

التفسير المحرر 12

There is no moving creature on earth except that Allah guaranteed its provision. And Allah knows its dwelling place and the place where it dies or is buried, and the details of that are recorded in the Preserved Tablet.

It is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and His Throne was upon the water before that, so He created the universe to test you, to see which of you is best in obedience to Him. And if you were to recite the Qur'an—O Muhammad—to the polytheists to inform them that Allah will raise them alive after their death, they would surely say: "This Qur'an is nothing but clear magic!"

If We delay the punishment for these polytheists until an appointed term, they will surely say in denial and mockery, "What is holding the punishment back from us if it is true?!" Indeed, on the Day it comes to them, nothing will avert it, and the punishment they sought to hasten will inevitably befall them.

And if We give man a blessing from Us and he finds its pleasure, then We take it away from him; he becomes utterly desperate for good returning to him, ungrateful for Allah's blessings, and of little thanks to Him.

But if We let man taste a blessing after hardship, he will surely say: "The hardship has gone from me, and it will not afflict me again!" Indeed, he is overjoyed with Allah's blessings, boastful of them

over others, and ungrateful to Allah for them. He forgets the fluctuations of the world and forgets to seek the bliss of the Hereafter.

Except for those who were patient in adversity and did righteous deeds in prosperity; it is they who will have forgiveness for their sins and a great reward.

Perhaps you—O Muhammad—may give up conveying to your people some of what Allah has revealed to you from the Qur'an and may be distressed by conveying it to them, for fear that they might say, "Why has not a treasure been sent down to him, or an angel come with him, so that we may believe in him!" So be patient and continue in your call to them. You are only a warner to your people of My punishment, and it is not upon you to bring them the miracles they propose. And Allah is Guardian and Protector over all things, so put your trust in Him.

Or do the polytheists say, "Muhammad has fabricated the Qur'an, and it is not from Allah?!" Then say to them, O Muhammad, "If I have fabricated it, then produce ten fabricated chapters like it, and seek help from anyone you can—from mankind and jinn and your alleged gods—to help you with that if you are truthful in your claim that I have fabricated the Qur'an."

But if they did not fabricate ten chapters like the Qur'an, then know—O polytheists—that the Qur'an

was revealed to Muhammad (ﷺ) from Allah, containing His Knowledge and including His commands and prohibitions. And know that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone. So will you submit and be obedient to Allah?

Whoever intends with their striving and righteous deeds this world and its splendor, We will give them the full reward for their deeds in it, such as abundance in provision and so on, and Allah will not diminish their reward in this world.

They are those who will have nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire. Their righteous deeds will be rendered worthless, so they will not be rewarded for them in the Hereafter, and the good they did for other than Allah will be futile, as it will not benefit them with Him.

Is one who is upon a clear proof from his Lord and is followed by another witness from Allah that confirms this clear proof—which is the Qur'an—and by another witness before it—which is the Torah that Allah sent down to Moses for the Children of Israel to take as a guide and follow, and to be a mercy for them from Allah—the same as one who is not so? Those who are upon a clear proof from their Lord truly believe in the Qur'an. And whoever disbelieves in it from among the people of the religions, he is among the people of the Fire. So be not in doubt, O Muhammad, that the Qur'an is revealed from Allah, and that whoever denies it, the

Fire is his promised destination. Indeed, the Qur'an is the truth from your Lord, but most of the people do not believe in that.

No one does more wrong than those who fabricate lies against Allah. They will be brought before their Lord on the Day of Resurrection, and He will hold them to account and punish them. The angels, the prophets, and the believers will say on the Day of Resurrection, "These are the ones who lied against their Lord." Behold, the perpetual wrath of Allah and His expulsion from His mercy are upon the wrongdoers.

Those wrongdoers hinder people from the religion of Allah and strive to make it appear deviant from the truth. They alienate people from it and make falsehood seem appealing to them, while they deny the Day of Resurrection.

They cannot escape Allah on earth by fleeing if He intends to punish them, and they have no protectors besides Allah to aid them and ward off His punishment from them; rather, their punishment will be multiplied. They were unable to hear the truth in a way that would benefit them, nor could they see it in a way that would be of use to them.

It is they who have lost their share of the reward and have doomed themselves to punishment. What they used to call upon has vanished, their lie against

Allah has been nullified, and their gods have departed from them, so they did not benefit them.

On the Day of Resurrection, they are truly and truthfully the greatest losers for having substituted the lowest levels of Hellfire for the abodes of Paradise.

Indeed, those who believe in the truth, do righteous deeds, humble themselves before their Lord, are reverent, and find peace in Him—those are the inhabitants of Paradise; they will abide therein forever.

The likeness of the disbelievers is that of the blind and the deaf, and the likeness of the believers is that of one who can see and hear; for the disbeliever neither sees the truth to be guided nor does he hear the truth in a way that benefits him, whereas the believer is the opposite of that. So, are the two parties equal?! Will you not then be mindful and leave disbelief and disobedience?

We certainly sent Noah to his polytheistic people, and he said to them, "Indeed, I am a clear warner to you from the punishment of Allah if you persist in your polytheism."

We sent him to his people, [saying], "Worship none but Allah alone." He said to them, "Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a painful day."

But the disbelieving chiefs of Noah's people said, "We see you as nothing but a human like us, and you are not one of the angels, so how could Allah send

you instead of us?! And no one has followed you in your religion except our weak and lowly ones, as it appears to us and to others. We see no merit in you over us that would make you worthy of our following; rather, we think you are liars in what you claim.

Noah said: "O my people! Consider if I stand on clear proof and knowledge from Allah about my truthfulness, and Allah has granted me prophethood, but you have been prevented from knowing the truth as a punishment for you. Should we compel you to believe in it and follow it, while you hate it and are averse to it?!

O my people! I do not ask you for a wage for conveying the message of Allah. My reward is only from Allah Who sent me. And I will not drive away the weak believers because of your contempt for them. Indeed, they are returning to Allah, and He will ask them about their deeds, not their honor or lineage, and He will reward them for them and recompense those who wronged them. But I see you as people who are ignorant of what you ought to know. It is out of your ignorance that you asked me to drive them away, while they are better than you.

Noah said, "O my people, who will protect me from the punishment of Allah if I drive away the believers and He punishes me? Will you not then take heed and cease from your misguidance?"

I do not say to you that I possess the treasures of Allah's provision to dispose of them, nor do I claim to know the hidden secrets or other matters of the unseen, which none knows except Allah, nor do I say that I am an angel. Rather, I am a human being, conveying to you the message with which Allah has sent me. Nor do I say of the believers whom you look down upon that Allah will not grant them their reward for their faith. Allah knows best what is in their hearts of beliefs and intentions. Indeed, if I were to claim that Allah will not grant them good, that they conceal the opposite of what they reveal, and that I drove them away—then I would truly be one of the transgressors against the command of Allah Almighty.

The polytheists among the people of Noah said, "You have argued with us, and have excessively argued with us, and have gone to extremes in it. So hasten the punishment for us, if you are truthful in your claim."

Noah said to his people, "It is Allah alone Who will bring the punishment upon you if He wills, and then you cannot escape Allah by fleeing from His punishment, nor do you have any power to repel His punishment."

My advice will not benefit you if Allah wills to lead you astray and cast misguidance into your hearts because of your stubbornness. He is your Lord, the Disposer of your affairs, and to Him alone

you will return after your death, and He will recompense you.

Or do the polytheists of your people say, O Muhammad, "Muhammad has fabricated this Qur'an and fabricated the story of Noah?!" So say to them: "If I have done that, then its sin is upon me alone! But I am free from the sins you commit of disbelief, lying against Allah, and denying the truth."

And Allah revealed to Noah that none of your people will believe in the truth and follow it except those who have already believed, so do not grieve over what your people were doing of misguidance, and do not be concerned about their affair, for I will surely destroy them.

And construct the Ark under Our watchful Sight and Our protection, and with Our direction on how to make it, and do not plead with Me for the polytheists, for it is decreed that they will surely be drowned.

So Noah began to construct the ark, and whenever a group of the chiefs of his people passed by him and saw what he was doing, they ridiculed him. He said to them, "If you ridicule us, we will surely ridicule you just as you ridicule us."

Noah said, "You will soon know who will be afflicted with a disgracing punishment in this world, and upon whom an everlasting punishment will descend in the Hereafter."

Until when the command of Allah came for the destruction of Noah's people, and the oven burst with water as a sign of the coming of the punishment, it was said to Noah, "Take into the Ark a pair from every species—male and female—along with your family, except those whom Allah has destined for destruction due to their disbelief, and also take the believers." And they were few.

And Noah said to those with him, "Board the ship. In the Name of Allah it will sail swiftly over the water, and in the Name of Allah it will anchor on the shore. Indeed, my Lord is All-Forgiving of the sins of those who repent to Him and Most Merciful to them, as He saved them from His punishment and from the wrongdoers."

As the ship was sailing with Noah and those with him in waves as high as mountains, Noah called out to his disbelieving son, who was in a place far from the ship, and said to him, "O my son, embark with us, and do not be with the disbelievers, lest you drown like them."

Noah's son said, "I will take refuge on a mountain that will protect me from the water!" Noah said, "Today no one will be saved from Allah's punishment except those to whom He shows mercy." And a wave came between Noah and his son, so he was among those whom Allah destroyed by drowning.

And Allah commanded the earth after the drowning of the people of Noah to absorb the water upon it and for the sky to hold back from raining. So the water on the earth receded until it was gone, and the matter was concluded with the destruction of the disbelievers and the salvation of the believers. And the Ark with those in it came to rest upon Mount Judi. And it was said, "Away with the wrongdoers."

Noah called out to his Lord, saying, "O my Lord, indeed my son is of my family whom You promised me to save from drowning, and indeed Your promise is surely true, which is never broken, and there is no injustice in Your judgment, nor any error."

Allah said, "O Noah, your son is not of your family whom I promised you to save, because he is a disbeliever in Allah Almighty. I have answered your question. So do not ask Me about the reasons for My actions, nor request from Me that which you do not know to be permissible or whose occurrence would be compatible with wisdom. I warn you, lest you be among the ignorant."

Noah said, "My Lord, I seek refuge in You from asking You henceforth about that of which I do not know its correctness. And if You do not forgive me for what I have done and have mercy on me, I will be among those who have lost themselves and their deeds."

And it was said when the ship settled on Mount Judi, "O Noah, disembark to the land with peace from Us, and lasting blessings upon you and upon nations from your followers. And then there will be disbelieving nations whom We will grant enjoyment in this world, and then We will make them taste a painful punishment in the Hereafter."

Indeed, the story of Noah is one of the unseen reports of the past, which We reveal to you, O Muhammad. Neither you nor your people knew it before this Qur'an. So be patient in your call to your people and endure their denial and harm. Indeed, the outcome in this world and the Hereafter is for the righteous.

And We sent to the tribe of 'Ād their kinsman Hūd. He said: "O my people, worship Allah alone; none is worthy of worship but Him. You are nothing but fabricators against Allah in your worship of other than Him."

O my people, I do not ask you for a wage for conveying Allah's message to you. My reward is only from Allah Who created me. Will you not then understand that I am calling you for your own benefit and without any wage?!

O my people! Seek your Lord's forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance. Allah will shower you with abundant and continuous rain and will add extra strength to your strength and increase you in

wealth and children. So do not turn away from the truth, persisting in falsehood.

The people of Hūd said, "O Hud, you have not brought us any clear evidence that testifies to your truthfulness! And we will not abandon the worship of our gods merely because you forbid it, and we are not believers in what you claim of prophethood and messengership."

We only say that some of our idols have afflicted you with madness for forbidding their worship and disparaging them. So Hūd said, "I call Allah to witness, and I call you to bear witness that I am free from your worship of idols."

So you plot with all your gods to harm me, then give me no respite, and do not delay it.

Indeed, I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is no living creature on earth that is not completely under His control, power, and authority. Indeed, my Lord is on a path of truth and justice; He wrongs no one, and His words and deeds are never without wisdom.

But if you turn away from my call to worship Allah alone, then the argument has been established against you by conveying to you the message of Allah. My Lord will replace you with other people after your destruction, and they will follow the truth. You cannot harm Allah in the least with your disbelief. Indeed, my Lord is the Guardian

over all things, preserving the words and deeds of His servants, and He protects me from you.

And when Our punishment came, and We destroyed the disbelievers, We saved Hūd and the believers with him by Our mercy, and We saved them from a severe punishment.

And such were the people of 'Ād. They rejected the miracles, denied the proofs of Allah, and disobeyed His messengers by their disobedience to Hūd, and followed every arrogant, tyrannical, and obstinate leader who did not accept the truth.

The people of Hūd were followed in this world by a curse from Allah and from the believers, and another curse will follow them on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, 'Ād disbelieved in their Lord, so Allah cast them away from all good.

And We sent to the tribe of Thamūd their kinsman Sālih. He said: "O my people, worship Allah alone; none is worthy of worship but Him. He is the One Who initiated your creation from the earth by creating your father Adam from it, and made you inhabit it, populate it, and utilize its bounties. So seek Allah's forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance. Indeed, my Lord is Ever Near and Responsive to whoever calls upon Him."

The people of Sālih said, "O Sālih! We truly had hoped for your goodness and soundness of mind and for you to be a leader among us before you claimed prophethood and forbade the worship of

our gods! Do you forbid us to worship what our forefathers used to worship?! Indeed, we are in doubt about your words—a doubt that causes us to be suspicious of you."

Sālih said: "O my people, tell me, if I have a clear proof from Allah, and He has granted me prophethood and messengership from Himself as a mercy to creation, then who would protect me from Allah's punishment if I were to abandon calling you to the truth?! If I did so, you would only add to my loss and harm."

And O my people, this she-camel of Allah is a sign for you and a proof of my truthfulness. So leave her to graze freely in Allah's land, and do not touch her with harm, or an imminent punishment will seize you.

But the disbelievers killed the she-camel, and their prophet Sālih said, "Enjoy life in your homes for three days before the punishment descends. This is a true promise that must come to pass."

So when Our punishment came, We saved Salih and the believers with him by a mercy from Us upon them, and We saved them from the disgrace of that day and the humiliation of its punishment. Indeed, your Lord, O Muhammad, is the Powerful in His might, Able to save the believers and destroy the disbelievers, the One Whom nothing can overcome.

And the mighty blast struck those who wronged themselves by disbelief and hamstringing the she-

camel, so they fell lifeless in their homes, stuck to the ground.

As if the disbelievers, when the punishment came to them, had never lived in their homes nor enjoyed themselves therein. Indeed, Thamūd disbelieved in their Lord. So, may Allah cast Thamūd away from all good.

The angels came to Abraham with the good news of a son. They greeted him, and he replied, "Peace be upon you!" Then it was not long before he brought a roasted calf for his guests, not knowing that they were angels.

When Abraham saw his guests' hands not reaching for the food, he became suspicious and fearful of them. They reassured him, saying, "Do not be afraid. We are angels sent to the people of Lot to destroy them."

And Abraham's wife was standing by, and she laughed. So she was given the good tidings of Isaac, and after Isaac, of Jacob.

She said in astonishment, "Woe to me! Shall I have a son, while I am an old woman, the likes of whom do not give birth, and this husband of mine, Abraham, is an old man, the likes of whom cannot have children?! This is indeed an astonishing thing that does not customarily happen!"

The angels said to her, "Do you wonder at something Allah has decreed?! The mercy of Allah and His abundant blessings be upon you, O people

of the house of Abraham. Indeed, Allah is Praiseworthy in all His attributes, actions, and words, Possessor of majesty and vastness in His attributes of perfection."

When the fear had left Abraham and the good news came to him, he was reassured, and when the angels informed him of the destruction of the people of Lot, he began to plead concerning their destruction.

Indeed, Abraham was truly forbearing, not hasty with punishment, humble before his Lord, frequently supplicating to Him, constantly returning to Allah with his obedience, knowledge, and love, and returning to Him in all his affairs.

The angels said, "O Abraham, leave pleading concerning them, for the command of your Lord has come for their destruction, and the punishment will inevitably befall them."

When the angels came to Lot—and he did not know that they were angels—he was distressed by their coming and felt great anguish, fearing for them from his people, and said: "This is a huge distressing day!"

And the people of Lot came rushing to him! Their continuous habit before the messengers came to Lot was to approach men from behind, so they came to his guests for that reason. He said to them, "O my people, these are the women of my people, so marry them; this is purer for you than approaching males.

So fear the wrath of Allah and His punishment, and do not disgrace me by violating the sanctity of my guests. Is there not among you a single right-minded man of sound judgment and discernment who would forbid you from that?!"

The people of Lot said to him, "You certainly know that we have no desire for women, and you surely know that we want men!"

Lot said, "If only I had supporters to help me against you or could take refuge with a clan that would protect me from you, I would stand between you and my guests."

The angels said to Lot, "We are the angels of your Lord, sent to destroy your people; they will not reach you with any harm. So depart with your family from this land after passing a portion of the night, and let none of you look back, and continue on your way, except for your wife. Do not take her out with you. The same punishment that afflicts your people will afflict her. Indeed, their appointed time of destruction is the coming morning. Is it not near for the punishment to descend upon them?!"

When Our command came for the destruction of the people of Lot, We made the highest of their towns the lowest, and We rained upon them stones of strong clay, piled on one another, so they turned into stones.

Stones are marked by Allah with signs, and they are not far from the wrongdoers who do likewise, so let them beware.

And to the people of Midian, We sent their kinsman Shu'ayb. He said, "O my people, worship Allah alone, for none is worthy of worship except Him. And do not give short measure and weight concerning people's rights. I see you are in a state of prosperity and abundant blessings, and I fear for you because of your polytheism and your defrauding of people's rights—the punishment of an overwhelming Day from which no one will escape."

And O my people! Give people full measure and weight with justice, and do not diminish anything from their due rights, and do not go about in the land disobeying Allah and harming the creation.

What Allah leaves for you after giving people their due rights is better for you than the unlawful gains you amass by wronging people, if you are believers in what I brought to you. And I am not a watcher over you, nor is it my duty to keep a record of your deeds.

The people of Shu'ayb said, mocking him, "O Shu'ayb! Does your prayer command that we forsake what our forefathers worshipped of idols and statues? Or that we give up doing with our wealth as we please by cheating in weights and measures? Indeed, you are the forbearing, the right-

minded!" They said this sarcastically—meaning to describe him with foolishness and ignorance.

Shu'ayb said, "O my people! Tell me, if I have clear proof from my Lord in what He has commanded me to call you to His oneness, and in what He has forbidden you from wronging people, and Allah has given me good and lawful provision, should I then follow misguidance?! I do not want to forbid you from something and then do the opposite of it. I only intend by my advice to reform your affairs and benefit you to the best of my ability. My success in what I intend and the facilitation of good for me is only through the help of Allah alone. In Allah I have put my trust, and to Him alone I return in repentance, obedience, and supplication."

O my people! Do not let your opposition to my faith and your hatred for me lead you to persist in disbelief and oppressing people, lest you suffer a punishment from Allah similar to that which befell those before you by drowning, or the windstorm, or the tremor. And the people of Lot are not far from you, neither in place nor in time.

And seek your Lord's forgiveness for your sins and turn to Him in repentance. Indeed, my Lord is Most Merciful to whoever turns to Him in repentance and is Most Affectionate to His repentant servants.

The people of Shu'aib said, "O Shu'aib! We do not understand much of what you preach to us, and we

see you as powerless to protect yourself from us. Were it not for our regard for your clan, we would have stoned you, for you have no honor or standing with us."

Shu'ayb said, "O my people! Do you have more regard for my clan than for Allah? You refrained from stoning me for their sake and not for Allah, the Mighty and Majestic?! You have turned your backs on Him, not fearing Him nor revering Him! Indeed, my Lord encompasses all that you do, and He will punish you for them."

O my people! "Persist in your ways; I will persist in mine. You will soon come to know who will receive a humiliating punishment from Allah and who is a liar! And wait; I too am waiting with you."

And when Our punishment came, We saved Shu'ayb and those who believed with him by a mercy from Us. And the blast struck those who wronged themselves with disbelief, so they fell dead in their town, attached to the ground.

When the punishment came to them, it was as if the people of Shu'ayb had never lived and enjoyed themselves in their homes. So, may Allah cast Midian away from His mercy, just as Thamūd were cast away before them.

Indeed, We sent Moses with Our miracles and clear proof.

We sent him to Pharaoh and the nobles of his people, but they followed the way of Pharaoh in

misguidance, and his way was not sound, nor did it guide to the truth.

Pharaoh will be at the forefront of his people on the Day of Resurrection and lead them into the Fire. What a terrible place they will enter!

And Allah made a curse follow them in this world—in addition to their drowning in the sea—and they will be cursed again on the Day of Resurrection. What an evil combination of curses to receive!

That which We have mentioned in this Surah of the accounts of the towns whose people We destroyed, We relate to you, O Muhammad; some of them are towns whose structures are still standing, while others are ruins whose structures have been demolished.

We did not wrong the people of those towns when We destroyed them, but they wronged themselves with disbelief and sins, so they deserved the punishment. Their gods did not benefit them, nor did they ward off the punishment of Allah from them, and only added to their loss, ruin, and destruction.

Thus Allah destroys those who wrong themselves through disbelief and sins. Indeed, Allah's punishment for them is painful and grievous.

Indeed, in the destruction of the wrongdoers by Allah is a sign for whoever fears the punishment of

Allah on the Last Day. That is a Day on which Allah will gather the people to recompense them for their deeds, and it is a Day witnessed by all of creation.

And We do not delay the coming of the Day of Resurrection except for a specific and limited time known to Allah.

When the Day of Judgment comes, no soul will speak except by His permission. The people will be of two categories: the wretched and the blessed.

As for the wretched, they will be immersed in the Fire; for them therein is a hideous exhalation coming from their throats and a severe inhalation in their chests from the severity of their torment!

Abiding in the Fire forever, except as your Lord wills, O Muhammad. Indeed, nothing prevents your Lord from doing what He wills, in accordance with what His wisdom dictates. Glorified is He.

As for those who were granted happiness, they will be in Paradise, abiding therein forever, except as your Lord wills—O Muhammad—a gift from Allah, without end.

So do not doubt, O Muhammad, that what the polytheists of your people worship of idols is false. They only imitate their forefathers in that without any proof. And We will certainly give them their share of the good decreed for them in this world and their share of the punishment in the Hereafter, in full, without any reduction.

And We had certainly given Moses the Torah, but some of his people believed in it, while others disbelieved. Had it not been for a prior decree from your Lord to delay their punishment, He would have destroyed them immediately and distinguished the people of truth from them by their salvation. Indeed, those who differ in falsehood concerning the Torah are in a disquieting doubt, so they do not know whether it is truth or falsehood!

And indeed, your Lord, O Muhammad, will fully give all those who differ the recompense of their deeds on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of all of them.

So stand firm, O Muhammad, upon the religion that Allah has commanded you along with the believers with you, and do not transgress the limits of uprightness that Allah has set for you into what He has forbidden you. Indeed, Allah is All-Seeing of what you do; nothing of your deeds is hidden from Him, and He will recompense you for them.

And do not incline—O people—to the wrongdoers, for if you do, and you approve of their actions, are pleased with them, and appease them, the Fire will seize you, and you will find no helpers besides Allah to benefit you, nor anyone to save you from His punishment.

And establish the obligatory prayer at the beginning of the day and its end—the Fajr, Dhuhr,

and Asr prayers—and establish the prayer in hours of the night—the Maghrib and Isha prayers. Indeed, righteous deeds, such as prayer and others, expiate minor sins. That which has been mentioned of what Allah has commanded you and forbidden you from is a reminder for those who remember Allah and remember His promise and His warning.

And commit yourself to obeying Allah, abandoning disobedience to Him, and enduring the harm of the disbelievers, for Allah certainly gives the doers of good their reward in full.

If only there had been among the generations We destroyed individuals of intellect and faith who forbade the people from disbelief and sins. But those who forbade that were few, and they were the followers of the Messengers whom Allah Almighty saved. As for those who wronged themselves, they pursued the pleasures of this worldly life and were criminals by committing disbelief and sins, so they deserved the punishment of Allah.

And your Lord, O Muhammad, would never destroy the towns unjustly while their people were acting righteously, for Allah Almighty has never destroyed a town unless its people persisted in wrongdoing.

And if your Lord had willed, O Muhammad, He would have made mankind one single nation, but they will not cease to differ in their faiths and doctrines.

Except for those whom Allah has given mercy and guided them to the truth, so they do not differ concerning what has come to them from their Lord. For this very difference He created them, as the wisdom of Allah Almighty decreed that people would be different: some choosing to deny the truth and thus be wretched, and others choosing to follow it and thus be blessed. The command of Allah has been fulfilled, and His decree has been executed in accordance with His precedent knowledge: that He will surely fill Hell with those who deserve it from among the jinn and humans all together.

And We relate to you, O Muhammad, from the stories of the messengers that which makes your heart firm, so you increase in faith, certainty, and patience against the denial of your people. And there has come to you in this Sûrah the truth in which there is no doubt, and an admonition from Allah to guard against the causes of divine punishments, and a reminder for them.

Say—O Muhammad—to those who do not affirm the oneness of Allah and do not believe you: Persist in your way and your current state; we will continue to follow the path that Allah has commanded us.

And wait for the mercy of Allah to befall us; indeed, we are awaiting what Allah has promised us of your punishment.

To Allah belongs the dominion of what is hidden from His servants in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Knower of all its hidden aspects. And to Allah alone returns every doer and their deed, and He will recompense them for it. So worship Allah alone, O Muhammad, and entrust your affairs to Him. And your Lord is not unaware of what you do, and He will recompense each one according to their deeds.

These disjointed letters with which this Surah and others begin are meant to demonstrate the miraculous (inimitable) nature of the Qur'an; they show the inability of creation to challenge it with something similar to it, even though it is composed of these very Arabic letters with which they speak. These are the verses of the clear Qur'an, evident in its rulings, its words, and all the various meanings it contains. Its truthfulness is manifest, as it clarifies and makes plain that which was obscure.

Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic scripture—O Arabs—so that you may know and understand its meanings.

We relate to you, O Muhammad, the best of stories of the past nations through Our revelation of this Qur'an to you. And indeed, before We revealed this Qur'an to you, you were among your people who did not know what the Qur'an contained of faith, guidance, and the stories of the prophets and past nations.

Remember—O Muhammad—when Joseph said to his father Jacob, "O my dear father! Indeed, I saw in a dream eleven stars and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrating to me."

Jacob said to his son Joseph, "O my son, do not relate this vision to your brothers, lest they envy you and devise a plot against you to harm you. Indeed, Satan is to Adam and his offspring a manifest enemy, inciting them to envy and plotting."

Jacob said to his son Joseph, "Just as your Lord has shown you this vision in your dream, so will your Lord choose you and select you for prophethood. He will teach you the interpretation of the visions people see in their dreams and their ultimate meaning, as well as the meanings of the Books of Allah and the ways of the Prophets. He will complete His favour upon you in this world and the Hereafter, and upon the people of the faith of Jacob—his offspring and others—just as He perfected His favour before upon your forefathers, Abraham and Isaac, with great blessings in their religion and worldly life. Indeed, your Lord is All-Knowing of everything, including His knowledge of who is worthy of being chosen and receiving favour. He is All-Wise, placing everything in its proper place, a wisdom manifest in the governance of His creation."

Indeed, in the story of Joseph and his eleven brothers are lessons, admonitions, and signs for those who ask about their account and story.

Remember when the brothers of Joseph said among themselves, "By Allah, Joseph and his brother are surely more beloved to our father Jacob than we are, while we are a group of so many. How could he love these two more than the entire group?! Indeed, our father is in clear error and has departed from truth and sound judgment by favoring Joseph and his brother over us in his affection, while we, the ten of us, are more beneficial to him than these two are!"

Joseph's brothers said to one another, "Kill Joseph or cast him out to a distant and uninhabited land, so your father will be free from his preoccupation with him and turn his full attention to you. Then, after you have done this, you may become righteous people by repenting to Allah for your deed."

One from among the brothers of Joseph said, "Do not kill Joseph, for killing him is a most grievous sin. But throw him into the bottom of the well; he will be picked up by some passing travellers if you must do something to separate him from his father."

The brothers of Yūsuf (Joseph) said to their father Ya'qūb (Jacob) (peace be upon him), having resolved to cast Joseph into the bottom of the well, "O our father! Why do you fear us concerning

Joseph? Do you not trust us with him?! For we are indeed his well-wishers, seeking his protection, care, and benefit.

Send him with us tomorrow to eat and have fun, enjoy the wilderness, and be active and play. We will indeed be guardians for Joseph, and we will protect him from any harm or injury.

Jacob said to his sons, "It truly saddens me that you take Joseph to the wilderness, and his absence is hard on me. I fear that a wolf might eat him while you are preoccupied and unaware of it."

They said to their father, "If a wolf were to eat Joseph while we are a strong group with him and unable to protect him from it, then we would surely be helpless and ruined, with no good in us and of no use!"

So when his brothers took him away from his father, and they all made up their minds to throw him into the bottom of the well, they did so. And We inspired Joseph, "You will inform them of this deed of theirs to you while they are unaware that you are their brother Joseph."

Then the brothers of Joseph, after they had thrown him into the bottom of the well, came to their father Jacob in the darkness of the night, weeping over Joseph.

They said, making a false excuse to their father, "Our father! We went racing and left Joseph with our belongings, and a wolf ate him while we were

away. But you will not believe us, even if we were truthful, because of your poor opinion and suspicion of us."

And they came with Joseph's shirt, stained with false blood, claiming it was Joseph's blood when the wolf had eaten him. Jacob said, "The matter is not as you claim; rather, your souls must have tempted you to do something concerning Joseph, other than what you describe. So I can only endure what you have done to Joseph with a beautiful patience, with no impatience in it, and no complaint to people. And it is Allah's help that I seek against the lies you describe."

And a passing group of travelers came along the road, so they sent their water-drawer to fetch water for them. He let down his bucket into the well, and Joseph clung to the bucket and came out. When their water drawer saw him, he said: "Good news! Here is a boy." And the travellers hid the matter of Joseph, treating him as merchandise among their trade goods and resolving to sell him. And Allah is All-Knowing of what they were doing to Joseph; nothing of that is hidden from Him.

And the caravan sold Joseph for a diminished price: a few, counted, insufficient dirhams, and the caravan was among those who had no desire for him.

And the one from Egypt who bought Joseph said to his wife, "Make his residence and stay

comfortable. Perhaps he will be useful to us, or we will adopt him as a son." And just as We rescued Joseph from his brothers, brought him out of the well, and raised him to a position of honor and high standing with Al-Aziz (the Chief Minister) of Egypt, so We established him in the land of Egypt until he attained the high status therein, and that We might teach Joseph the interpretation of visions—which people see in their dreams—and the meanings of the Books of Allah and the ways of the Prophets. And Allah is predominant over His affair; He does what He wills, so His command is not repelled or resisted, nor is what He intends contested. But most of the people do not know that Allah is predominant over His affair, that the management of all affairs is in His Hand, and they do not realize His wisdom in His creation and His subtlety in bringing about what He wills, Glorified is He.

When Joseph attained his full strength, youthfulness, and mental maturity, We gave him Prophethood and knowledge. This is how We reward those who do good.

The wife of Al-Aziz (the Chief Minister)—in whose house he was residing and under whose care he was—seduced Joseph to herself and asked him to lie with her. She locked all the doors of the house firmly on herself and Joseph and said to him, "Come, approach me." He said, "I seek refuge in Allah from committing the immoral act you are calling me to;

indeed, your husband is my master. He has honored me and been good to me, so I will not repay his kindness by betraying him with his family. Indeed, the wrongdoers do not succeed or prosper; those who do what they have no right to do. And what you are calling me to is a wrongdoing and a betrayal of my master.

The wife of the Chief Minister advanced—with firm resolve—to commit an immoral act with Joseph. And Joseph inclined towards her, but his inclination was a fleeting thought, a whisper of the self, without choice or resolve. Had he not seen a sign from Allah that strengthened his faith and caused him to refrain from disobeying Him, the act would have occurred. We showed Joseph such a sign to avert evil and immorality from him in all his affairs. Indeed, Joseph was one of Our purified, chosen, and selected servants who were sincere to Allah in His oneness and worship.

Joseph and the wife of the Chief Minister raced to the door of the house; Joseph wanted to flee from her, and she wanted to prevent him from leaving. The wife of the Chief Minister caught up with Joseph, grabbed his shirt, and pulled it to prevent him from leaving, tearing his shirt from the back due to the severity of the pull. Joseph and the wife of the Chief Minister encountered her husband at the door. The woman said to her husband, accusing Joseph of trying to seduce her, "What is the

punishment for one who intends to commit an indecent act with your wife, except to be imprisoned or a painful beating!

Joseph said to the Chief Minister, defending himself, "I did not try to seduce your wife; rather, it was she who tried to seduce me, but I refused." When their statements differed, a witness from her family judged between the Chief Minister's wife and Joseph. The witness said, "If Joseph's shirt is torn from the front, then she is truthful in her claim that he tried to seduce her, and he is a liar in his claim that she was the one who tried to seduce him, the proof being that she was defending herself from him until she tore his shirt from the front.

But if Joseph's shirt was torn from the back, then she has lied in her claim that Joseph seduced her, and he is truthful in his claim that she is the one who seduced him, the proof being that he fled from her when she seduced him, so she followed him and pulled his shirt until she tore it from behind."

So when the woman's husband saw Joseph's shirt torn from behind, and his truthfulness became clear to him, he said to his wife, "Indeed, this lie that you have claimed against Joseph is part of your cunning and your schemes—O women. Indeed, your cunning and scheming are immense, with a powerful effect on souls."

The Chief Minister said to Joseph, 'O Joseph, turn away from this matter and mention it to no one."

And he said to his wife, "Seek forgiveness for your sin that you have committed: of trying to seduce Joseph, betraying your husband, and then falsely accusing Joseph while he was innocent. Indeed, you have been among the deliberate sinners."

And women in the city of Egypt said, "The wife of the Chief Minister, a woman of great standing, is seeking to seduce her slave boy and calling him to lie with her! Love for her young man has completely possessed her heart and has reached a great extent! We surely see her to be in plain error for her seduction of her young man and her love for him."

When the wife of the Chief Minister heard the gossip of the women who spoke of her seducing Joseph and the intensity of her love for him, she sent for them, inviting them to her house as guests. She prepared for them a reclining place with cushions and furnishings and gave each of the women who attended her gathering a knife to cut the food that needed cutting. She said to Joseph, "Come out before these women." So Joseph came out to them. When the women saw Joseph, they were in awe of his beauty and held him in high esteem, and they cut their hands with the knives, thinking they were cutting food, due to their astonishment at the beauty of Joseph they had seen. The women exclaimed, "Great Allah, and glory be to Him! This is not a human being; he is none other than an honorable angel to Allah!"

The wife of the Chief Minister said, "So this is the one who made you so stunned and lose your mind by just seeing him until you cut your hands—the very one you blamed me for being infatuated with and then criticized me for trying to seduce him and for my love for him! I did try to seduce Joseph, calling him to indecency, but he firmly refused. And if Joseph does not do what I order him, he will certainly be thrown into prison and will be among the disgraced and humiliated."

Joseph humbly supplicated to Allah, saying, "My Lord, entering prison and enduring its hardships is better and easier for me than that to which those women invite me, which is committing immorality. And if You do not avert their scheme from me, I might incline toward them out of my weakness and follow what they desire of me and thus be of the ignorant of Your right and violate Your commands and prohibitions. So protect me, and do not entrust me to my own self."

So Allah responded to Joseph's prayer and averted from him the scheme of the wife of the Chief Minister and her companions for disobeying Allah. Indeed, Allah is the All-Hearing of Joseph's supplication when he called upon Him, and He hears every supplicant of His creation; and the All-Knowing of the women's cunning, of Joseph's intention, his need, and what is best for him, and He knows all conditions of His servants.

Then it seemed best to the Chief Minister and his companions, after they had seen the proofs of Joseph's innocence, to imprison him for a period of time.

So they imprisoned Joseph, and two young men entered the prison with him. One of them said to Joseph, "I saw in a dream that I was pressing grapes." And the other said, "I saw in a dream that I was carrying bread on my head, from which the birds were eating. Tell us the interpretation of what we saw in our dreams. Indeed, we see you as one of the doers of good, so be good to us by interpreting our visions."

Joseph said to the two young men, "You will not see food coming to you in a dream except that I will inform you of its interpretation in wakefulness before it comes to pass. This knowledge of the interpretation of dreams is from what my Lord has taught me. Indeed, I have renounced the religion of the disbelievers who do not believe in Allah and His Oneness and who deny the Resurrection, the reward, and the punishment on the Day of Reckoning."

And I have followed the religion of my fathers, the prophets: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who called to Tawhīd (Allah's Oneness). It is not for us to associate any partner with Allah in His worship and obedience. That monotheism—with which Allah Almighty has honored us—is from His favor upon

us and upon the people, for whom He has made us callers to His Oneness and obedience. But most people are not grateful to Allah for His blessings upon them by affirming His Oneness and believing in His messengers; rather, they associate partners with Him!

Joseph said to the two young men, "O inhabitants of the prison, are various gods that neither benefit nor harm better, or the One God, Who has no second in His essence, His attributes, and His perfection, Who has subdued everything of His creation, and is alone worthy of worship?!

You worship nothing besides Allah but names that you and your forefathers have called gods, believing in their divinity, for which Allah has sent down no authority, neither for their naming nor for their deserving of worship. Judgment belongs to none but Allah; He alone is the Judge among His servants, the Lawgiver for them. Allah has commanded you—all people—to worship none but Him alone and to associate nothing with Him. That Tawhīd (Allah's Oneness) and sincere devotion in worship to Allah alone is the straight religion, but most people do not know this, so they associate partners with Allah out of their ignorance.

Joseph (peace be upon him) said to the two young men, "O two companions of the prison! As for one of you, he will be released from prison and will serve wine to his master, the King. But as for the

other, he will be crucified, and the birds will eat from the flesh and fat of his head. The matter has been decreed about the interpretation of which you both inquire, and it will inevitably happen."

Then Joseph said to his companion, whom he knew for certain would be saved, "Mention me to your master, the King, and inform him that I am imprisoned without any crime." But Satan made the young man who was released forget to mention Joseph to the King, as he had instructed him, so Joseph remained in prison, wronged and forgotten, for several years.

And the King of Egypt said to his courtiers, "Indeed, I saw in a dream seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows! And I saw in my dream seven green ears of grain and seven others that were dry! O nobles, inform me of the interpretation of my vision if you have knowledge and expertise in that."

The nobles said to the King, "This vision of yours is nothing; it is merely a jumble of dreams with no basis in reality, and we have no knowledge of the interpretation of confused dreams."

Finally, the surviving ex-prisoner of the two young men who were in prison with Joseph said—remembering after a long time Joseph's knowledge of interpreting visions and what he had instructed him to do, to mention his case to his master, the King—"I will tell you the interpretation of the

King's dream. So send me forth to the imprisoned Joseph, so I may ask him for its interpretation."

So they sent him to him, and he said to him. "O Joseph, O man of truth in your words and deeds, inform us of the interpretation of a vision of seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows and of seven green ears of grain and seven others that are dry. Interpret this vision so that I may return to the king and his courtiers. Let them know its interpretation, your knowledge, and your merit so that you may be released from prison."

Joseph said, interpreting the king's dream, "You will sow for seven consecutive fertile years, as is your custom in planting. Leave the harvest of your crop in its ear so that it does not spoil, and eat a little of it according to your need, and store most of your harvest."

Then after the seven years of abundance will come seven years of severe drought, in which everything you have stored up for them from the harvest of your crops during the seven years of abundance will be eaten, except for a little of what you keep and store.

Then after the seven years of drought will come a year in which Allah will send abundant rain upon people, and in that year, people will press grapes, oil, and the like.

When the king learned the interpretation of his dream, he said, "Bring the one who interpreted this

dream of mine out of the prison, and bring him to me." So when the king's messenger came to Joseph to bring him out of the prison, Joseph said to him, "Go back to your master, the king, and ask him about the case of the women who cut their hands so that he may know the truth of my innocence. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing of the women's scheming against me and others; nothing of that is hidden from Him."

The king's messenger returned to him and informed him of Joseph's message. So the king summoned the women who had cut their hands and the wife of the Chief Minister, and said to them, "What was your affair and your account when you sought to seduce Joseph?!" The women said to the king, "Allah forbid that Joseph should be accused of any evil; we knew of no sin against Joseph, small or great!" The wife of the Chief Minister said, "Now the truth has come to light and has appeared. It was I who tried to seduce him, and he is surely truthful in his claim that it was I who tried to seduce him."

The wife of the Chief Minister said, "This admission and confession of the truth is so that Joseph will know that I did not lie about him or accuse him of sin in his absence. I have declared the truth, for Allah does not guide the schemes of those who betray trusts; rather, He foils their scheming and deprives them of guidance.

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