissible to have partnership in wealth. And to assign the power of attorney to one of the partners to spend on others' behalf is also proper. Besides, to share amicably in food is also permissible.

So by a Divine Plan the secret of the Men of Cave was disclosed. The scholars explain that the tyrant who ruled the country had long been dead and a believing and pious king had taken over. However, a conflict had developed amongst the masses over the belief in *Ākhirah*, like the denial of life in *Barzakh* in our country today. The King would often pray to **Allah** for manifesting a clear sign by **His** Omnipotence to substantiate the belief in *Ākhirah*, for it was no longer possible to convince people by arguments. So **Allah** stirred the Men of the Cave from their slumber. When the one who had gone to the market to buy food offered money to the vendor, the latter was surprised to discover that the coin was three hundred years old. He disclosed it to others until the news reached the King and became widely known. The incident of escape and disappearance of the young men was still fresh in history. Therefore, their reappearance became an evidence to the life in *Ākhirah* as well as the Absolute Powers of **Allah**. **He** may keep a person alive for centuries without any provisions and is Powerful to requite in *Barzakh* or raise the dead from the grave. Indeed **His** Promise is true and *Yaum-al-Qayamah* will take place beyond doubt.

The Essence of a Wali's Karamah

Just as a Prophet's^{AS} miracle substantiates his Prophethood, a Wali's Karamah establishes and strengthens *Dīn*. In fact, it is a Prophet's^{AS} miracle which is manifested as Karamah at the hands of a Wali, and provides evidence to the authenticity of Prophethood. So when the biography of the Men of the Cave became widely known and people became aware of all its aspects, **Allah** caused them to die. It was an extraordinary event so the people started discussing the idea of constructing memorial monument. But the question was of their identity, which was to be inscribed on the proposed monument. No one but **Allah** knew what their names were and which families they came from. The purpose of their unveiling was not to narrate history but to invite people to guidance. So the people gave up the quest for their identity and the idea of building a monument, saying that only **Allah** knew the reality. However, they did agree that they were **Allah**'s chosen servants. Finally the

nobles in power decided to build a mosque over the Cave, so that the visitors may worship **Allah** therein.

Mosques Adjacent to the Tombs of Aulia' Allah

Mufti Muhammad Shafi^{RUA} asserts that it is not prohibited to build mosques near the tombs of saints. However, to prostrate to the graves is a forbidden act and outright polytheism. Now the part of the event beneficial to mankind has been revealed, leaving out the irrelevant details. People will, however, continue to discuss their number; some may say they were three and their dog was the fourth while others will say they were five and the sixth was their dog. Yet some will also number them as seven with their dog as eighth. All these endless arguments are without any solid reasoning, so the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must tell them that **Allah** knows the best, and their number was not important for guiding people. As there are no obvious means of acquiring this knowledge so the Holy Prophet^{SAW} need not indulge in argument with them, nor must he seek any further information from them, as the important parts have been revealed by **Allah** and probing for the unnecessary is indeed futile.

Argument in Unnecessary Matters must be Avoided

It is also brought out that in important matters, argument for the sake of argument must not be resorted to. Rather the discussion must be carried out logically and with grace and tolerance. Besides, the truth must be accepted and unnecessary matters which do not concern one's beliefs or actions must be ignored as discussing them will not only be a waste of energy and time but may also result in creating more differences.

Section 4

23. And never say you of a thing: I am going to do that on the morning.

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾

24. Except with this reservation that **Allah** so will. And remember your **Rabb** when you forget, and say you: perchance my **Rabb** will guide me to something nearer to right direction than this.

إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَأَذْكُرَّ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ
عَسَىٰ أَن يَهْدِيَنِّي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِن هَٰذَا رَشْدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25. And they stayed in their cave three hundred years and added nine.
26. Say you: Allah knows best how long they stayed; His alone is the hidden knowledge of the heavens and the earth. How well He sees and hears! They have no patron beside Him, nor in His Rule He associates anyone.
27. And recite you what has been revealed to you of the Book of your Rabb; and none may alter His Words, and never will you find beside Him a refuge.
28. And endure yourself in the company of those who call upon their Rabb in the morning and evening seeking His Countenance, and let not your eyes rove from them seeking the adornment of the life of this world; and obey you not him whose heart We have made to neglect of Our remembrance, and who follows his lust, and whose affair is exceeding the bound.
29. Say you: the truth is from your Rabb, let him therefore believe who will and let him disbelieve who will. Verily We have prepared for the wrong doers a Fire the awnings of which shall encompass them; and if they cry for relief they shall be relieved with water like the dregs of oil

وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ
وَأَزْدَادُ وَاثِنَا ﴿٢٥﴾

قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا لَهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ أَبْصِرْ بِهِ وَأَسْمِعُ
مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ. مِنْ وَلِيِّ وَلَا يَشْرِكُ
فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابٍ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ
لِكَلِمَاتِهِ. وَلَنْ نَجْعَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَلْتَحَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾

وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ
بِالْفُجْرَةِ وَالْعِشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ
عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِيعِ
مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ
أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ
فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْفَاطِلِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ
سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَفِيضُوا يَفِضُوا أَيْعَاؤُا يِعَاؤُا كَالْمُهْلِ
يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهُ يَنْسُكَ الشَّرَابُ
وَسَاءَتْ مَرْتَفَعًا ﴿٢٩﴾

scalding their faces. Ill the drink,
and vile the resort!

30. Verily those who believe and
work the righteous works We do
not waste the wage of him who
does well in regard to his work.

31. These! For them are the Gardens
Everlasting with running
streams. Bedecked they shall be
therein with bracelets of gold
and wear they shall green robes
of satin and brocade, reclining
therein on the couches.
Excellent the reward, and
goodly the resort!

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا ﴿٣٠﴾

أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ حَبَّتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ
يُحْمَلُونَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسْوَدٍ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا
خُضْرًا مِنْ سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَّكِنِينَ
فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَتَغَمَّ السُّرَابُ وَحَسَنَتْ مَرْفَعًا ﴿٣١﴾

Secrets of Revelation

O' Prophet^{SAW}! It does not suit you to say that you will do a particular thing tomorrow without saying Insha Allah with it. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} is the fountainhead of guidance. Seeing his miracles people might start to believe that he could accomplish everything. Therefore, he is being advised never to say that he would do something, without adding Insha Allah.

When the three questions were put to the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, he said that he would give the answers the next day, but he did not add the words Insha Allah. After this, nothing was revealed for about fifteen days. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} was dejected as the non believers ridiculed him. He was, however, comforted upon the revelation of this Āyah wherein a code of conduct was laid down for the future. To say Insha-Allah is a commendable act for all Muslims in general. And if by chance the Holy Prophet^{SAW} forgets to say Insha Allah where he must, he should say it as soon as he remembers, for it befits his status.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} should tell them that they may find the story of the Men of Cave incredible, but he has been informed about matters much more extraordinary and important, which he has already conveyed to them. The creation of Prophet Ādam^{AS} and of the 'Arsh, the heavens and the angels

before him, matters pertaining to life and death, and above all, the Supreme **Being** and **His** Attributes far outweigh as evidence this story of the Men of Cave, and are much clearer signs for the guidance of mankind.

They argue about the duration of the stay in the cave. Since the long span of this stay highlights its importance as a miracle and a supernatural event, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} can tell them exactly that the Men of Cave rested in a state of slumber for three hundred and nine years. During this period not only their bodies and garments remained preserved but they also remained alive without eating or drinking. They just slept on. Yet if the non believers do not believe this recounting it does not matter. However, they must be told that it is **Allah** Alone **Who** knows the exact duration of their stay and it is **He Who** is giving this information.

So exalted is **He** that all the hidden secrets of the heavens and the earth lie bare before **Him**. **He** is Vigilant and all-Hearing. If they do not believe in the facts told by the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, they would not find any helper against **Allah**. They too depend entirely on **Him** for any form of help and none can dare interfere in **His** Administration and Commandments. The non believers used to fabricate events measuring **His** Powers by their own standards, just as today people come up with all sorts of fabrications to refute Karamah and miracles. The fact is that Karamah and miracles are extraordinary events and must not be judged by the normal standards.

'O Prophet^{SAW}! Your assignment is to convey to the people the revelations you receive from **Allah**: you are not responsible for making them believe. Your duty is fulfilled when you convey the Message. The revelation of the Book is a job of **His** Gracious Providence. **His** Message is indeed a treasure for human grooming. Therefore, no alteration in it is possible on demand of the affluent chieftains of the infidels. Nor should you worry that if they fail to embrace Islam it will impede its propagation. You should simply convey **Allah's** Message as anyone who will slack in **His** obedience or tends to obey others than **Him** will find no refuge against **His** Grip. It is only **Allah** who provides refuge to everyone'. Hence the demand put forth by the polytheists of Makkah that the Holy Prophet^{SAW} should make the destitute Companions^{RAU} leave his audience for their sake is certainly not worthy of attention.

Company of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}

Rather the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must particularize his companionship for those who remember **Allah** constantly in pursuit of **His** Pleasure and Nearness, and are not heedless of **His** Zikr even for a moment.

Perpetual Zikr

Scholars have also interpreted it as persistence in worship. While this is also correct, yet the real meaning is Zikr-e-Qalbi, which if attained does not brook even a moment of negligence. After this Āyah was revealed and the Holy Prophet^{SAW} came out of his chamber he noticed some Companions^{RAU} engaged in Zikr. He also sat with them, recited this Āyah and said: 'Thanks to **Allah** Who has also provided me the people with whom **He** has commanded me to associate. Besides, in the very next sentence a comparison is drawn between them and the heedless. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} is commanded that the latter must be given no importance because **Allah** has rendered their Qulūb heedless of **His** Zikr. Whereas the Ḥadīth highlights the superiority of Zikr-e-Qalbi over Zikr-e-Lisāni, the Qurān declares that because of the Barakah of the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} company not only the Qulūb of the Companions^{RAU} remembered **Allah** constantly but also each and every cell of their bodies practised Zikr (39:22). In fact, there are varying levels of Zikr.

Levels of Zikr

Accepting Islam is also Zikr provided it is from the core of heart. This is the first and the minimum level. The second level is the capacity to act according to the Sunnah, which turns each and every action into Zikr. The third level is of verbally praising **Allah** (Tasbīḥ), which is termed as Zikr-e-Lisāni. The fourth and the most perfect level is when the Qalb is blessed with perpetual Zikr. This level can be attained only in the company of an accomplished Shaikh through the process of mirroring. There is no other way of acquiring it. Moreover each level of Zikr attracts the proportionate degree of Holy Prophet's^{SAW} attention and company.

While dispensing this blessing, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must never make wealth and power the criterion, expecting that the conversion of the rich and privileged to Islam would strengthen it. Certainly such people are not worthy of his attention. Rather his affectionate attention must be reserved only for those who enlighten their Qulūb with his Barakah and remember **Allah** constantly. Therefore, those whose Qulūb **He** has rendered heedless of **His** Zikr because of their disobedience and denial ought to be completely ignored.

Negligence of Qalb Enslaves a Person to Desires

And when the Qalb dies of negligence, a human being is stripped of his honour of being human and becomes subservient to desires just like animals. So the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must give no importance to such people. Rather he must make it very clear that Dīn and the Prophetic Barakah are in reality a Divine Favour unto mankind. Every individual is free to choose the path of honour or be steered by his vain desires. But it must be remembered that Allah has prepared a mighty inferno in Hell for the latter course. It is a Fire bounded by walls also made of fire. When those condemned to it would ask for a drink they will be offered a disgusting puss-like liquid hotter than fire itself, which would scorch their faces as soon as they will bring it near their lips. It will indeed be a tormenting and extremely afflictive abode.

Compared to this, all those who accepted the faith and adorned their lives with noble deeds and obedience will be rewarded manifold. For them await ever green gardens, under which flow rivers so that the gardens may bloom forever. The obedient servants of Allah will be duly honoured. They will all be dressed in the finest of green clothes, adorning gold armlets and will rest on the finest silk cushions laid on the most elegant seats. It would indeed be a gracious requital and also a truly honourable abode. It must be remembered that the dress, the ornaments and the decorum mentioned above all pertain to Ākhirah. It is not proper to measure or evaluate them with a worldly yardstick and argue that silk and gold are not permissible for men.

Section 5

32. Proclaim you to them the similitude of two men. We made for one of them two gardens of vines and hedged both with palms, and We placed tillage in between.

وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ
مِنْ أَعْنَبٍ وَحَفَفْتَهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زُرْعًا ﴿٣٢﴾

33. Each of the two gardens brought forth the produce, and stinted not anything thereof, and We made stream to gush forth in the midst of the two.

كُنَّا الْبُجَّتَيْنِ، أَنْتَ أَكْلَهُمَا وَلَمْ نَنْظِرْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا
وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلْفَهُمَا نَهْرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

34. And he had property. Then he said to his companion as he

وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ، وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ،

spoke to him: I am better than you in substance and mightier in respect of retinue.

35. And he entered his garden, while he was a wrong doer in respect of his own soul. And he said: I do not consider that it will ever perish.

36. Nor I consider that the Hour is going to happen; and if I am brought back to my **Rabb**, surely I shall find something better than this as a retreat.

37. His companion said to him; as he spoke to him: are you a disbeliever in **Him** who created you of dust; then of a sperm, and formed you a man?

38. But, **He** is **Allah**, my **Rabb**, and with my **Rabb** I do not join anyone.

39. Why then you said not when you entered your garden: whatever **Allah** may will, there is no power save in **Allah**; if you see then I am inferior to you in substance and offspring.

40. Then perchance my **Rabb** will give me something better than your garden and send on it a bolt from the heaven so that it become a slippery plane.

41. Or the water thereof becomes deep sunken, so that you can make a search therefor.

أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا ﴿٣١﴾

وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ
أَنْ تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا ﴿٣٢﴾

وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِنْ رُجِدْتُ إِلَى رَبِّي
لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا ﴿٣٣﴾

قَالَ لَهُ مَسَاجِبُهِ وَهُوَ مُحَاوِرُهُ أَ كَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِي
خَلَقَكَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّكَ رَجُلًا ﴿٣٤﴾

لَيْكِنَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا ﴿٣٥﴾

وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ
إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ إِنْ تَرَىٰ أَنَا أَقْلٌ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴿٣٦﴾

فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّي أَنْ يُؤْتِيَنِي خَيْرًا مِنْ جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ
عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَيُصِيحُ صَاعِبًا
زَلْفًا ﴿٣٧﴾

أَوْ يُصِيحَ مَاءً غَافِرًا فَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُ مَطْلَبًا ﴿٣٨﴾

42. And his property was encompassed, and lo! He was wringing the palms of his hands over what he had spent on it, so it lay fallen down on its trellises, saying: oh! Would that I had not joined anyone with my **Rabb!**

وَأَحْيَطَ بِشَرِّهِ، فَأَصْبَحَ بِقَلْبٍ كَفَيْهِ عَلَى مَا أَنْفَقَ فِيهَا
وَهِيَ حَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ بَلَيْتَنِي
لَمَ أَشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا ﴿١٢﴾

43. And there could be no party helping him as against **Allah**, nor he could be an avenger himself.

وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ، فِتْنَةٌ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَمَا كَانَ مُنْصِرًا ﴿١٣﴾

44. Herein is all protection from **Allah the True**; Excellent is **He** as to the reward and Excellent to the final end!

هَذَا لَكَ الْوَلِيَّةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقِّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ نَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عَقْبًا ﴿١٤﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Many similitudes can be presented of what is often witnessed at communal and individual levels. So O Prophet^{SAW}! Present before these infidels the similitude of the two friends. One of them was blessed with affluence. He owned vineyards surrounded by date palms with a fertile piece of land in the middle. His land yielded bounties like grapes, dates and grain simultaneously, in sufficient quantities throughout the year. Right through his gardens a river was flowing, which kept them ever green and laden with seasonal fruits. While the owner of these gardens was affluent, the other friend was not so well off.

One day the rich friend gave vent to his inner thoughts and said to his friend: "Compared to you, I am very affluent and influential. There are many people who obey me, but you, my friend, consider my beliefs and practices to be ungodly. You believe in **Allah** and are hopeful of reward from **Him**. But what I see is just the opposite. Had you been right, all these favours I enjoy would have been with you." He entered his garden in conceit and, blinded by his prosperity, commented: "Can such flourishing gardens with a river flowing through ever perish? Certainly not! And what people say about the Day of Judgment is, in my opinion, a hoax concocted as a consolation by the poor.

However, if it is true and I do have to return to **Allah**, I will be given even better gardens than these. Because according to you, Jannah is better than this world and will be awarded to **His** chosen people, and my affluence is an evidence to the fact that I am **Allah's** chosen person".

Just as today it is often said of a rich person that **Allah** has favoured him amply. The level of morality and beliefs is often over looked while making such remarks. It must be remembered, that worldly affluence is a blessing only when complimented by faith; otherwise its a misfortune. However, his believing friend said rather emphatically: "You are denying such a Magnificent Creator **Who** created you out of a handful of dust." In **His** grand system, this dust produces food, which becomes part of human bodies. Then it turns into a droplet of semen and is planted into the mother's womb and **Allah** fashions it into a perfect human being.

"If you insist on denial," he said, "I will not be influenced by your wealth so as to follow you. My belief is that **Allah** is my **Rabb Who** fulfils my needs and I do not ascribe any partners in **His Being** and in **His Attributes**. It would have been much better for you if upon entering your garden, you had said. '**Allah** be praised. There is no power save **Him**. Everything occurs by **His Command**.' You should have been thankful to **Allah** seeing me lesser in wealth, power or kin than yourself rather than resorting to denial. **Allah** is all Powerful, **He** may bless me with superior gardens than yours if **He** pleases. **He** can also decree a calamity upon your gardens reducing these to waste. And you may be left wistfully dumbfounded upon seeing a barren field in front of you. **He** is all Powerful to command the river to dry up, on which the gardens thrive, which would then be ruined and you can by no means bring the water back."

And this was exactly what happened; **His** gardens were uprooted because of his arrogance and defiance. One morning when he entered his gardens, he found them totally ruined. He was thunderstruck to behold the devastation, and began lamenting: "Had I not ascribed partners to **Allah**, such a calamity would not have struck. Or even if this worldly loss was to be incurred at least my reward in the **Ākhirah** would have stayed. Now I have destroyed both!" but his wealth and servants could not help him in the least and it became evident that all powers rest with **Allah** and only **His Rule** and Authority truly prevails. Only **His Favour** can benefit people both here and in the Hereafter. Otherwise nothing can be of any avail in this life and the next.

Section 6

45. Propound you to them the similitude of the life of this world. It is as water which We send down from the heaven, then there mingles with it the vegetation of the earth, and lo! It becomes dry stubble, which the winds scatter. And Allah is Potent over everything.

وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا كَمَا إِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيحُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿١٥﴾

46. Riches and sons are the adornment of the life of the world, and the righteous works that last are excellent with your Rabb in respect of reward and excellent in respect of hope.

الْعَمَلُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴿١٦﴾

47. And beware of a Day when We will cause the mountains to pass away, and you will see the earth plain, and We will gather them, and We will leave of them not one.

وَيَوْمَ نُسِّرُ الْجِبَالَ وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ بَارِزَةً وَحَشَرْنَاهُمْ فَلَمْ نُغَادِرْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿١٧﴾

48. And they shall be sent before your Rabb in ranks. Now you have come to Us as We had created you the first time. Aye! You fancied that We had appointed for you no meeting place.

وَعُرْسُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ صَفًّا لَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ بَلْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَلَّنْ نَجْعَلَ لَكُمْ مَوْعِدًا ﴿١٨﴾

49. And the Book shall be placed, and you will see the culprits alarmed at what is therein, and they will say: ah! Woe to us! What ails this Book that it leaves not any misdeed, small or great, but it has comprehended it! And they shall find present

وَرُوضَ الْكِتَابِ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَا لِ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يَغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظُنُّ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿١٩﴾

all that they had wrought; and
your **Rabb** wrongs not any one.

Secrets of Revelation

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must tell these people the similitude of this temporal life. For instance, the downpour from the clouds fills the earth with greenery. Then after a certain period the greenery turns pale, withers out and is scattered away by the winds. It drifts along the blowing winds without any destination or worth. Similar is the case of individuals and nations. Many nations assume power and it appears as if they will never face a downfall. But eventually they perish and move on to oblivion. In case of individuals, see how many young and stout men get buried under the dust. It is **Allah** Alone **Who** is above any changes and transitions, is Eternal and Omnipotent. Wealth and possessions are undoubtedly an adornment for this world. But deeds last forever, are valued by **Allah** and are expected to be amply rewarded by **Him**.

Enduring Deeds, Wealth and Progeny

'Good deeds that endure', according to the Commentators, comprise each and every noble deed including the lawful earning of wealth and spending it within the limits of Shari'ah. Also included is the right nurturing of one's children to make them pious and righteous. In short, be it family and tribe, or friends and relatives, wealth or deeds, if an act is in accordance with Shari'ah, it qualifies to be listed amongst the good deeds that endure. And if the same wealth is earned illegally and is spent unlawfully, or the progeny and the tribe or friends and servants are not influenced to observe the limits laid down by Shari'ah, the short lived worldly grandeur and power will eventually prove disastrous. One day even the mountains will be lifted from their place and finally blown to debris. The beauty and festivities of the earth will also come to an end. Neither will there remain habitation nor wilderness. The earth will be transformed into a vast barren field and everyone will be gathered there. None of the mighty arrogant deniers will be able to escape or hide. All human beings will be present before **Allah** in ranks. The non believers will then be addressed: "Your wealth, your false honour and temporary power could not accompany you and you stand here empty handed as when you were born for the first time. You thought that you would never be brought to life again. You did not even have the sense to comprehend the fact that the One **Who** had the power to create you for the first time could also do it again. But you did not

believe this simple fact." And then the Register of Conduct of every individual will be opened and placed before him. The wrongdoers will quiver when they see it and will exclaim sorrowfully that the Register has not miss out any details of their conduct. It has documented their actions in the minutest detail. 'And O Prophet^{SAW}! Your Rabb will not wrong anyone.'

Punishment According to Deeds

They will see their doings in front of them. Obviously the punishment will be in consonance with the deeds and shall match the sin committed. Rather, each sin will be embodied to become a proportionate punishment.

Section 7

50. And recall when We said to the angels: do Sajdah to Ādam, and they did Sajdah, but Iblīs did not. He was of the Jinn, so he trespassed the command of his Rabb. Would you then take him and his progeny as patrons instead of Me, whereas they are unto you an enemy? Ill is for the wrong doers this exchange.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا
إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ
أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي
وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ يَبْئَسُ لِلظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51. I made them not present at the creation of the heavens and the earth or at the creation of themselves; nor was I to take the seducers as supporters.

مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ
أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذًا الْمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدًا ﴿٥١﴾

52. And beware a Day whereon I shall say: cry unto My associates whom you fancied. So they will call upon them and they will answer them not, We shall place between them a barrier.

وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ نَادُوا شُرَكَائِيَ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ
فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ
مَوْبِقًا ﴿٥٢﴾

53. And the culprits will see the Fire and imagine they are about to

وَرَأَى الْمُجْرِمُونَ النَّارَ فَظَنُّوا أَنْهُمْ مُوَاقِعُوهَا

fall therein; and they shall not find therefrom a way of escape.

وَلَمْ يَجِدُوا عَنْهَا مَصْرِفًا

Secrets of Revelation

O' Mankind! Just remember the time when we honoured your progenitor **Ādam^{AS}** and ordered the angels to prostrate before him. All complied but **Iblīs** who refused to do so. In his rivalry for Prophet **Ādam^{AS}** he even refused to obey the order of his Creator. So will you make friends with **Iblīs** and his progeny instead of **Allah**, whereas they have always been your enemy.

Satan also has Progeny

The accomplished Shaikh **Allah Yar Khan^{RUA}** once said that the Jinn inhabiting the earth are nine times the human population and the Satans are nine times the population of Jinn and humans put together. A major reason for this huge population is their long life span. Since **Iblīs** was granted respite till the Day of Judgment, the influence of his extended age is carried to his kind. They live for thousands of years, while the Jinn and the humans who serve as his army are in addition to his progeny. **Allah's** Protection against him must be sought at all times. So all those who prefer making friends with **Iblīs** and obeying him over **His** friendship and obedience have indeed made a deplorable bargain.

Those who associate hopes with **Iblīs**, what rationale do they have to support their action? Do they believe that he and his progeny contributed to the creation of the earth and the heavens, or that **Allah** sought help from them? Certainly not! For it does not befit **His** Greatness to employ for **His** service those who mislead others. **He** is beyond any want. And if as a reward **He** does appoint anyone to serve **His** Purpose, certainly it cannot be the wrongdoers.

Allah announces that one day **He** will ask all the polytheists to call out all those they had believed to be **His** partners in their worldly life. And even if they cry out at the top of their voice, their self proclaimed gods will not be able to answer them back as **Allah** will seize their ability to hear or speak. **He** will also create a partition between the two but even if the partition was not there, they could have been of no avail to them. However, because of the barrier they will be as if non-existent. Those guilty of polytheism and infidelity will see Hell right in front of them and will also be aware of the fact

that they are heading for it. But they will find no escape and will have no option but to fall into it.

Section 8

54. And assuredly We have set forth all manner of parables in this Qurān for mankind, but man is of all things the most contending.

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا ﴿٥٤﴾

55. And nothing prevents mankind from believing now when the guidance has come to them and from asking forgiveness of their Rabb, except that there may come to them the dispensation of the ancients or that the chastisement may come to them face to face.

وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ سُنَّةٌ الْأَوَّلِينَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ قُبُلًا ﴿٥٥﴾

56. And We do not send Messengers save as bringers of glad tidings and warners, and those who disbelieve dispute with falsehood that they may rebut thereby the truth; and they take My Signs and what they are warned of as a mockery.

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ
وَيُحَدِّثُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِالْبَطْلِ لِيُذْجِسُوا بِهِ
الْحَقَّ وَيَتَّخِذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ وَمَا نُنذِرُوا هُزُوًا ﴿٥٦﴾

57. And who does greater wrong than he who is admonished with the Signs of his Rabb and yet turns away from them and forgets what his hands had sent forth? We have set up veils over their hearts lest they should understand it, and in their ears a heaviness; and if you call them to the guidance, lo! They will

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذُكِّرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ، فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا
وَنَسِيَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاؤُهُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ
أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا
وَإِنْ تَدْعُهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ
فَلَنْ يَهْتَدُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا ﴿٥٧﴾

not let themselves ever be guided.

58. And your Rabb is the Forgiver, Owner of Mercy. Were He to call them to account for what they have earned, He would have hastened torment for them, but for them there is a return, and beside it they cannot find a place to take themselves to.

59. And these cities! We destroyed them when they did wrong, and We had appointed a time for their destruction.

وَرَبُّكَ الْغَفُورُ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ لَوْ يُؤَاخِذُهُمْ
بِعَمَّاكَسَبُوا الْعَجَلَ لَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ بَلْ لَهُمْ
مَوْعِدٌ لَّنْ يَجِدُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ مَوْبِلًا ﴿٥٨﴾

وَتِلْكَ الْقُرَىٰ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ لَمَّا ظَمَرُوا
وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَهْلِكِهِمْ مَوْعِدًا ﴿٥٩﴾

Secrets of Revelation

People must not have plunged into destruction by disobeying the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. Yet they are so mindless that when Allah favoured them by sending guidance through His Prophets^{AS}, instead of seeking His Forgiveness and embracing Islam they looked forward to the promised doom like the preceding doomed nations. Or do they wish to be struck by doom right away? The Messengers of Allah are given clear and manifest miracles and the code for the guidance of mankind. But these people argue for the sake of argument, hoping to avoid facing the truth. Since they have no answer to the logical reasoning and evidence presented by the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, they simply resort to mockery. But let it be known that whoever having received the Divine Commandments, turns his face away in arrogance is a transgressor. What is it after all over which they are so arrogant, as to have adopted an evil conduct and forgotten the fact that one Day they will have to face retribution for their misdeeds?

Sin and Infidelity Drape the Hearts, Marring the Importance of Piety

But what can they possibly see as We have draped their hearts because of their indulgence in sin and disbelief. They cannot even discern what piety is, and their ears have been deprived of the capacity to hear the truth. Now even if the Holy Prophet^{SAW} persistently invites them to the truth, they will never be

guided, as they can neither hear the invitation, nor see how beautiful the path of guidance is.

Nevertheless, your Rabb is Most Clement and Munificent, otherwise the conduct of these people is so vile that they deserve to be seized and punished instantly. They make friends with Iblīs instead of Allah and obey him. However, they are granted respite and a time has been destined for their death and retribution. And they will never be able to escape the moment promised to them, nor will they find any escape. The ruins of many such settlements can be seen whose habitants had given to transgression and waywardness. Allah destroyed them. They too had been granted respite but when the destined hour struck they were decimated.

Section 9

60. And recall when Mūsa said to his page: I shall not cease journeying until I reach the confluence of the two seas, or I shall go on for ages.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِفَتْنِهِ لَا آتِبِرِحُ حَقًّا
أَتَبْلُغُ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِي حُقُبًا ﴿٦٠﴾

61. And when the two reached the confluence of the two, they forgot their fish, and it found its way into the sea freely.

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنَهُمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا
فَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا ﴿٦١﴾

62. And when the two had passed by, he said to his page: bring to us our breakfast we have indeed got toil from this journey of ours.

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتْنِهِ إِنَّا غَدَاءٌ نَا
لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِنْ سَفَرِنَا هَذَا نَصَبًا ﴿٦٢﴾

63. He said: look here! As we were proceeding to the rock I became unmindful of the fish and nothing but Satan made me forget to mention it to you, and it took marvellously its way into the sea.

قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِذْ أَوْتِنَا إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ
الْحُوتَ وَمَا أَنَسَنِيهِ إِلَّا الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُ
وَآتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿٦٣﴾

64. Mūsa said: that is exactly what we have been seeking. Then

قَالَ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغُ فَأَرْتَدَّ إِلَىٰ آثَارِهِمَا

they turned back on their footsteps, retracing.

65. Then the two found a bondman from **Our** own bondmen, on him **We** had bestowed a Mercy from before **Us** and him **We** had taught knowledge from **Our** Presence.
66. Mūsa said to him: shall I follow you that you may teach me of what you have been taught directive knowledge.
67. He said: verily you will not be able to have patience with me.
68. And how can you have patience over that which your knowledge does not encompass?
69. Mūsa said: you will find me, if **Allah** will, patient, and I shall not disobey you in any affair.
70. He said: well, if you would follow me, then do not question me of anything, until I begin to mention it myself.

فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ عِبَادِنَا آتَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً
مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِمَّا عَلَّمْنَا ﴿٦٥﴾

قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُعَلِّمَني
مِمَّا عَلَّمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴿٦٦﴾

قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾

وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ خُبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾

قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ صَابِرًا
وَلَا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا ﴿٦٩﴾

قَالَ فَإِنِ اتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ
حَتَّىٰ أُحَدِّثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٧٠﴾

Secrets of Revelation

The arrogance and defiance of these people necessitates the recall of another incident, which shows that **Allah** has even cautioned his most chosen people, the Prophets^{AS} and Messengers^{AS}, for having uttered a single phrase tainted with conceit, though unintentionally. They were put to trial as a part of their training. As mentioned earlier, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} had said that he would give the answers to the three questions the next day without adding **Insha Allah**. The revelation ceased for fifteen days and the infidels ridiculed him to their hearts content. He was instructed to be careful in future. Similarly, the exalted Prophet Mūsa^{AS}, who enjoyed the honour of a dialogue with **Allah**

was put through trial for a minor slip. If **Allah** is so austere when **His** chosen people unintentionally utter something tainted with arrogance, what about the non believers who because of their disbelief, have already qualified for **His** Wrath? Over and above if they speak arrogantly, they can only stray further away from truth and guidance. What happened to Prophet Mūsa^{AS} and what he had to go through is recounted in these Āyāt and the relevant Aḥādīth is as follows.

The Story of Prophet Mūsa^{AS} and His Meeting Khidhar^{AS}

Once Prophet Mūsa^{AS} was asked as to who was the most knowledgeable person on the face of the earth? He said that it was he. It was true in the sense that he was an exalted Prophet^{AS} blessed with revelation and a dialogue with **Him**. But he was given knowledge pertaining to the matters of Shari'ah, whereas knowledge pertaining to the administration of the universe is handed down by **Him** to the respective angels, sometimes to human beings too, especially to a class of the Aulia' who attain a special level of Nearness to **Him**. The Arwaḥ of such Aulia' acquire the appearance of the angels residing in the 'Arsh, and some are even assigned to perform duties like the angels. The account of Ḥadhrat Khidhar^{AS} is given here as an example. This great blessing had been conferred upon the earlier nations, so the Ummah of Prophet Muḥammad^{SAW} must and does have it.

Was Khidhar a Prophet^{AS}? Is he Still Alive or was he then Living?

There are varying opinions over it which suggest both the possibilities. But for sure Khidhar was not a Prophet^{AS}, for neither has there been any mention of his Ummah nor any Divine Book. He had passed away before the era of Prophet Mūsa^{AS}. So the administrative affairs are in fact being performed by his Rūḥ just as the angles do. This brings out that to call him out for help would be a crime similar to that committed by the non believers who used to call out to the angels.

Prophet Mūsa^{AS} had said that he was the most knowledgeable person, whereas it would have been proper to say that only **Allah** knows the best, or that **Allah** had given him the knowledge more than anyone else. He was commanded to meet a servant of **Allah** near the confluence to see how **He** had blessed him with special knowledge. So he set out on his journey as revealed in these Āyāt, which will be explained in the light of sayings of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}.

Prophet Mūsa^{AS} told his servant that he would move on until he discovered the spot where the two seas or the two rivers confluence, even if it meant a life long journey. *Haqba* refers to eras, so what he meant was that since it was

Allah's Command to march on, he would comply even if his entire life was spent on the move. Yushā bin Nūn (Joshua) accompanied Prophet Mūsa^{AS} as an aide. It was **Allah's** Command to keep a fish with them for when they would reach the given destination, it would miraculously come to life and slip into the water. That would be the place of meeting with the aforesaid servant of **Allah**.

Therefore, the twain kept on walking until they halted for rest at a spot. They forgot about the fish though it had not only come to life and slipped into water but also made a tunnel like passage as it moved through it. They resumed their journey, but praise be to **Allah** that Prophet Mūsa^{AS} felt tired from here onwards. So they rested for the night and the next morning he asked for breakfast. While taking out the food the aide suddenly remembered that he had forgotten to mention about the fish slipping into water at the last stop. They had probably traversed beyond their destination and that was why the Prophet^{AS} was feeling tired, he said.

A Strange Point

A subtle point reveals itself here that if one strives in **Allah's** obedience with devotion he does not feel tired. That is why the Aulia' could keep night long vigil in **His** worship. If worships appear cumbersome to us today, it means that we are trespassing the limits of obedience and are lacking in sincerity.

The aide termed his forgetting as the act of Satan. Prophet Mūsa^{AS} said that it was that very place where they had to reach. Therefore, they turned back on the same route following their footsteps and arrived at the spot where the fish had disappeared. Here they found the chosen servant of **Allah**, Khidhar^{AS} whom **Allah** had blessed with **His** special Mercy and a special knowledge which he had directly acquired from **Allah**.

Was this Blessing, Only Conferred upon Khidhar ?

The phrase "one of our slaves" suggests the possibility of there being many such souls blessed with *'Ilm-e-Luduni*, that is, the Inspired Knowledge. This knowledge is purely a Divine Gift acquired without the conventional means. All the Divine blessings showered upon **His** friends, or whatever they may perceive once their hearts are illuminated, is a form of *'Ilm-e-Luduni*. Though this blessing varies from person to person yet the hallmark of *'Ilm-e-Luduni* is that the relevant knowledge begins to gush forth from the heart like a river in spate. So Prophet Mūsa^{AS} told Ḥadhrah Khidhar: "**Allah** informed me that you

have been blessed with a unique kind of knowledge. And if it is alright for you to teach me some of it, I may remain in your company for a while.”

The Superiority of Prophet Mūsa^{AS}

The superiority of Prophet Mūsa^{AS} is well established, for he was an exalted Prophet^{AS} while Ḥadhrat Khidhar was just a Wali. The knowledges of the former pertained to the Prophethood, that is, the Shari‘ah while that of the latter concerned the administration of the universe. This may well be compared to a situation where a person may be a renowned scholar, jurist or a commentator of Qurān or Ḥadīth but does not know how to drive a vehicle. He will have to resort to a driver for taking lessons in driving, while his superiority as a scholar will remain as such.

Here is a lesson for scholars of Islam that they must learn such skills, which may serve the purpose of Jihād, for instance, the use of weapons, driving etc. Being students in such skills will not dwarf their status in any way.

So Ḥadhrat Khidhar said: “You will not be able to bear with me as you are governed by Shari‘ah which must apply to all actions, while I am no longer in this corporal existence and not obliged to abide by your Shari‘ah. My actions will be directly subservient to Kashf or Ilhām and will pertain to administrative matters. Hence not only will you find my actions as strange but will also be unable to resist criticism.” Prophet Mūsa^{AS} assured him that he would not only find him very patient and tolerant, but also adherent to all his instructions. Finally Ḥadhrat Khidhar agreed to allow Prophet Mūsa^{AS} to accompany him but only on one condition that the latter would not raise any questions on what he did, unless he himself explained it.

Section 10

71. Then the two journeyed together until when they embarked in a boat, he scuttled it. Mūsa said: have you scuttled it that you may drown the people thereof? Assuredly you have committed a thing grievous.

فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا قَالَ
أَخَرَقَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا ﴿٧١﴾

72. He said: did I not tell you that you would not be able to have patience with me?

قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٢﴾

73. Mūsa said: do not take me to task for what I forgot and do not impose hardship in my affair.
74. Then the two journeyed till when they met a boy, and he killed him, Mūsa said: have you killed an innocent person not in return for a person? Assuredly you have committed a thing formidable.
75. He said: did I not tell you; you would not be able to have patience with me?
76. Mūsa said: if I question you regarding anything after this, abandon me; surely there has reached you an excuse from my side.
77. Then the two moved on, until when they came to the people of a city. They begged food from the citizens, but they refused to entertain the two. Then they found therein a wall about to collapse and he set it upright. Mūsa said: had you wished you could have taken a wage therefor.
78. He said: this shall be the parting between me and you. Now I shall declare to you interpretation of that over which you could have no patience.
79. As for the boat, it belonged to poor men working in the sea. I wanted to damage it, as there

قَالَ لَا تُوَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تَزِرْهَافِي
مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرًا ﴿٧٣﴾

فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ قَالَ أَقْتَلْتَنَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا نُكْرًا ﴿٧٤﴾

• قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ
مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

قَالَ إِنْ سَأَلْتُكَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدَ هَذَا فَلَا تُصْنِجْنِي
قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِن لَدُنِّي عُذْرًا ﴿٧٦﴾

فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا أَنبَأَ أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ أَنَسَطَطَعَمَا أَهْلَهَا
فَأَبَوْا أَنْ يُضَيِّقُوا لَهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ
أَنْ يَنْقَضَ فَأَقَامَهُ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ
عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ﴿٧٧﴾

قَالَ هَذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنِكَ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِمَا أُرِيدُ
مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِيعَ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٨﴾

أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسْكِينٍ يَعْمَلُونَ
فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ

was before them a prince confiscating every boat.

80. And as for the boy, his parents were believers, and we apprehended that he might impose upon them exorbitance and infidelity.

81. So we intended that their Rabb should change for them one better than he in piety and closer in affection.

82. And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town and underneath it was a treasure belonging to them, and their father was righteous. So your Rabb intended that the twain should attain their maturity and bring forth for themselves their treasure as a Mercy from their Rabb; and I did it not of my own bidding. That is the interpretation of what you could not bear patiently.

مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا ﴿٧٩﴾

وَأَمَّا الْغُلَامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنِينَ فَخَشِينَا
أَنْ يُرهِقَهُمَا طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا ﴿٨٠﴾

فَأَرَدْنَا أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُ زَكَوَةً
وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴿٨١﴾

وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ
وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا
فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا
كَنْزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا فَعَلْتُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِي
ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

Secrets of Revelation

So the twain set forth, until they had to board a boat. The people already on the boat welcomed them with great honour seeing their noble disposition. According to Ḥadīth they were not even charged the fare out of respect. But Ḥadhrat Khidhar put his hand on the plank of the boat and cleaved it, while Prophet Mūsa^{AS} witnessed the gesture and couldn't resist speaking out. He said sarcastically if this was an act of his Karamah, whereby he did not even spare the people who had been so courteous to them and had let them on board with such respect. Now if the plank fell apart all those aboard were sure to drown. It was an extremely wrong act to which Prophet Mūsa^{AS} protested.

Ḥadhrat Khidhar said that he had already made it clear that Prophet Mūsa^{AS} would not be able to tolerate what he witnessed while accompanying him. So Prophet Mūsa^{AS} asked forgiveness that he had forgotten about his promise, and that he be pardoned and allowed to continue the journey. They moved on until they came across a little boy who was playing. Ḥadhrat Khidhar killed the boy in a super natural manner, as distinct from conventional, lest there is an uproar. This was too much for Prophet Mūsa^{AS} to digest. He said that the promise besides, it was not possible to remain quiet over such glaring violation of Shari'ah.

The Conduct of Scholars

It is obligatory for the religious scholars to check any violation of Shari'ah without any compromise. Prophet Mūsa^{AS} protested how he could kill an innocent child without any reason, for the child was not a murderer liable to be killed according to Shari'ah. This was preposterous and extremely intolerable. Ḥadhrat Khidhar said that he had predicted earlier that Prophet Mūsa^{AS} would not be able to be patient over what he would witness for he was the custodian of Shari'ah while the former was not under any such obligation.

So Prophet Mūsa^{AS} again requested him to overlook his intrusion and allow him to continue. If he repeated it again, Ḥadhrat Khidhar would be free to part with him as it was no longer appropriate to be apologetic every time.

Aulia' are Bound to Follow Shari'ah

The wrong doings of anyone cannot be assumed as being based on Kashf. The Aulia' are bound to follow Shari'ah as long as they are alive. What they do after they pass away is not known to common man.

Prophet Mūsa^{AS} and Ḥadhrat Khidhar once again set out and passed by a town. They felt hungry, but none of the residents was hospitable to offer food. There they spotted a wall of a house about to collapse. Ḥadhrat Khidhar miraculously repaired it. Prophet Mūsa^{AS} again intervened saying why he had to manifest his Karamah by mending the wall without any wages while they were so much in need of provisions. Ḥadhrat Khidhar said that it was the time for them to part their ways, but he would not let the Prophet^{AS} go without letting him know the reality of what he had witnessed and found so strange.

“First of all about the boat: it belonged to some very poor people and was their sole source of livelihood. But the direction they were heading towards that day was a place ruled by a tyrant who had ordered all boats to be confiscated. So I damaged it lest the officials of the king confiscate it, sparing them a greater

loss. As for the child, he was the son of an extremely noble and God-fearing couple, but was of evil disposition. It may be the result of any sin committed by the parents, or the intake of forbidden food etc. But Allah spared them the trouble for if the boy had grown older, he would have not only progressed in his evil temperament but also would have been a source of spreading disbelief and evil. So Allah decided to bless them with a pious and loving progeny in his place. As for the wall, it was the property of two orphans. Beneath it lay buried an heritage from their father, who was a very noble man. So Allah intended to safeguard the treasure until the children grow up and discover it themselves. All these were Divine plans and there was nothing I did on my own". This is a world of cause and effect. It is Allah's way that behind every effect there is a cause. Allah made him the cause behind all these affairs, he added.

Pious People Benefit Others

Children benefit from the nobility of their parents, both in the worldly, as well as eternal sense, and it is purely from Allah. Therefore, the children of learned scholars, accomplished saints and noble persons must be respected and accommodated. These were the circumstances attending the three events to which Prophet Mūsa^{AS} could not reconcile and display patience.

Section 11

83. And they question you of Zul Qarnain. Say you: I shall recite to you some mention of him.
84. Verily We! We established him in the earth, and gave him the means of everything.
85. Thereafter he followed a way.
86. Until when he reached the setting place of the sun, he perceived it setting in miry spring, and he found a nation nearby it. We said: O Zul-Qarnain! Either chastise them or take the way of kindness in respect of them.

وَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنِ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٨٣﴾

إِنَّمَا كُنَّا لَمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا آتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَصِيًّا ﴿٨٤﴾

فَاتَّبَعَ مَسِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ ۖ وَوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا قَوْمًا قُلْنَا يَا ذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُعَذِّبٌ وَإِنَّمَا آتَيْنَاهُ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا ﴿٨٦﴾

87. He said: as for him who does wrong presently he shall chastise him, and then he shall be brought back to his **Rabb**, and **He** shall torment him with a formidable torment.

88. And as for him who believes and works righteously, for him will be a goodly wage, and soon we shall speak to him something easy of our affair.

89. Thereafter he followed a way.

90. Until when he reached the rising place of the sun, he perceived it rising upon a nation for whom **We** had not set a veil against it.

91. Thus it was. And surely **We** have encompassed in knowledge all that was with him.

92. Thereafter he followed a way.

93. Until when he arrived between the two mountains, he found beside them a people who almost did not understand a word.

94. They said: O **Zul-Qarnain!** Yajūj and Majūj are doing mischief in the land; should we then pay you tribute so that you place between us and them a barrier?

95. He said: better than your tribute is that wherein my **Rabb** has established me; so help me with your labour, and I shall place between you and them a rampart.

قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ
فَيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا مُّكْرَمًا ﴿٨٧﴾

وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُ جَزَاءٌ
الْحَسَنُ وَسَنَقُولُ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٩﴾

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطْلُعُ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ
لَّمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهَا سِتْرًا ﴿٩٠﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ وَقَدْ أَحَطْنَا بِمَا لَدَيْهِ خَيْرًا ﴿٩١﴾

ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٢﴾

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ السَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا
لَّا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ قَوْلًا ﴿٩٣﴾

قَالُوا يَا بَنِي آدَمَ إِنَّا فَجَّرْنَا بِكَ الْيَمِينَ وَمَا جُوعٌ
مُّفِيدٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَا نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا
عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا ﴿٩٤﴾

قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ
وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا ﴿٩٥﴾

96. Bring me lumps of iron. Then when he had evened up the two mountainsides he said: blow! Then when he had made it a fire, he said: bring me molten copper and I shall pour it thereon.

ءَاتُونِي زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ
قَالَ انْفُخُوا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ ءَاتُونِي أُفْرِغَ
عَلَيْهِ قَطْرًا ﴿١٦﴾

97. In this way they were not able to scale it, nor were they able to burrow through it.

فَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ
وَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا ﴿١٧﴾

98. He said: this is a Mercy from my **Rabb**; then when the Promise of my **Rabb** comes, **He** shall make it powder, and the Promise of my **Rabb** is ever true.

قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّي فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّآةً
وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا ﴿١٨﴾

99. And **We** will let them on that day, surge some of them against others, and the Trumpet shall be blown, and then **We** will muster together.

وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ
وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمَاعًا ﴿١٩﴾

100. And **We** will set Hell on that Day unto the infidels with a setting.

وَعَرَّضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرَضًا ﴿٢٠﴾

101. Unto those whose eyes had been under a covering from **My** remembrance, nor had they been able to hear.

الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَنْ ذِكْرِي
وَكَانُوا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ سَمْعًا ﴿٢١﴾

Secrets of Revelation

They ask the Holy Prophet^{SAW} about Zūl Qarnain, a mighty King of the past of whom many tales were current, each different from the other. The infidels of Makkah put this question to the Holy Prophet^{SAW} that he must tell them the truth about Zūl Qarnain if he was truly **Allah**'s Prophet receiving revelations.

Who was Zūl Qarnain?

This name was not given by the Qurān but had already been famous. It was about this name that the question was asked.

Why was he named so? Different versions exist. According to some he had two plaits on his head while some said that he had two horns. Another version states that on either side of his head he had wound scars. His name was Alexander and Zūl Qarnain was his title. According to the Qurān he was a righteous believer and a great ruler. There are also some Jewish versions which cannot be relied upon. However, there have gone by many persons by the name of Alexander and the last one was Alexander of Macedonia commonly known as Alexander the Great. He, however, cannot be accepted as Zūl Qarnain as he was a non believer rather a polytheist who worshipped fire. Aristotle was his Minister. The Zūl Qarnain under discussion, according to *Al Hadaya wa Nahaya*, was a contemporary of Prophet Ibrāhīm^{AS}. Allah knows the best.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must tell these pagans that he will recount some aspects of Zūl Qarnain's life. The unnecessary details have been omitted by the Qurān itself.

State Power is also a Very Great Blessing

Allah had blessed him with a mighty kingdom and he had all the means available for its sustenance and defense against the enemies. The state power enjoyed with Allah's obedience is indeed a great blessing.

So he headed in one direction and conquered city after city and reached out to the farthest Western end. There was no land beyond as far as the eyes could see and it appeared as if the sun was setting in a dark quagmire like the sea. There he came across an ungodly and extremely cruel nation which he vanquished.

Possibility of a Wali Being Addressed by Allah

He was addressed by Allah "O' Zūl Qarnain! It is upto you to punish them or to be kind towards them." Here certain scholars suggest that Zūl Qarnain may have been a Prophet^{AS} and was addressed through Waḥī. Others assert that Ḥadhrat Khidhar was his assistant, through whom he was addressed, but again no evidence exists as to Ḥadhrat Khidhar's Prophethood. It is possible that he himself had an Ilhām or Ilqa' as a Wali can be addressed by Allah like Prophet Mūsa's^{AS} mother, who had acted upon the Divine Command. Given the choice, Zūl Qarnain decided that if the people repented and reformed

themselves it would be good for them otherwise they would be certainly punished and killed. However, he said that compared to disbelief killing was a very mild punishment; the real punishment will be inflicted when they are admitted into Barzakh and Ākhirah. Allah shall punish them severely. But those who become believers and reform themselves will not only be dealt with kindness but will also be blessed, rewarded and honoured.

He then began his journey to the East and reached out its farthest end. It seemed as if it was the rising place of the sun as the land had ended. There he came across a nation which was accustomed to life under the open sky without any abodes. He dealt with them in the same manner as he had with the people in the West. This account revealed by the Qurān comprises facts and is not some form of a fable.

He then set out in the third direction, which, according to Commentators, was the North. He came across a people amidst the lofty mountains, neither having a language nor means of acquiring knowledge. They pleaded to Zūl Qarnain that their safety was constantly threatened from Yajūj Majūj (Gog and Magog). Therefore, they could not pay any attention to the other more important issues like improving the quality of life, enjoying peace and acquiring knowledge.

Who are Yajuj Majuj?

A lot has been said and discussed by scholars wherefrom it can be deduced that an extremely barbaric nation of human origin is confined behind the rampart erected by Zūl Qarnain. It will force its way out of the rampart near the Doomsday and devastate the earth. Then by Allah's Decree and the invocation of Prophet 'Isā^{AS} they shall die of an epidemic. The appearance of Dajjāl, the descent of Prophet 'Isā^{AS} from the heavens and the onset of Yajūj Majūj are all events that will take place before the Yaum-al-Qayamah.

So the people requested Zūl Qarnain to tell them a way by which they could protect themselves against Yajuj Majuj or erect a rampart between them for which they were ready to even pay a tax or other compensation. He said that Allah had blessed him with affluence and ample wealth. However, they may help him with manpower so that he could raise for them an unsurmountable rampart. He collected thick sheets of iron and arranged these in the form of a wall filling the gap between the two cliffs. He then ordered them to heat up the iron sheets red hot and pour molten copper over them to form a real strong rampart. He told them that their enemies will neither be able to cross as its surface does not allow climbing nor drill a hole in it. He added that the

rampart and its erection are symbols of his **Rabb's** Mercy. When it will be **His** Decree to allow the Yajūj Majūj through as promised, it will be destroyed as the Promises of **Rabb** are sure to come true.

At the predestined time for exodus, they will break loose and enter countries like a flood, destroying everything in their way. This will be the time concomitant to Yaum-al-Qayamah, for soon after Doomsday will begin and the Trumpets will be blown. The world shall come to an end and the infidels will see Hell right in front of them; those who had become so engrossed in the world and had even forgotten to remember **Allah**. They failed to become believers, lending a deaf ear to all warnings.

Section 12

102. Do then who disbelieve think that they may take **My** bondmen instead of **Me**, as patrons? We have prepared Hell as an entertainment for the infidels.
103. Say you: shall I declare to you the greatest losers in respect of works?
104. They are those whose effort is wasted in the life of the world, and they imagine that they are doing well in action?
105. They are those who disbelieve in the Signs of their **Rabb** and in their meeting with **Him**, vain shall be made all their works, and **We** will not allow them any weight on the Day of Judgment.
106. That shall be their reward: Hell; for they disbelieved and held **My** Signs and **My** Messengers in mockery.
107. Verily those who believe and do righteous works, theirs shall be

أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِنْ دُونِي
أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نُزُلًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ
يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَإِنَّا بِنُزُولِهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِمْ
فَعِطَتْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَلَا يُقِيمُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَرَنَّا ﴿١٠٥﴾

ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَاتَّخَذُوا آيَاتِي
وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ

Gardens of Paradise for an entertainment.

108. Abiding therein, they shall not seek any removal out of them.

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا حِوَلًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

109. Say you: were the oceans to become ink for the words of my Rabb, these would surely exhaust before the words of my Rabb exhausted, even though We brought another ocean for support.

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مَدَادًا لَكَلِمَتِي رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَتِي رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَعْدَدًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

110. Say you: I am but a human being like yourselves; revealed unto me is that your God is One God. Whoever then hopes the meeting with his Rabb, let him do righteous deed, and let him not join anyone in the worship of his Rabb.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ وَأَعْلَىٰ ﴿١١٠﴾

Secrets of Revelation

All these events and accounts merely provide evidence to the Magnanimity of Allah. Given this knowledge, if the infidels still insist on worshipping others than Allah, those who themselves are His humble creation, then they must know that for them has been prepared a blazing Fire. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must inform them about those at a maximum loss. They will be the ones whose worldly efforts will be totally wasted, while they had always considered themselves as successful.

Action Contrary to Shari'ah is a Loss

These people, in other words, strove hard in life to earn wealth and acquire power and thought that they had made great achievements. But all their effort being contrary to Shari'ah not only went in vain, but also became a source of punishment for them. The reason behind the wastage of their deeds is their

disbelief; for neither did they accept **Allah's** Commands nor believed in the Hereafter and in the precept of gathering before **Him**.

Thus if such people perchance do something good, it would not have any positive impact on their **Ākhirah**, as their action was not based on faith. Therefore, as a punishment they were condemned to Hell.

They were the lot who considered themselves as great thinkers. They made fun of the Prophets^{AS} and declared the Divine Commandments as inapplicable. Simultaneously with their condemnation to Hell, the obedient and believing servants of **Allah** will be rewarded.

Jannah will be adorned to welcome these honoured guests who shall reside therein forever. They will experience a unique joy with each passing moment. So thoroughly will they be satiated that they will not even think of shifting to another place. If somebody wonders how could such a vast range of delicacies be possible, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must inform them that if the oceans were to be used as ink, **His** Grace, Attributes and Powers cannot be fully recorded, even if an equal volume of oceans were to be added. It is **He Who** creates these delicacies in the Paradise.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must tell them that he has not asked them to take him as God, rather he is a human being like them originating from Prophet **Ādam**^{AS}. The difference is that he is not an ordinary human being; he is a Messenger of **Allah** who receives revelation. The honour and greatness of Prophethood aside, he is but a human being. So they must not worship him but be prepared to stand before **Allah**. And the essence of this preparation lies in two things. Firstly, doing good works without relying on one's wisdom, strictly in accordance with Divine Injunctions and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. Secondly, never to ascribe any partners to **Allah** in **His Being** or in **His Attributes**, for polytheism indeed invalidates all worships.