

سُورَةُ النَّامِلِ

Surah An Naml

(THE ANT)

Section 1

In the Name of Allah

The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.

1. Ṭā. Sīn. These are the verses of the Qurān and a Book luminous.
2. A guidance and glad tidings to the believers.
3. Who establish Ṣalāt and pay Zakāt and of the Hereafter they are convinced.
4. Verily those who do not believe in the Hereafter – fair-seeming to them We have made their works, so that they wander perplexed.
5. Those are they for whom there will be an ill chastisement, and in the Hereafter they will be the greatest losers.
6. And surely you are receiving the Qurān from the presence of One Wise, Aware.
7. Recall when Mūsa came to his household and said: Verily I see a fire afar, I shall forthwith bring you tidings thereof, or bring you a brand lighted therefrom, that you may warm yourselves.
8. Then when he came to it, he was cried unto thus: Blessed is

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

طَسُّ نَيْلِكَ ءَايَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١﴾

هُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾

الَّذِينَ يُعِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ

بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ

أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٤﴾

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ

وَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمُ الْآخِضَرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

وَإِنَّكَ لَتُلْقَى الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ لَدُنِّ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٦﴾

إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِأَهْلِيهِ إِنِّي آنستُ نَارًا مَنَانِيكُمْ مِنهَا يَخْبَرُ

أَوْ مَنَانِيكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ قَبَسٍ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهَا نُودِيَ أَنْ بُورِكَ مَنْ فِي النَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا

Whoever is in the fire and
Whoever is around it, and
hallowed be Allah, the Rabb of
the worlds.

9. O Mūsa! It is really I, Allah, the
Mighty, the Wise.

10. And cast down your rod. Then
when he saw it wriggling as
though it was a serpent, he
turned in flight and did not look
back. Mūsa! Do not be alarmed,
in My Presence the sent ones do
not fear.

11. Excepting any who may have
done wrong and thereafter
changes evil for good; then
verily I am Forgiving, Merciful.

12. And put your hand into your
bosom, it shall come forth white,
without any hurt: Among nine
Signs to the Pharaoh and his
people. Verily they have been a
people transgressing.

13. Then when Our Signs came to
them illuminating, they said: this
is a magic manifest.

14. And they denied them, out of
spite and arrogance, although
their souls were convinced
thereof. So behold! What has
been the end of the corruptors.

وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨﴾

يَمُوسَى إِنَّهُ أَنَا اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

وَأَلْقِ عَصَاكَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهَا نَفْسُهُ كَانَتْهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّى مُدْبِرًا
وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ يَمُوسَى لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّي لَا يَخَافُ

لَدَى الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

إِلَّا مَن ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حَسَنًا بَعْدَ سُوءٍ

فَأَنِّي غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجُ بَيْضًا

مِن غَيْرِ سُوءٍ فِي تِسْعِ آيَاتٍ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا أَقْوَامًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً

قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٣﴾

وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا

فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Ṭā Sīn. These are the verses of the Qurān, a clear and manifest Scripture, which
expounds realities. It is a source of guidance and salvation for those who enjoy
full trust in it. This is demonstrated by the fact that they are pragmatic in

Allah's obedience, strive earnestly in His worship and pay Zakāt. In other words, they obey Allah in practical conduct as well as in financial matters. They do not do this with the intention of acquiring mundane benefits but out of a firm faith in the Day of Reckoning, seeking success on that Day. And those who do not believe in the Ākhirah, their evil deeds are made fair seeming to them as a punishment. They continue to plunge deeper into misguidance by leading a sinful life. They shall always face an agonizing doom, and will be at great loss in the Ākhirah. However, their denial can by no means undermine the credibility of the Qurān, revealed the Holy Prophet^{SAW} by Allah, the Wise and the Aware.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must not feel dejected with the response he gets. The preceding Prophets^{AS} were also raised with truth and miracles but the wretched refused to believe in them. Take the account of Prophet Mūsa^{AS}, for instance. When he was travelling back to Egypt along with his family, he lost his way in the wilderness on a cold night. He saw fire on the other side of the valley, and told his family to stay put while he went towards the fire. He hoped to find someone who would put him back to the track, and he would also bring back a piece of ignited firewood to warm up. When he reached near the fire he heard a voice saying: 'Blessed be **Whoever** is inside the fire and whoever is standing by it'.

Observation of Divine Lights and Speech

It was not really the conventional fire but Divine Lights attended by the angels, who were duly blessed. However, what Prophet Mūsa^{AS} heard were Allah's Personal Words, as if coming from all directions, in a state which could neither be determined nor identified. It was as if not only his ears, but his entire body was listening.

Was the Refulgence Personal?

The Commentators have discussed at length whether these Divine Lights were Allah's Personal Refulgence or not. To the best of my understanding, this Refulgence was not Personal but Attributive as angels were also present there. Besides, this Refulgence was manifested to impart knowledge and knowledge is an attribute. As for the question whether Allah Himself was present in the Fire, the answer is in the negative, for Allah is beyond any transfusion. He is far too exalted to transfuse into any entity, being Himself the Creator of all entities as well as their Sustainer and Guardian. Mark the words in the address: "I am Allah, the Mighty, the Wise". He summoned the Prophet^{AS} out of His Wisdom to witness the wonders of His Omnipotence He was instructed to cast his staff. As soon as he did, it transformed into a big serpent writhing and

twisting around. Prophet Mūsa^{AS} was awestruck and fled without even turning back to take a look. He was told not to be afraid, for he had been blessed with Prophethood, and the Prophets^{AS} do not fear while in His Presence.

Prophets also Possess Natural Instincts

This event shows that the Prophets^{AS} also possess natural human instincts and where these are not exhibited, it is only as a miracle. Allah said that the Prophet^{AS} should not be afraid, as even a sinner who has repented and opted for piety, need not be afraid in His Court. He is Forgiving and Merciful. As a second miracle, he was told to place his hand into the bosom of his robe which came out as bright as the moon. And he was told that he would be given nine miracles in all before he proceeded to the Pharaoh and his folk who were living a sinful life. When Prophet Mūsa^{AS} later invited the Pharaoh's people to Allah and manifested his miracles, they took it as magic.

Denial Out of Spite

Their denial was merely out of spite as they knew deep in their hearts that it was not magic but miracles endowed by Allah. This indeed was a great transgression, a sheer arrogance on their part. The ill fated mischief-mongers were, therefore, pushed into the Fire after being drowned to death.

Section 2

15. And assuredly We vouchsafed to Daūd and Sulaiman, knowledge, and the twain said: Praise be to Allah who has preferred us to many of His believing bondmen!
16. And Sulaiman inherited from Daūd, and he said: O mankind! We have been taught the language of birds, and we have been vouchsafed of everything, and surely this is an evident grace.
17. And there were gathered unto Sulaiman his hosts of Jinn and mankind and birds, and they were set in bands.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ
الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُدَ وَقَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا
مَنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأَوْعِينَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾

وَحَشَرَ لِسُلَيْمَانَ جُنُودَهُ مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ
وَالتَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18. And when they came to the valley of the ants, an ant said: Ants! Enter your habitations lest Sulaiman and his hosts may crush you while they perceive not.

19. So, amused at her speech, he smiled and said: Rabb! Dispose me that I should be grateful for the favour wherewith You have favoured me and my parents, and that I should work righteously pleasing You; and out of Your Mercy enter me among Your righteous bondmen.

20. And he sought after the birds and said: What is the matter that I do not see the hoopoe, is he among the absentees?

21. I shall chastise him surely or I shall slaughter him unless he offers me a good explanation.

22. But he stayed away not long, and said: I have comprehended what you have not yet comprehended, and I came to you from Saba with a sure tiding.

23. I have found a woman ruling over them, and she has been vouchsafed of everything. And hers is a mighty throne.

24. I have found her and her people adoring the sun instead of Allah, and Satan has made their work fair seeming to them and has barred them from the way, as they are not guided.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا اتَّوَعَلْنَٰ وَادِ النَّعْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّعْلُ
ادْخُلُوا مَسْكِنَكُمۡ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمۡ
سُلَيْمٰنُ وَجُنُودُهُۥ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِّنۡ قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ اؤْرِعِي
أَنۡ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِيۤ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وٰلِدَيَّ
وَأَنۡ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلِيۤ بَرَحْمَتِكَ
فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدَّ
أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُۥ عَذَابَ شَدِيدٍ أَوْ لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُۥ
أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطُ بِهِۦ
وَجِئْتُكَ مِنۡ سَبَآءٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ
مِنۡ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَجَدْتُهُمْ قَوْمًا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنۡ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَزَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ أَعْمٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ
فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. So that they adore not Allah Who brings forth the hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you declare.
26. Allah! There is no God but He! The Rabb of the Magnificent Throne.
27. Sulaiman said: We shall now see whether you have spoken the truth or whether you are of the liars.
28. Go you with this letter of mine, and cast it down unto them and turn aside from them, and see what they return.
29. She said: O Chiefs! There has been cast to us an honourable epistle.
30. It is from Sulaiman, and it runs: In the Name of Allah The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.
31. Rise not against me, and come to me submissive.

أَلَا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾

قَالَ سَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

أَذْهَبَ بِكِتَابِي هَذَا فَأَلْقَاهُ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ
فَانظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْأَيْ الْقِي إِلَىٰ كِتَابِ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣٠﴾

أَلَا تَعْلَمُونَ عَلَيَّ وَأَتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

Secrets of Revelation

We honoured Prophets Daūd^{AS} and Sulaiman^{AS} with Prophetic knowledges. Here the term knowledge refers to Prophethood together with other sciences, and arts, for instance, the knowledge of making armours was especially given to Prophet Daūd^{AS}. Moreover, power and rule were also the peculiarities of both these Prophets^{AS} and they were grateful to Allah for these exceptions over so many noble people, as every Prophet was not given rule or a kingdom. When Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} succeeded his father Daūd^{AS}, he revealed to his people that Allah had blessed them with the faculty to understand the language of birds, and with other honours. This indeed was His special favour.

Inheritance of the Prophets^{AS}

Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} inherited his father's Prophetic knowledges. Here it is not appropriate to suggest that this legacy refers only to material wealth. According to learned Commentators, Prophet Daūd^{AS} had 19 sons who inherited his wealth, while Prophethood went to Sulaiman^{AS}. So it was he, who ascended the throne, as authority ought to be delegated on the basis of merit and not inheritance. This is clarified by a saying of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}: "We, the Prophets do not receive any inheritance nor do we have any heirs." This means that legacy of the Prophets^{AS} is not in the form of temporal wealth or material things, rather, as the Holy Prophet^{SAW} adds: "The heirs to the Prophets are the scholars, as our legacy is not in money but in knowledge". The knowledge inherited by Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} was supplemented by authority over the Jinn, the birds and the animals including wild beasts and he was also blessed with the understanding of the languages of all. There also exists a report that the Holy Prophet^{SAW} was an heir to Prophet Sulaiman^{AS}, though seventeen centuries separate the two.

So Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} gathered his armies to visit some part of his kingdom. His entourage also included Jinn, animals and birds, all lined up with their own kind. They were on the move when they came across a valley full of ants. On seeing the approaching army, one of the ants warned the rest to rush back to their dwellings lest they are trampled over by the mighty army of Prophet Sulaiman^{AS}, without even being noticed.

Animals too have Understanding

This proves that the animals too are gifted with understanding, though not enough to make them sentient to follow Shari'ah. But they do have a degree of comprehension and natural instincts, such as knowledge of building a habitat, searching for food, raising children and looking after their families. All these responsibilities are diligently discharged by them. This discipline is witnessed everywhere, be it the beehive, a herd of elephants, a pack of lions or a flock of crows.

Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} heard the ant and understood what it said. It was a miracle that he could hear from a distance, as well as decipher it. He felt very happy that Allah had blessed him with such knowledge and had gifted even the ants amongst his subjects with a sense of responsibility that their leader was concerned for their safety. He raised his hands in prayer, in gratitude for Allah's blessings upon him and his father, to crave for capacity to do good that met His Approval and for the inclusion of his name in the roll of His righteous bondsmen.

Acceptance of a Noble Act

The prayer of the Prophets^{AS} is also a method of instruction for mankind. It has been highlighted here that a noble act and its acceptability are two separate issues. For instance, any action taken in accordance with Shari'ah is noble, but its acceptance will depend on the intention and sincerity behind it, as well as the consent of **Allah**. So virtue ought to be attended by humility.

On his way when Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} checked the birds, he found the hoopoe missing. He asked its whereabouts and announced that it would be severely punished for being absent without permission which may be death by slaughtering unless it presented a plausible excuse for its absence.

Civil Servants duty towards the Public and Administrative Affairs

According to Ḥadhrat ibn 'Abbas^{RAU} it is instinctive of the hoopoe to detect underground water channels. So when the army had arrived at an arid zone, its services were required to identify the site to be dug by the Jinn for water. At this critical juncture the hoopoe was missing, while many lives were at stake due to thirst. The absence was, therefore, taken seriously as a crime punishable by death. It alludes to the fact that in the management of State affairs, it is imperative that the officials stay acquainted with the conditions of the public and discharge their administrative duties diligently. Another phenomena observed here is that whereas a hoopoe can see beneath the surface, it cannot see the snare laid on the ground and gets trapped. Praise be to **Allah**! All Powers lie with **Him**, while the creation is by all means dependant.

The hoopoe turned up soon and said that it had brought some important information for Prophet Sulaiman^{AS}. It had spotted a flourishing country during its flight and had gone to visit it. It was there that it had witnessed strange circumstances of which the Prophet^{AS} hitherto had no news.

Knowledge of the Unseen; a Divine Peculiarity

The knowledge of the unseen is **Allah**'s domain while the Messengers^{AS} are informed over it. Therefore, if **Allah** withholds information over a particular matter, it cannot be known. In this case **Allah** used the hoopoe as a courier to convey the news to Prophet Sulaiman^{AS}. It had witnessed a city called Saba in Yemen, ruled by a woman, who had all the resources required for running an empire and sat on a magnificent throne.

A Woman's Rule

There is no ambiguity in Islam over the issue of a woman's rule. There is a consensus that a woman is not eligible. She cannot even lead the Ṣalāt let alone that she be raised to the lofty office of leading a Muslim nation.

It is not appropriate to draw an inference from Queen Bilqis's rule, as she was a ruler over fire worshippers. As for the myth that Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} married her and allowed her to stay in power is not endorsed by any credible report. Even if it had been so, the supreme authority after marriage would have rested with Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} while she would be his subordinate. The simple fact is that we have to obey the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, not the preceding Shari'ah, and he never appointed a woman as the Imām or ruler, nor has allowed us to do so.

The Story of Bilqis

According to the Commentators, her grandfather was a great ruler. His son had married a genie. Bilqis was born as a result of this marriage; so she was always accompanied by Jinn. Whether intermarriage between human and Jinn is possible and permissible is a controversial issue. A vivid account of how and when it was practised is given in the book named *Akām al Marjān fi Alkām Jān*. As for the method of reproduction, it is the same as in human beings. Sexual assaults by male Jinn over human females, as well as sexual relationships between Jinn females and human males is a common phenomenon and many such incidents are in my personal knowledge. However, there is definite reluctance in the matter of Nikah with Jinn, as the scholars rightfully dread that if this is accepted, every woman conceiving illegitimately could claim that she had married a Jinn, and there would be no way to verify her claim. Nevertheless a group believes in its permissibility.

The hoopoe also informed Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} that the queen and her nation worshipped the sun. They were Zoroastrians who worshipped all kinds of light, be it sun, fire or any other light. They had been allured by the Satan, in such a way that they truly believed their religion to be the right path, and had gone astray. They ought to have prostrated before Allah, Who manifests the hidden in the heavens and the earth and is also well Aware of the overt and the covert states of people. There is no one else worthy of worship except Him and He is the Provider and the Sustainer of the great 'Arsh as well. In other words, the hoopoe expressed the desire that the nation be invited to guidance. Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} having heard its story, said that he would verify right away whether it was a truth or mere concoction to save its life. He gave the hoopoe a letter for the queen and her nation and ordered it to present the letter and disappear in observance of royal etiquettes. We shall then wait for the response.

Invitation to Infidels through a Letter

Invitation in writing is not only correct but a Sunnah. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} wrote letters to the infidel kings. However, due etiquettes must be observed as the hoopoe is being instructed here. The same is endorsed by the conduct of

the couriers sent by the Holy Prophet ^{SAW} So the hoopoe delivered the letter to the queen in her private chamber, where she was alone. She read it and took it to her court informing the chieftains that she had received a letter delivered in her room by some unknown courier, which is very well worded, comprehensive and worth appreciating. It is from Sulaiman ^{AS}, who writes "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Do not ever display any might against me, and come to me submissive."

The Etiquettes of Letter Writing

The letter had a seal, symbolic to its magnificence. The same is practised by rulers all over the globe. The Holy Prophet ^{SAW} also put his seal on his letters. The name of the writer must appear first so that the addressee may know the sender at the very out set. The letterheads in use today serve this purpose. It must begin with Allah's Name and must be succinct, with a comprehensive text without prolonging it unnecessarily. It is also proven here that even if the addressee is a non believer, the letter must begin with Allah's Name, and an expression of His Magnificence.

Section 3

32. She said: O Chiefs! Counsel me in the affair. I do not resolve on any affair until you counsel me.

قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْا أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي

مَا كُنْتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّىٰ تَشْهَدُونِ ﴿٢٢﴾

33. They said: We possess great force and great might; but yours is the command, we shall see what you command.

قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُو الْقُوَّةِ وَأَوْلُوا بِأَسِنَّةٍ شَدِيدَةٍ وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكَ

فَانظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

34. She said: Verily the kings when they enter a city, despoil it and make its most powerful inhabitants the most abased; so they also will do.

قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا

وَجَعَلُوا أَعْيُنَ أَهْلِهَا آذِنًا وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

35. Therefore, I am going to send them a present, and see with what answer the envoys come back.

وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدِيَّةٍ

فَنَاطِرَةٌ أِيْمَ يَرْجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

36. Then when he came to Sulaiman, he said: Are you going to add riches to me -

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ سُلَيْمَانَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ فَمَا آتَيْنِيَ اللَّهُ

خَيْرًا مِّمَّا آتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

while what Allah had vouchsafed to me is better than what He has vouchsafed to you. Aye! It is you who exult in your present.

37. Go you back to them. Surely we shall come upon them with hosts which they cannot withstand and we shall drive them forth from their place abased and they will be humbled.

38. Sulaiman said: Chiefs! Which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me surrendering themselves.

39. A giant from the jinn said: I shall bring it to you before you arise from your seat; surely I am strong enough for test and am reliable.

40. But one who had some knowledge of the Book said: I shall bring it to you before your eye twinkles. Then when Sulaiman saw it placed before him, he said: This is of the Grace of my Rabb that He may test me whether I thank Him or I am ingrate. Whoever gives thanks only gives thanks for his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful then my Rabb is Self-Sufficient, Munificent.

41. He said: Disguise her throne, so that we may see whether she is guided or is of those who are not guided.

42. Then when she arrived, it was said: Is your throne like this?

أَرْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَسَأَيُنْهَمُ بِمُجْنُودٍ لَا قِبَلَ لَهُمْ بِهَا
وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُمْ مِنْهَا أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

قَالَ يَتَأْتِيهَا الْعُلَمَاءُ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا
قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

قَالَ عَجْرِبَتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا ءَانِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ
مِنْ مَقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا ءَانِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ
أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رآه مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ
هَذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي ءَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ
وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

قَالَ تَكْرُوهَا عَرَشِهَا نَنْظُرُ أَنِ هَدَى
أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا

She said: It is as though it were it; and we have been vouchsafed the knowledge before this, and we have been Muslims.

43. And there hindered her what she worshipped instead of Allah; indeed she was of an infidel people.

وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ

مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

44. It was said to her: Enter the palace. Then when she saw it, she imagined it a pool and bared her shanks. He said: It is a pavilion smoothed of crystal. She said: Rabb! I have wronged my soul, and I surrender myself together with Sulaiman to Allah, the Rabb of the worlds.

قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً

وَكشفت عن ساقَيْهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُمَرَّدٌ

مِنْ قَوَارِيرٍ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي

وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Queen Bilqis summoned her chieftains, and after reading out the letter, invited their views. She said that they were well aware of the fact that the State matters were always resolved with their counsel.

The Importance of Counsel

It is obvious that in pre-Islamic days too some rulers did acknowledge the importance of counsel, while Islam emphasized it so much that the Holy Prophet^{SAW} himself consulted his Companions^{RAU} on various issues.

The chieftains of her court asserted that if the situation demanded an encounter, their military prowess was second to none, and they were the celebrated warriors. Otherwise the ultimate decision rested with her and she may command whatever she thought was the best. She said that it was not proper to go to war now, but to probe into various options first, as there is possibility of both victory and defeat in a war. The latter ushers in devastation as the conquerors ransack the cities and humiliate the elite, and this was an open fact.

The Conduct of Conquerors Versus the Muslims

Here the rulers are being educated that a war must only be waged in the best interest of the country when no other option is open. No countries and nations are to be plunged into war for the satisfaction of personal motives. Besides, the Queen of Saba has painted a true picture of the ungodly conquerors. Islam has replaced war with Jihād which does not aim at humiliating the opponent but at preventing him from evil. And the history of Islam bears witness that the Muslim conquerors extended a fair and forbearing treatment even to their non believing defeated opponents, but ironically today they are called terrorists by the Wild West. The Companions^{RAU} are far too exalted to be mentioned, while the situation in Palestine alone gives a fair comparison between the Muslim and Jewish occupation.

Moreover, Queen Bilqis also knew that it was not only a king's word but a word pertaining to belief. It was also an invitation to renounce the ungodly religion and believe in Allah. So she wanted to check whether the king was motivated by ambition to conquer under cover of religion or was truly a Prophet. If he was an opportunist, he would be confronted, otherwise obedience has to be pledged, for war would inevitably result in defeat in the latter case.

No Benefit against Dīn

Therefore, the queen decided to send highly precious gifts through her envoys and waited for the response. If the king was seeking temporal gains, he would be very pleased to receive the valuables, or may even ask for more, but if he was truly a Prophet, he would never compromise over his faith, she said. It is proven here that an ungodly society or system of running the Government should not be accepted merely for some benefits; rather it is imperative to oppose it tooth and nail. And as for the acceptance of a gift from a non believer, it was sometimes accepted and at others rejected by the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, depending upon the circumstances. When it was offered for a compromise on Dīn, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} rejected it, and where it was as a token of goodwill, it was accepted. In this case a long list of gifts has been recorded which were sent to Prophet Sulaiman^{AS}, including gold bars, gems, slaves and maids etc. Obviously it was a tribute from a very prosperous and a great kingdom to a singularly glorious Emperor, and had to be extremely precious. Along with the gifts, the envoys carried some questions.

Allah the Most Munificent, informed Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} before hand. He, therefore, ordered the laying of a gold and silver pathway extending far beyond his court, and lined up soldiers, Jinn, animals and birds in their ranks on both sides. His court was also magnificently decorated. When the envoys arrived

they immediately realised the insignificance of their gifts. Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} told them that they wanted to allure him with mundane goods whereas Allah had favoured him with treasures beyond measure. They must take their gifts back, and also take a close look at his legions. Their nation will not be able to counter these when attacked while their rulers would be exiled in utter humiliation. So the envoys returned thoroughly impressed along with answers to the questions sent by the queen. They recounted to the queen the grandeur and glory of the empire as well as its military might. Queen Bilqis decided to submit to the Prophet^{AS} and personally visit him for this purpose. According to the Commentators there were twelve thousand chieftains accompanying the queen, leading an army of a hundred thousand soldiers. On the other end, when Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} got the news of her arrival, he asked his courtiers as to who amongst them could bring the Queen's celebrated throne before her arrival.

Miracle, Karamah and Taşarruf

This famous throne had been built indoors, inside the royal chamber of the castle. It was indeed impossible to move it out in the first place and that also under the very nose of the royal guards. The words of Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} suggest that it could be brought by his men. This Karamah of his men would in fact be a miracle of the Prophet^{AS} himself. In other words, the Prophet^{AS} wanted to back up the temporal grandeur with the manifestation of a miracle so that he may not be taken just as an Emperor but also be recognised as Allah's Prophet^{AS}. A Prophet's^{AS} miracle humbles all logical reasoning; which indeed is a Divine Act. Similarly when such a thing is manifested at the hands of a devoted follower it is termed as Karamah and is indeed the miracle of his Prophet^{AS}. The other category is the Spiritual Sway, which is a kind of Karamah, though a Karamah does not involve intention. However, where one intends to do a thing and it is done it is called *Taşarruf* or Spiritual Sway which is demonstrated here. A mighty Jinn answering the Prophet's^{AS} call claimed that he could bring the throne before his court was adjourned. The task was formidable. The throne was massive and was kept inside the palace, studded with precious gems. It was under constant guard. Yet Allah had given him so much power that he could carry it and bring it with utmost trust and honesty. Then, a person blessed with knowledge of Allah's Book announced that he could bring the throne before the blinking of an eye.

The Knowledge of Allah's Book

Allah's Book does not carry only words and meanings but every consonant and syllable is also enriched with Divine Lights, Refulgence and spiritual states that descend upon a Prophet's^{AS} heart. These are in turn transmitted to the truly

devoted followers from heart to heart. The custodians of these spiritual states are called the Aulia' who indeed are heirs to the Prophets^{AS}. Otherwise those who merely play with the words and meanings of the Book often end up using it for earning livelihood. These custodians also possess spiritual sway proportionate to their capacity, as manifested on different occasions. A spiritual probe carried out under the supervision of the illustrious Shaikh Allah Yar Khan^{RUA} revealed that this member of Prophet Sulaiman's^{AS} Royal Court, identified as Asif bin Barkhia by the Commentators, focused the lights of his Qalb on to the Queen's Throne, and pronounced "A l l a h" once. The throne was instantly in front of them.

When Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} saw it, he praised Allah for favouring him with such competent courtiers and with such grandeur. It may be a form of trial for him, to see whether he offered thanks to Him or not. Whoever is grateful to Allah, he does it for his own good, and anyone who resorts to ingratitude, Allah is least bothered, for He is far too exalted and Absolute. He is extremely Munificent and gives such remarkable distinctions to His bondsmen. The Prophet^{AS} now ordered that certain unassuming alteration be made in the Throne, such as inter shifting of jewels in order to see how intelligent the queen was. So when the queen arrived she was asked whether her throne was also like this. She said that it indeed looked like her throne. She added that there was no longer any need for this great miracle as she had already fathomed that Sulaiman^{AS} was Allah's Prophet, and they had come to pledge loyalty to him.

The Evil Effects of Rituals

It is said that she was a wise woman who had not embraced faith earlier, being a captive of the rituals of her infidel nation, which drifted her away from the truth. It was amidst their evil traditions that she had been brought up. Obviously it was the evil influence of these rituals that she, inspite of being so intelligent, had stayed ignorant. Now she was enlightened immediately on receiving the lights of Prophethood.

She was escorted inside the palace. It was adorned with glass and crystal, which also covered the fish ponds. As she approached, she failed to notice the glass pavement on the fish ponds and pulled up her dress as if she was stepping in water. She was told that it was a glass floor and she may cross over safely. Now she lamented how those who cannot find their way inside a palace could determine the path of guidance by themselves? We had wronged ourselves by assuming that we were on the right path. "I now surrender together with Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} as a believer in Your Unity. You are the Sustainer of the worlds."

The Qurān concludes the story here. There are varying versions; some suggest that Prophet Sulaiman^{AS} married Queen Bilqis, reinstated her to power, had a palace built for her and spent a few days with her every month. However, these versions cannot be relied upon. Only Allah knows, but even if this had happened it cannot be a pretext for a woman's rule, as the queen no longer was the monarch but only his representative. Above all, the Muslims have to follow the Shari'ah of Prophet Muḥammad^{SAW}. The queen was greatly favoured by Allah, and caused her nation's conversion to faith.

Section 4

45. And assuredly we sent to Thamūd their brother Ṣāliḥ, saying: worship Allah. Then lo! They became two parties contending.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا
اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

46. He said: My people! Why do you seek to hasten the evil before the good? Why do you not seek the forgiveness of Allah, so that you may be shown Mercy?

قَالَ يَتْلُونَ لِيَ مَا نَشَاءُ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ
لِإِثْمِكُمْ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

47. They said: We augur ill of you and of those who are with you. He said: Your augury is with Allah. Aye! You are a people being tempted.

قَالُوا أَطِيرِنَا بِكَ وَيَمْنُ مَعَكَ قَالَ طَيْرُكُمْ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُفْتَنُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

48. And there were nine of a group in the city, who spread corruption in the land and did not rectify.

وَكَانَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

49. They said: Swear by Allah one to another that we shall surely fall upon him and his household by night; and thereafter we shall tell his heir: We did not see the destruction of his household, and we are truthful.

قَالُوا تَقاسموا بِاللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ
لِيَوْمِهِ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِ
وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

50. And they plotted a plot, and We plotted a plot, and they perceived it not.
51. So behold you how was the end of their plot. Verily We annihilated them and their nation all together.
52. Yonder are their houses overturned, for they did wrong. Verily herein is a Sign for a people who know.
53. And We rescued them who believed and used to be God-fearing.
54. And recall Lūṭ! When he said to his people: Do you commit indecency while you see its enormity?
55. Would you go in lustfully to men instead of women? Aye! You are a people addicted to pagan ways.
56. There was no answer of his people save that they said: Drive forth the family of Lūṭ from your city. They are a people clean indeed.
57. Then We rescued Lūṭ and his family except his wife. Her We destined to be of the lingerers.
58. And We rained upon them a rain, ill was that rain upon the warned.
59. Say you: All praise to Allah, and peace upon His bondmen whom He has chosen. Is Allah Best, or what they associate with Him.

وَمَكْرُوا مَكْرًا وَمَكْرْنَا مَكْرًا

وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَتْ عَاقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ

اِنَّا دَمَرْنَاهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ اَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

فَتِلْكَ بُيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِبَةٌ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا

اِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَاَنْجَبْنَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوا

وَكَانُوا يَنْقُرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

وَلُوطًا اِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِـهِ

اِنَّا تَوَدَّوْنَ الْفَاحِشَةَ وَاَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

اَيُّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ

بَلْ اَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

فَمَا كَانَتْ جَوَابَ قَوْمِـهِ ؕ اِلَّا اَنْ قَالُوا

اٰخِرُ جَوَامِلِ لُوطٍ مِّنْ قَرِيْبَتِكُمْ اِنَّهُمْ

اِنَّا نَسِئُكُمْ يَنْطَهَرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

فَاَنْجَبْنَاهُ وَاَهْلَهُ اِلَّا اَمْرَاَتَهُ قَدَرْنَاهَا

مِّنَ الْغَابِرِيْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَاَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطْرًا فَاَسَاءَ مَطْرُ الْمُنْذَرِيْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلٰى عِبَادِهِ الَّذِيْنَ اصْطَفٰى

مَا لَئِهٖ خَيْرٌ اَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

Secrets of Revelation

And see when Allah raised Şālih^{AS} as a Prophet unto his own nation Thamūd. When called upon to worship only Allah, the nation split into two groups. Some of them were inclined towards faith while others were not. They latter insisted that no matter how great a punishment, they would never become believers. This dissident group comprised mainly their eminent chieftains. Prophet Şālih^{AS} asked them why were they imprudently losing the chance to repent and attain Allah's Mercy rather than insisting on destruction. They foolishly alleged that all the disharmony and wretchedness was in fact because of the Prophet^{AS} and his retinue, otherwise they had been living in perfect peace.

Discord and Wretchedness

Such objections are raised even today. Whenever one attempts to forbid evil as enjoined by Islam, one has to face the accusation of creating discord in the society, though consensus over evil is synonymous to collective suicide. To stand up for virtue is indeed true unity even if such souls are few in number. Even if the majority stands united on evil it will beget nothing but unrest; see the outcome of Western democratic way of majority rule in Pakistan for the past half a century.

Prophet Şālih^{AS} told this people that the wretchedness was because of their conduct, their insistence on Allah's disobedience. Beware that the respite was for few days in the form of a trial. If they failed to mend their ways they would surely have to face dire consequences. All the nine chieftains in the city were mischief mongers who had created discord not only in their own nation but also in their neighbourhood. They never ever did any act of virtue. Now when they had no answer, they swore to collectively ambush Prophet Şālih^{AS} and his household and kill them under the cover of night. They will take an alibi thereafter and tell their heirs that they had been out of town attending to business when the incident took place, until the matter was hushed up. They conspired secretly, and Allah also, in turn, made a secret plan which they failed to discern. According to the Commentators, they went out at night and while passing along the foot of a mountain, a large rock tumbled down and crushed them to death. Later the entire nation was also destroyed because of their misconduct leaving their abodes desolate. This event provides a great lesson for anyone with a sound mind. While the entire nation was annihilated the believers remained absolutely unscathed as they had practised what they believed in.

Similar is the story of Prophet Lūṭ's^{AS} people. He warned them against debauchery and blatantly seeking men instead of women for satisfying their lust. He told them that they were not only iniquitous but also ignorant, for they did not even know the basic human morals.

Western Society

This indeed is the true portrayal of the Western society of today, where the Church has legalized sodomy, and homosexuals are marrying each other. There are nude clubs all over, rather people roam around almost naked in the market places. This immorality indeed is also ignorance. All those who are obsessed by the Western lifestyle must ponder over the Qurānic thought about them.

Prophet Lūṭ's^{AS} counselling infuriated his nation, and they decided to expel him and his followers from their township, who they thought were posing to be very pious. Yet destiny had other plans. Those whom they wanted to expel from their settlements were spared by Allah while the entire settlement including Prophet Lūṭ's^{AS} wife, closely affiliated with the infidels, was destroyed. Stones were pelted at them from the heavens ensuring total destruction.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must declare that all Praise is for Allah, Who is Infallible and Exalted. The peace and safety is for His chosen bondsmen, that is, for the Prophets^{AS} and their followers. No matter how protected an infidel may appear, he eventually has to face Divine punishment. Besides, Allah is far too exalted vis-à-vis their polytheistic rituals.

Section 5

60. Is not He best Who has created the heavens and the earth, and Who sends down water for you from the sky whereby We cause beautiful orchards to grow up and the trees of which it was not possible for you to cause to grow up? Is there any other god along with Allah? Nay! Yet they are a people who equalise.

﴿أَمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ مِمَّا كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا ۗ أَوَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلٌّ لِمَنْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ﴾

61. Is not He best Who has made the earth a fixed abode and has placed the rivers in its midst and

﴿أَمْ مَنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ

has placed firm mountains on it, and has placed a barrier between the two seas? Is there any other god along with Allah? Nay! Yet most of them do not know.

62. Is not **He** best **Who** answers the distressed when he calls unto **Him** and averts the evil, and has made you the successors in the earth? Is there any other god along with Allah? Little do you reflect.

63. Is not **He** best **Who** guides you in the darknesses of the land and the sea and **Who** sends the winds as heralds before **His** Mercy? Is there any other god along with Allah? Exalted be **Allah** above that they associate with **Him**.

64. Is not **He** best **Who** originates creation, and shall thereafter restore it, and **Who** provides for you from the heavens and the earth? Is there any other god along with Allah? Say you: Bring you proofs if you are truthful.

65. Say you: None in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen save **Allah**, nor can they perceive when they will be raised.

66. Aye! Their knowledge does not attain to the Hereafter, Aye! They are in doubt about it. Aye! They are blind to it.

حَاجِزًا أُولَئِكَ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

أَمَّن يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ
وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ
مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

أَمَّن يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
وَمَنْ يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ
أُولَئِكَ مَعَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

أَمَّن يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
وَالْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ مَعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

بَلْ أَدْرَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ بَلْ هُمْ
فِي شَكٍّ مِنْهَا بَلْ هُمْ مِنْهَا عَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

Secrets of Revelation

The infidels are reluctant to believe in Allah. They must be asked as to who has created the heavens and the earth. Their idols are but a creation, are themselves fashioned and cannot possibly create the heavens and the earth. And Allah, by His Wisdom, keeps perfect continuity in His creation. He causes the rain, and controls the water cycle - heat from the sun forms clouds which drift along the winds and then the downpour. This very water provides life to the soil to grow orchards, laden with flowers and fruits by His grand plan. It is beyond the powers of any mortal to make a single plant grow. So how can the one who shares nothing with Allah in this entire process, can be a partner to Him in worship? Yet these infidels stick to disbelief.

Who keeps the earth suspended in the space, and causes clear streams to flow on its soil, and has pegged the earth with gigantic mountains? Who keeps the sweet and bitter water apart in the same soil. Can anyone save Allah do this so that he be worshipped besides Him? Yet the ignorance of these infidels has invented partners to Him.

So who listens to the invocations of the distressed and alleviates his suffering? Even the polytheists, when up against a difficult situation like the turbulent sea, would only call out to Allah for help. Then who has made people heirs to their predecessors, and custodians to Allah's bounties on earth? There is no one who can become His equal in worship. Yet very few people take heed.

Who shows the way through the darkness in the land and the sea? While travelling through the deserts or seas, the dark nights clearly show the stars to identify the direction. And who makes the winds blow as harbingers of rain? So can there be anyone who may deserve to be worshipped along with Allah? Of course not! Rather all forms of polytheism have been concocted by people. He is free from all such absurdities.

Is it not He Who has created everything and will quicken all after death? He provides livelihood from the heavens and the earth? Is there anyone else who can be declared equal to Him. If these infidels have any proof, they must bring it forth against the evidence mentioned above in order to prove their point.

Information over the Unseen

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must let them know that despite all their expertise and inventions, it is only Allah Who knows the unseen. Knowledge of the unseen refers to that knowledge which is acquired without any means or media, outside the pale of sensory perceptions, so much so that even the Prophets^{AS} are informed on it by Him. It is rightly called as Information-on-the-unseen and

not Knowledge-of-the-unseen. The creation does not even know when will they be resurrected after death. They could not even perceive the Ākhirah through their own intellect. Their knowledges stood humbled and they finally ended up harbouring doubts over it.

Knowledge of Ākhirah, Him and His Attributes only through Revelation

Mankind is thoroughly blind with regard to this issue, for the knowledge of His Being and His Attributes as well as the Ākhirah is possible only through revelation. It enlightens and saturates the heart with firm belief. Yet the denier of revelation stands visionless on these realities.

- Section 6

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 67. | Those who disbelieve say: When we have become dust, we and our forefathers; shall we, verily be brought forth? | وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَيُّذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا وَءَابَاءُنَا أَبْنَاءَ الْمُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ |
| 68. | Assuredly we have been promised this before, we and our forefathers. Nothing is this, but the fables of the ancients. | لَقَدْ وَعَدْنَا هَذَا نَحْنُ وَءَابَاءُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسْطِيرُ الْأُولِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ |
| 69. | Say you: Travel in the land and behold how has been the end of the culprits. | قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ |
| 70. | Grieve you not over them, nor be straitened on what they plot. | وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُنْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مِمَّنْ يَنْتَكِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ |
| 71. | And they say: When will this promise be fulfilled, if you are truthful? | وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ |
| 72. | Say you: Perhaps close behind you may be what you would hasten on. | قُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ رَدِفَ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ |
| 73. | Verily your Rabb is full of Grace for mankind, yet most of them give not thanks. | وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ |
| 74. | Verily your Rabb knows what their breasts conceal and what they disclose. | وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ |

75. And nothing there is hidden in the heaven and the earth but it is in a Book manifest.
76. Verily this Qurān recounts with truth to the Children of Isrāil much of what they contend with.
77. And verily it is guidance and a mercy to the believers.
78. And verily your Rabb shall decide between them by His Judgement, and He is the Mighty, the Knowing.
79. So put your trust in Allah; verily you are on manifest truth.
80. Surely you cannot make the dead hear, nor can you make the deaf hear the call when they flee turning their backs.
81. Nor can you lead the blind out of their error. You can make none hear save those who believe in Our Signs and who have submitted themselves.
82. And when the word concerning them shall come to be fulfilled, We shall bring forth a beast of the earth speaking to them, that of Our Signs the people have not been convinced.

وَمَا مِنْ غَائِبَةٍ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٧٥﴾

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَنْصُرُ عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

وَإِنَّهُ لَهْدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ بِحُكْمِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٨﴾

فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾

إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمَعُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تَسْمَعُ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمْيٰ عَنْ ضَلَالَتِهِمْ ۗ إِنْ تَسْمَعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

Secrets of Revelation

The basis of their doubt and denial of Ākhirah is the question that when death will reduce them to dust, like their predecessors, how will they be raised again? They argue that such things had been said before and were now being repeated. They were nothing but tales outside the pale of reality. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must tell them that while they are adamant on denial, they might as well ponder over the fate of those who did so earlier. They are welcome to travel around to

see how the preceding infidels had been destroyed. Allah's Creative Powers have been explained earlier. Now the limitations of intellect are explained beyond which is the domain of faith.

They ask the Holy Prophet^{SAW} to tell them the time when the Doomsday would occur. If not, how could they accept that it will take place at all. So he must tell them that it is possible that some portents of it, in the form of Allah's punishment, may be lurking right behind their backs. They may be seized any moment. So they must not make haste in asking for the doom. It is indeed out of His kindness, being extremely Merciful, that respite is given. It is the people who are mostly ingrates. He knows all what they conceal deep in their hearts, as well as what they display. His Knowledge befits His Magnificence. The secrets of the heavens and the earth and the unseen are inscribed even in the Guarded Tablet. In fact, many unseen facts have been explained by the Qurān. For instance, there were disputes over some events amongst the scholars of Banī Isrāīl and none of the parties could give the correct account. The Qurān explained all with complete authenticity including definite guidance for the future. It is not an ordinary book but a Divine Mercy for all those who embrace Islam.

The time is running out fast. It may be unknown to the people but it is in Allah's Knowledge and He will arbitrate between them. He is all Prevailing, Whom no one can prevent from doing what He wants, and is All Knowing, nothing can be concealed from Him.

These infidels who refuse to listen to the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, may well be compared to the dead; so how could he make the dead listen to his words? Or to the deaf who turns his back and walks away, or the blind who cannot find the way by listening to the directions. However, the words of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} will only benefit the blessed who believe in His Revelations and become Muslims.

Hearing by the Dead

These Āyāt do not refer directly to the hearing by the dead, as it is only an analogy. It cannot be concluded that the infidels could not hear the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. However, they could not derive any benefit from him just as a dead body cannot execute a given command of piety. Similar was the condition of the infidels, so it refers to such hearing which is beneficial. Then a comparison has not been drawn with the living, rather, it says that the Holy Prophet^{SAW} can only make those hear who have become believers. In other words, it is only a believer who can benefit from what he teaches.

Whether the dead can hear or not is an issue over which a difference of opinion amongst the Companions^{RAU} is on record. This has been explained in a simple manner by the author of Mu'arif al Qurān, Mufti Muḥammad Shafi^{RUUA}. The fact is that opinion differs with regard to varying situations, occasions and particular individuals, and not over the basic question whether the dead can hear or not. As all the Āyāt concerning this topic are addressed to the infidels alone, it does not establish that the dead cannot hear. There are, however, Āyāt that support hearing by the dead, such as those pertaining to the martyrs, which establish that they are alive and are duly provided. It is also revealed that they rejoice over the noble deeds of their survivors in the world. This means that the Rūḥ not only understands but is also aware of the conditions of those left behind. It may be argued that this applies only to the martyrs, yet it does establish one fact that not every dead is deprived of hearing. Ḥadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar^{RAU} justifies the hearing by the dead relying on Aḥādīth. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} directs that whenever the believer pass by the grave of fellow believers, they must offer greetings which are duly reciprocated.

However, it is also a fact that not all the dead can hear, nor can every one hear them. It is entirely upto **Allah**, that whoever **He** wants to hear **He** makes them hear, and whoever **He** chooses to be heard, **His** words are heard by them. The same rule applies to the living. Everything happens by **His** Will.

Beast from the Earth

When the Promised Hour draws nigh, there will emerge a strange beast from the earth, which will talk to the people. It is only then that those who did not believe in its occurrence will realise, but the respite to repent would have ended. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} identifies some signs of the commencement of that Day. Two of these are the rising of the sun from the West and emergence of this beast from the earth. However, by then the time to repent would have gone past, and this strange beast and its conversation with people would only leave them wonder struck. They will then realise the magnificence of **Allah's** Omnipotence, but the chance to become believers would have been gone. The emergence of this beast would be followed closely by the establishment of the Doomsday. Human behaviour today has reached the point where they object to the words of wisdom conveyed by the Prophets^{AS} as well as **His** Scriptures, while they thoroughly believe in jugglery.

83. And remind them of the Day on which We shall gather from every community a troop of those who belied Our Signs, and they will be held in order.
84. Until when they will have come, He will say: Did you belie My Signs when you could not comprehend them in your knowledge; nay, what else was it that you have been working?
85. And the word concerning them shall be fulfilled because they did wrong and they shall not be able to speak.
86. Do they not consider that We have made the night that they may repose in it, and the day sight-giving. Verily in them are Signs for those who believe.
87. And remind them of the Day on which the Trumpet shall be blown, and terrified shall be those who are in the heavens and the earth, save him whom Allah wills. And all shall come to Him lowly.
88. And you shall see the mountains you deem solid passing away as the passing away of the clouds, the handiwork of Allah Who has perfected everything, Verily He is Aware of all that you do.
89. Whoever will bring good shall have better than its worth; and

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجًا مِمَّنْ يُكَذِّبُ
بَيِّنَاتِنَا فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوكَ وَقَالُوا كَذَّبْتُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا
وَلَمْ نُحِيطْ بِهَا بِعِلْمٍ أَمْ آذَانًا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَوَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا فَهُمْ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِيَتَكُونُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ
مُبْصِرًا إِنَّكَ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَفَرَجَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَكُلٌّ أَتَوْهُ
لَا خَيْرَ لَهُمْ ﴿٨٧﴾

وَنَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسِبُهَا جَمَادًا وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ
سُئِعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْفَخَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ
إِنَّهُ خَيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا وَهُمْ مِنْ فَرَجٍ

they will be secure from the terror of that Day.

90. And whoever will bring evil – their faces shall be cast down in the Fire. Are you being requited anything save what you have been working?

وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91. I am commanded only to worship the Rabb of this city which He has sanctified, and His is everything, and I am commanded to be of the Muslims.

إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدِ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

92. And that I should recite the Qurān. And whoever receives guidance, receives it for his own soul, and as for him who strays, say you: I am only of the warners.

وَأَنْ أَتْلُوا الْقُرْآنَ فَمَنْ أَهْتَدَىٰ فَأِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ. وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

93. And say you: All praise to Allah. Presently He will show you His Signs, so that you will recognise them. And your Rabb is not heedless of what you do.

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ سَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ. فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

Secrets of Revelation

One Day Allah will gather everyone, and from each community the deniers of His Revelations will be segregated and put before Him. They will be asked whether they had refuted the Divine Revelations without deliberating over them, or had they made an effort but failed to discern the reality? Since they will indeed be guilty, they will have no answer, nor will they be able to utter a single word. Why did they not understand the phenomenon of resurrection from the sleep? Don't they see that Allah has made the night for the purpose which to an extent weakens the connection of Spirit with the body. A sleeping person is unaware of all emotions of joy or sorrow, gain or loss, and is drawn away from whatever is in the world. The same person gets up the following

morning fresh and sets to work. If the heart is illuminated with the light of faith, sleep itself suffices as evidence of the Doomsday. **Allah** Who has originally created mankind can also resurrect it. **He** allows the link between the body and the Spirit to weaken during sleep, which is typical of death, and restores life as soon as one awakes.

When the Trumpet will be blown on that Day, the entire populace of the heavens and the earth would fall unconscious and perish, save those whom **Allah** will spare. They will not experience any anxiety. Normally a frightened person tries to flee away but the guilty will be forced towards **Allah's** Court and will not even dare to think of it.

The tall and high mountains never conceived to move from their place will turn into clouds of dust. It is **He** Who has granted perfection and stability to everything, and when **He** decides to destroy, nothing can survive. O' People! **Allah** is well Aware of your conduct, so whoever comes forth with noble deeds on that Day will be rewarded more than what he will deserve. And those who bring evil deeds will be flung upside-down into Hell, because the retribution corresponds to the actions.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must tell them that he is obliged to worship the **Rabb** of this city, **Who** has consecrated it. And as for the creations, they all fall under **His** Ownership and cannot possibly be worthy of worship. And that he has been instructed to submit to **Allah** both in beliefs and actions, and also to read out the **Qurān** to everyone. Whoever accepts it and gets on the right track will do his own self a favour, while those who, despite this invitation, stick to misguidance are responsible for their decisions, as it is not his duty to forcibly drag them onto the path of guidance. He is only entrusted with the task of forewarning mankind over the dire consequences of evil conduct well in time.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} must also let them know that all praises and excellences belong to **Allah** Alone. **He** is Omnipotent, All-Knowing and Wise. Very soon **He** will make them witness all that they are sceptical about. And when the Promised Day will be established, they will also know it.