

# THE Qur'ān

## BASIC TEACHINGS

Thomas Ballantine Irving  
Khurshid Ahmad  
Muhammad Manazir Ahsan

THE ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# **THE QUR'ĀN :**

## **BASIC TEACHINGS**

An Anthology of Selected  
Passages from the Qur'ān,  
translated into contemporary  
English with an Introduction to  
the Message of the Qur'ān.

**Thomas Ballantine Irving  
Khurshid Ahmad  
Muhammad Manazir Ahsan**

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*This QUR'ĀN*

*guides one to what is more straightforward and reassures believers who act honourably that they shall have great earnings. Yet We have reserved painful torment for those who do not believe in the Hereafter.*

**The Night Journey 17: 9-10**

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## Preface

The Qurʾān is the foundation and the mainstay of Islamic life and culture. If ever a book transformed a people from a motley group of warring tribes into a civilized, international community, gave them a distinct identity, fashioned their historical personality and continued to be their main source of inspiration for over a millennium, it is the Qurʾān. The impact of this book has not been confined to Muslims and their cultural accomplishments. It has influenced, in many ways, the mainstreams of human history and culture all over the world and has penetrated the thought and lifestyles of people belonging to different traditions.

The Qurʾān claims to be God's final Revelation to man, preserving and protecting what was revealed to mankind through earlier prophets, and completing and perfecting that guidance for the future.

Whether one believes in the Qurʾān or not, a book which makes such a claim and which has had such a tremendous and continuing influence on world history should be studied and understood with great sympathy and reverence. Whatever the direct and indirect influences of the Qurʾān on Europe and America in the past — and they have been legion — it is distressing that today the minds and hearts of the great majority of people in the West have very little direct rapport with the Qurʾān. In an age wherein the spiritual poverty of man is becoming more and more pronounced and his moral cravings are seeking new avenues of expression, contact between the Qurʾān and the soul of the or-

dinary man and woman in the West is minimal — they are hardly even conscious of their own historical debt to the Qurʾān.

What lies at the root of this estrangement? Prejudice against Islam and its basic book is one factor. The dismal eras of the Crusades and of colonialism brought ignorance and prejudice in their wake and the people in the West are still living under their ominous shadows. The barrier they set up can be removed only by a more open-minded approach to the Qurʾān and by giving people easier access to it. For a number of historical reasons, contact between the West and the world of Islam is increasing. This may prove a turning point in their history if their future relationship grows on a foundation of knowledge and sympathetic understanding. In this *milieu* bias and ignorance deserve to be seen more as a challenge to be overcome than as obstacles to be helplessly lamented.

The intellectual and social climate of the modern culture of the West also militates against the spirit of the Qurʾān. This too is but a flimsy barrier: the tensions that engulf man today bring to light the need for new sources of inspiration and thus offer fresh opportunities for the dissemination of the message of the Qurʾān.

One of the principal reasons for the West's failure to understand the message of the Qurʾān is that the Holy Book of Islam has never been presented to it in its true perspective. People who are not familiar with the language of the Qurʾān and are not initiated in Islamic tradition find it difficult to grasp its spirit and meaning merely by reading it in translation. The Qurʾān — the uncreated Word of God — was revealed through the medium of a human language, namely Arabic, and it is only by reading it in the original that one may feel and enjoy its real beauty and grandeur. Only then is one in communion with 'that inimitable symphony the very sound of which moves man to tears and ecstasy'.\* To that extent, the Qurʾān remains untranslatable, but that must not suggest that efforts should not be made to render its meaning in another language. It rather increases the need, however difficult the task may be.

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\* Pickthall, M. M. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (New York: Mentor), p. vi.

Every language has its own spirit and ethos. The language of the Qurʾān is surrounded by a unique mental and moral climate; it has a distinct style, supported by a value-laden idiom, a multi-dimensional phrase-structure, sequential interrelatedness and powerful expression. The language reflects the values and the values relate to concepts and ideals. All these go to make up an organic whole, a unique literary culture, with a self-sustaining spiritual and cultural personality. In such a context, not only does translation become a matter of interpretation, but, however good the translation may be, one who is uninitiated in the ideas, values and spirit of this culture cannot, through the mere words of a translation, reach and grasp the spirit and the meaning of the text. No attempt has yet been made to bring the mind of the Western reader into contact and communion with the ethos of the Qurʾān. The situation becomes even more difficult when a translation is not done with sympathy, understanding and reverence. It is tragic that several of the translations through which a Western reader approaches the Qurʾān were done, not so much to produce a sympathetic understanding of it, as to denigrate or mock its message. Even where a translation does not suffer from deliberate distortion or misrepresentation, it lacks understanding and force and the power to communicate. Since the non-Muslim reader is not familiar with the ethos of the Qurʾān and is not properly initiated into the culture of the Divine Word, he fails to taste its sweetness, to encompass its breadth and fathom its depths, and to move with it towards his tryst with destiny. This may explain why two persons, reading the same translation (whether beautiful or flat) may have two almost diametrically opposed reactions: one who is initiated into the ethos of the Qurʾān is able to go beyond the words and penetrate into the world of the Qurʾān while the other, uninitiated, feels frustrated; for him words become walls yielding no opening into the Book.

It would be ludicrous to assume that any one book can remedy this situation. What is, however, possible is to attempt to identify the difficulties involved in building bridges between the modern Western reader and the meaning and message of the Qurʾān, and to try to initiate mental and cultural processes that may ultimately

remove these barriers, transforming estrangement into understanding and communion. The message of the Qur'ān can penetrate the heart of man today as it penetrated human hearts in the past; it can sink into the soul of its seeker in the West as it has sunk into the souls of men elsewhere. The question is primarily of the right approach and suitable opportunities. Our hope and ambition is to make a beginning towards such an approach: to provide the uninitiated reader with an opportunity to develop familiarity with the spirit of the Qur'ān, to share its ideals and values, and to begin to think and live with it. This effort is being made in the humble spirit of developing better communication between human beings and between man today and the sources that have inspired men through the ages.

*The Qur'ān: Basic Teachings* is an anthology of passages from the Qur'ān selected and arranged in such a way that it may give a total view of the essential message of the Book, initiate the reader into its world-view and values, capture some flavour from its style, bring the reader's imagination into vivid contact with the vision of the Qur'ānic model of man and society and bring him closer to God, the Lord of the Universe. An effort has been made to translate the meaning of the Qur'ānic verses into contemporary English: our aims are authenticity and understandability. The selections have been arranged either in prose form or as rhythmic free verse, depending upon the need of the passage. They have been grouped under relevant headings, from the *Fātiḥa* (The Opening), and the Qur'ān's view of itself, to the world-view of the Book and the description of major prophets — the receptacles of Divine Revelation and the agents for the propagation of God's guidance to man.

This is followed by a selective yet comprehensive look at the moral and social teachings of the Qur'ān — the ideas and values that inspire man to establish the Kingdom of God on earth; the realization of the dream of God-conscious man living in a just society fulfilling his destiny here and seeking higher stations in the Hereafter; the ideal of man living at peace with himself and with the creation around him by living at peace with the Creator.



The selections conclude by bringing into focus the mission of those who choose to integrate themselves with God and with each other on the basis, not of colour or language, territory or socio-political interests, but on the universal basis of shared ideals and values of life. This selection may not be complete, yet we hope it is comprehensive enough to give the vision of Reality that the Qurʾān presents and of man and society that it creates. Familiarity with this vision and with the way the Qurʾān projects it will initiate the unbiased reader into the spirit and the ethos of the Qurʾān. This book is not a substitute for the Qurʾān, but a stepping stone to it. One who has developed this familiarity with the world of the Qurʾān, will, we hope, have a better feeling for the meaning and message of the Qurʾān when he reads it from cover to cover.

The Qurʾān was revealed piecemeal: it is always rewarding to read the Qurʾān a little at a time, to reflect and meditate on what has been read, and to try to follow it step by step. Only then does the Qurʾān reveal its secrets to its seekers, help them traverse its spiritual landscape and enable them gradually to move forward in communion with its spirit and ethos. Our objective — our hope and prayer — is to bring the reader to the threshold of the Qurʾān. Our aim has been to let the Qurʾān speak for itself and to make the reader see and approach the Qurʾān in its true light. If even a single inquiring soul is enabled to see the Book in its true perspective, we shall feel well rewarded. We have studied the Book with faith and reverence, have tried to understand its meaning diligently and prayerfully, and have tried to render it into contemporary English sincerely and honestly.

We offer this anthology as much with a deep sense of humility as in a spirit of hope: humility, for we are conscious of our own weaknesses and limitations; hope, because we are confident that the message of the Qurʾān has the capacity to rise above the constraints and failings of any human enterprise. This book, like the Qurʾān itself, is meant for all seekers after Truth, whether they are ordinary men, scholars and specialists, simple or sophisticated, young or old, Muslim or non-Muslim. Our special concern, however, has been with those who do not have a reasonable

command of the Arabic language and have to approach the Qurʾān through a translation. We hope it will be used with profit by the general reader and also by the younger generation of Muslims being brought up in Europe and America, and whose problems are, in many ways, very similar to those of the uninitiated reader of the West. It could also be of great help to those who are pursuing any course of studies on Islam and the Muslim world in secondary and higher education. An effort has been made to use distinct English words for different meanings of Arabic words used interchangeably in the original text. We have taken into consideration present English usage, avoiding expressions used in other translations but which now sound out-of-date (such as 'Fie!'). With the Western reader in mind, we have used the word 'God' or 'God Alone' instead of 'Allah' and we have addressed Him as 'You' rather than 'Thou' for a more immediate effect. We have tried to keep the language of the translation simple, clear and direct — as is that of the Qurʾān in Arabic. The result is now before you.

Now a word about the way the book has been prepared. Professor T. B. Irving is the senior member of the team. He has been preparing a new translation of the Qurʾān for the last twenty-one years 'with the aim of presenting it in a form which Westerners will understand more easily'. In 1967 he produced an anthology of passages from the Qurʾān — *Selections from the Noble Reading* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Unity Publishing). That showed us the way to produce something more comprehensive and in 1973 the three of us started work on the present project., *Selections from the Noble Reading* was our starting point, but only a starting point. During the course of new research and through our joint efforts, a much more representative and comprehensive selection of passages from the Qurʾān was made.

The initial responsibility for translation rests with Professor Irving, who is a competent scholar of Arabic, a dedicated student of the Qurʾān and a master craftsman in linguistics. In him, the two traditions of the English language — the British Canadian and the American — shade into each other. His family originally came

from Scotland and Ireland (Belfast), and has settled in Canada; he was educated in Toronto, Princeton and Baghdad and has taught in different seats of learning on the American continent. These translations were thoroughly examined and re-examined by the other two authors.

Dr. T. B. Irving first of all, and then later Dr. M. M. Ahsan undertook the painstaking task of comparing the translation of each verse with the original text. In this effort, they have re-checked the meaning of each verse with the leading authentic *tafāsīr* (exegeses) of the Qur'ān, both classical and contemporary. We have depended more heavily upon the *tafāsīr* of Bayḍāwī and Ibn Kathīr from the classical ones and *Tafhīm al-Qur'ān* of Mawlānā Sayyid Abu'l-A'lā Mawḍūdī and *Fī zilāl al-Qur'ān* of Sayyid Quṭb from the contemporary *tafāsīr* literature. During the course of this research, we sent our comments and proposed modifications to Professor Irving, who revised the text of his translations accordingly. Final editing has, however, been done by us in the Islamic Foundation. There have been a few places where we could not reach a consensus of opinion. In respect of all such places, the General Editor had to have the final say. All such passages have been marked with an asterisk. Professor Irving reserves his right to use in his writings the expressions which he prefers. In a work like this, we could have worked only through such generous mutual accommodation. The present writer has acted as the General Editor and has also been assisted by Mrs. Buckmaster. The General Editor has also contributed the Preface and an introduction to the Message of the Qur'ān. He acknowledges his debt to Dr. T. B. Irving and Dr. M. M. Ahsan for their valuable comments. The translation of a number of passages included in this anthology was read by the great Moroccan scholar and teacher, Professor Muhammad Taqiuddin Hilali; and also by Dr. A. H. Abdul Kader, formerly Director, the Islamic Centre, Washington, and Dean of the Faculty of Law at Al-Azhar University, and Imam Abdul Moti Al-Aseer of the Ohio State University. Professor Irving acknowledges his debt to them, particularly to Professor Hilali, who is also his teacher. We are also grateful to Mrs. D. Buckmaster for her valuable assistance in the final revi-

sion of the manuscript and in preparing it for the press. Her contribution in technical editing is immense. We are also indebted to Dr. Martin Lings for helping the General Editor in sorting out some difficult points, particularly the ones in respect of which there was some difference of opinion. We are grateful to Mr. Salem Azzam, Secretary General, Islamic Council of Europe, for his interest in this project and of the World of Islam Festival Trust for partially supporting it, particularly through the editorial co-operation of Mrs. D. Buckmaster. The book was planned to be published by the World of Islam Festival Publishing Company, but this intention was not able to be realized for a number of reasons. Now the book is being published by the Islamic Foundation. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Evelyn U. Irving for her warm and valuable co-operation in seeing the manuscript through its different phases of preparation and editing, to our colleagues in the Islamic Foundation for helping us in a number of ways and to Mrs. K. Hollingworth for typing and retyping the manuscript.

We would like to conclude this preface with the traditional Muslim prayer:

Our Lord! If we have been able  
to convey in these pages  
the true meaning of Your Message,  
then open the hearts of the people to it,  
and wherever we have failed in this effort,  
forgive us and protect the people  
from our error.

Amen.

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Khurshid Ahmad

## Introduction

Read in the name of your Lord who creates,  
creates man from a clot!  
Read, for your Lord is most Generous.  
[it is He] Who teaches by means of the pen,  
teaches man what he does not know.  
However man is so arrogant,  
he sees himself as self-sufficient.  
Yet to your Lord will be the Return!<sup>1</sup>

These verses from the earliest Revelation to the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him) succinctly capture the perennial tension of the human situation: man's cravings for the knowledge of Reality; his soul's longings for rapport with the Divine; and the biases, complexes and misconceptions that frustrate his efforts and drive him away from the Straight Path. Yet his realization that his Return is to the Lord quickens the unceasing throb of his conscience, which never lets him settle in contentment along the path of rebellion against the Creator.

Man does not stand alone in the firmament of Creation. His existence is not a fortuitous accident of history. The world around him is not unrelated to him and his purpose in life. Everything is part of a Divine Plan — the overall scheme of Providence.<sup>2</sup> He Who has created man has also provided for him all that he needs

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1. Qur'an, 96: 1-8

2. Qur'an, 3: 191, 29, 44, 30, 8, 64: 3.

for the good life: whether that be in the nature of physical providence ensuring his existence and growth, or of moral and social guidance for the full flowering of human personality and culture.

Praise the name of your Lord, the All-Highest,  
Who has created and fashioned,  
Who has proportioned and guided<sup>3</sup>.

A basic premise established firmly by the Qur<sup>ān</sup> is that the entire scheme of existence is purposive: that God is not only the Creator and Nourisher of the Universe, He is also the Source of all Guidance; and that everything in the Universe, from the tiniest elements of the atom to the largest planet, from the weakest substance to the mightiest mountain, exists and operates in accordance with the laws of nature designed by God, and as such fulfils what God has willed for it. The natural course for man, who has been endowed with freedom and volition, is voluntarily and deliberately to conform to God's Will in that area of his existence where he has been given the freedom of choice. God has not left man in the dark — He has provided him with as much knowledge of Reality as is required to develop right attitudes in life and to live justly and honourably to fulfil his mission in the Universe. This guidance, the greatest treasure of man, has been provided in the form of Divine Revelation, communicated to man through God's prophets.

### The Islamic Concept of Revelation

Revelation, in the Islamic framework, is neither, primarily and predominantly, a Divine, self-disclosure of His Person, of the Divine Spirit as such,<sup>4</sup> nor mainly the revelation of His Purpose in

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3. Qur<sup>ān</sup>, 87: 1-3

4. This distinguishes the Islamic approach from the Christian one:

God is *persona* and can only be contacted as *persona* — all attempts to fathom the most essential characteristics of the Christian religious sphere lead to this conclusion. . . Within Christian religiousness revelation is not the opening of a path which leads to the inner nature of God, it is the appearance of God's *persona* and hence the path of intercourse between God and mankind. From what God does and says, man can infer what God's will is. Rev. C. W. Monnich, 'Christianity', *Historia Religionum*

(continued to p. 23)

the form of a people whose history and experience become embodiments of the Divine to an extent that the 'Word of God' is subsumed in the 'Act of God', as articulated in the history of a specific chosen people.<sup>5</sup> Instead, it consists in the revelation of the Divine Will, so that man knows and learns what is expected of him and tries to realize it in actuality. This Will is primarily embodied in the message communicated by God through His prophets, who convey it to mankind and who also try to translate it into practice, setting a model before them all. The two instruments of Divine Guidance are God's Books and his prophets, both inviting and enabling man to harmonize his will with the Divine Will, and as such to live in peace with God, with himself and with his fellow beings. This is what Islam (literally, submission and peace) signifies: peace through harmonization of the human will with the Divine Will.

The central problem of human life and society, according to Islam, hinges on man's relationship to *Hidāya* (Divine Guidance). Man is not self-sufficient. He needs Divine Guidance to have a correct perception of Reality and to fashion his life, individual as well as collective, in that light. Man, unaided by Divine Guidance, is in-

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(*Handbook for the History of Religions*), vol. II: *Religions of the Present*, ed. by C. Jones Bleeker and Geo. Widengren, Leiden (E. J. Brill), 1971, p. 49. Discussing the different shades of the meaning of revelation in Christianity, H. L. Goudge says: '(a) Revelation is primarily of God's reality, character and purpose. All other revelation is subordinate to this, and to a large extent included within it. (b) Revelation is made in act rather than in word. God reveals Himself by what He does, and the trend of His purpose by His partial fulfilment of it. But the word of God is important in its own place. . . (c) Revelation culminates in Christ and the Spirit-bearing Church, who at once reveal in act God's reality, character, and purpose and declare it in word. In them God's purpose is partially fulfilled and also moves forward to complete fulfilment. . . The Lord reveals the Father, because in His activity the Father is seen actually at work (Jn 14: 9, 15: 23)'. H. L. Goudge, 'Revelation', *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Edinburgh, 19 vols., p. 748.

See also John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, The Library of Philosophy and Theology, London (SCM Press) 1966, pp. 75–110 and 246–279; Bishop David Brown, *The Christian Scriptures* (Christianity and Islam No. 2), London (Sheldon Press), 1969, pp. 20–25, 54–58; Bishop Kenneth Cragg, *The Call of the Minaret*, New York (Oxford University Press), 1964, p. 241f.

5. This brings to focus the difference between the Islamic and Judaic approaches: 'To the Hebrews God was revealed in the facts of their history and experience. . . . God revealed His purpose to establish it by actually establishing it in Israel, so far as the obstinacy of His people allowed, and extending it through Israel one to another, so far as Israel was ready to be the instrument of its extension, both by doing and by suffering'. H. L. Goudge, *op. cit.*, vol. 19, p. 748.

capable of solving all the riddles of Creation, of having a world view based on Reality as it is, or of deriving those values and principles whose application in life can produce peace and harmony in man's soul and personality, create equilibrium and balance within human society and harmonize human behaviour with the movements of cosmic forces and the overall dynamics of existence. All the means of knowledge available to man (instinct, habit, reason, intuition, experience) and all the sources of guidance he has developed over the ages (philosophy, history, law and science, to name only the major ones among them) are unable to yield unimpeachable knowledge of Reality and of the ultimate values to which human behaviour should conform. Increases in the knowledge of the means of life fail to equip man with understanding of the ends of life and the true norms of moral behaviour, both individual and social. The predicament of man — of the man who sees himself not in relation to God and His Guidance, but as self-sufficient — lies in having torn himself assunder from the Divine arrangement for human evolution and devoted himself to the service of means to the neglect of ends. His investigations, observations and deductions do not necessarily lead him to a realistic understanding of physical and socio-moral phenomena, for he has lost his true sense of perspective and the interrelatedness of different elements of existence. Nor do they yield him an objective analysis within human society, for the observer and deducer is himself a human being, and subject to the limitations which keep ultimate Reality beyond his reach. Whatever perception of the social phenomenon he holds, that perception is essentially partial and subjective, more often reflecting his own biases, prejudices and suppositions than objective Reality. This lies at the root of man's failure to solve the problems of human life and society by adopting a purely secular approach to life. All sources of knowledge have a part to play and a positive contribution to make, but they are able to make their true contribution only when they operate within the framework of ultimate Truth as communicated by Divine Revelation. Divine Guidance is the greatest moral and social need of man. If he needs air and water for his physical existence and growth, he needs Divine Guidance for his moral and social existence and development.



That is why the central quest of man is for guidance and not just for physical survival or economic advancement. This is borne out by the invocation which a Muslim makes in *Sūra al-Fātiḥa* (The Opening), which is recited in every prayer and is crucial to the understanding of the spirit of Islam:

Praise be to God, Lord of the Universe,  
the Merciful, the Mercy-Giving!  
Ruler of the Day for Repayment!  
You do we worship and from You do we seek help.  
Guide us along the Straight Road,  
the Road of those whom You have favoured,  
with whom You are not angry  
nor who are lost!<sup>6</sup>

Man is being invited to seek what he needs most for his human existence and growth, as against his mere physical or animal existence, and this is Guidance to the Straight Road — to the way of the Prophets and the righteous. The Qurʾān is God's response to this supplication of the human soul:

This is the Book which contains no doubt,  
[it is] guidance for the heedful  
who believe in the Unseen, keep up prayer,  
and spend from what We have provided them with;  
Who believe in what has been sent down to you  
as well as what was sent down before you,  
while they are certain about the Hereafter:  
such people hold guidance from their Lord,  
such will be successful.<sup>7</sup>

In prayer as well as in the response to prayer, guidance is sought and offered in two forms — the Book of God and the Prophet of God. The Book contains the Divine Word, uncreated, unaltered and intact. The Book reveals those aspects of Divine Reality whose knowledge is required to develop a correct relationship

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6. Qurʾān, 1: 1-7

7. Qurʾān, 2: 2-5.

with God and His creation, even though the Totality of the Divine Reality remains beyond human comprehension. As such the real intent of the Revelation is not the disclosure of God's Person, but of His Will. The glimpses of Divine Reality that one gets from the Book are there to enable one to build one's relationship with God more meaningfully. The focus is on relationship, not the Person of God as such. This relationship is built on two foundations: faith and action.

Faith is the acceptance of Divine Reality — His Oneness, His Supremacy, His Providence, His Beneficence, His Sovereignty — as He has made it known to man, acknowledgement of His Authority and commitment to the Guidance He has revealed.

Action is individual and social, in compliance with His Will, with the purpose of making that Will prevail on oneself and on the world. Fulfilment is sought by living in accordance with the norms and values expounded by Revelation and by striving to change the world in the light of this Guidance; in a word, by engaging in the struggle to establish a new socio-moral order — the Kingdom of God on the earth. Man's success and salvation lie in striving in this direction. This is the path followed by the prophets. Pursuing their mission and following their noble example is the right course for all those who look to them as their leaders. Right conduct is the natural product of faith; they represent two sides of the same coin.

An important consequence of this central focus on Divine Will and Guidance as against His Person or the incarnation of His Purpose in history is that man's primary concern remains with right attitudes and right conduct, which are relevant to all human beings. Islam's major interest is neither in mystery nor just in history, although both do occupy a certain place in the total picture of the Divine Scheme that they reveal. Islam's main interest is in man and his relation to the Creator and also to His creation. From this emerges the unique approach of Islam — an approach not of life-denial but of life-affirmation and life-fulfilment. Islam deals with the problems of this world — with the challenges and

strains and prospects of the human situation. It looks upon the human potential and seeks development and fullest realization. It makes man an active participant in the drama of life, integrates him with God, his Creator and Law-Giver, and invites this God-conscious man to understand the Divine Purpose in the Universe and his own mission in life and to fulfil that by bringing about a moral transformation of man and the establishment of a just society.

Man, in the Islamic scheme, is eager to seek salvation, but this salvation is sought through heeding God and the establishment of correct relations with the whole of God's creation. Salvation in the Hereafter and success in the world are not antithetical; they coincide and converge and support and strengthen each other. There is no division of life into religious and secular, no distinction between sacred and profane, between other-worldly and this-worldly. This world is to the Hereafter what the farm is to farm produce, to paraphrase one of the sayings of the Prophet. As such, the purpose of revelation is to enable man to understand his true relationship with his Lord and to strive to live in the midst of society with honour and equality, trying to make his behaviour conform with the Divine Will, in the fulfilment of His Purpose, seeking to be at peace with Him. The Revelation does communicate to man some of the Divine Attributes and certain facets of His creation. It also deals with some aspects of metaphysics and eschatology, of ethics and morality, of history and civilization, of law and politics, of economics and sociology. But all this is presented with one purpose: to guide man to the Straight Road, the road of the blessed ones, and to warn him of, and protect him from, the road of the rebels and the lost.

The real emphasis in the Islamic scheme is on acceptance of Divine Revelation as the supreme norm for human life, the chief source of guidance. This means subordination of all other sources of knowledge to the Divine Revelation, which provides the basic framework within which all other factors and forces have to operate. This demolishes the concept of the self-sufficiency of man. Secularism, that is, man's independence from God and

Revealed Guidance in collective aspects of life in society, has no place in Islam. Islam establishes God's sovereignty over the entire human realm. It asks man to give all that he has to God, not leaving him with anything to be given to Caesar. One principle prevails in all sectors of life: that of Godliness. The Muslim approach to life is God-centred. Acceptance of and obedience to the Divine Will is essential for success and salvation.

The Islamic concept of revelation is that the Divine Will has always been revealed in terms of clear and definite communications from God through His prophets. The revelations sent to the Prophets Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus (peace be on them) conveyed this message in their own times. The Qur'an is the Word of God revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and constitutes a re-statement, correction, completion and perfection of the earlier message.

God guides man — in fact the whole of creation — in a number of ways. Instinct, intuition, inspiration and prophetic dreams are some of the means. The highest form of guidance has, however, been revealed in a much clearer and more categorical way: through the Word of God revealed to His prophets. It is this Word of God, as contained in His Book, which constitutes the Law — the supreme code of guidance for the whole of life. A prophet, himself a human being, is the first to accept this guidance and to practise it, setting an example for others to emulate. The function of a prophet is to convey the Divine Message, to explain and elaborate it, to implement it, and to initiate those processes in the lives of individuals and society through which the ideals and principles embodied in the Divine Revelation are realized in history.

Islam's effort to shift the focus of attention on to the Divine Will makes the ideological transformation of human society the real arena for man's action. Spirituality and religiosity lie in bringing about this change — in the deepest recesses of human motivation as much as in socio-economic and political institutions and policies of society. This idea also underpins the concept of human equality and the oneness of man. There is no priesthood, nor any

chosen people. All human beings are equal before God and under Divine Law. No-one has any supra-human or religious authority over anyone else. Whatever authority there is lies with God and His prophets. No-one else, not even the religious leaders or their establishment, if any, has any right to claim to represent God and His Will. His Will is available in the Book of God and in the example of His prophets. These are accessible to everyone. The Book and the Prophet alone constitute the criteria for man. This closes the doors of exploitation of man by man in any form, religious or otherwise, and brings all human beings under the supremacy of one Code and one Law. The Qurʾān is the last statement of the Divine Will — the code of guidance for mankind. And the Muslim *umma*, community of faith, represents a people committed to this Book — those who believe in it, stand by it and derive their identity from it.<sup>8</sup>

#### **The Qurʾān: A Unique Book**

The Qurʾān is unique. It embodies the Word of God — unchanged, unabridged and uncompromised. It does not contain any element that is a product of a human mind. Its contents and its arrangement are from God. It is the unmixed Word of God. It was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) piecemeal, in the form of brief and not-so-brief orations, over a period of twenty-three years; these revelations were arranged by the Prophet in their present order under Divine Guidance. The Qurʾān is unique in almost every respect, in its Divine Origin, its style and methodology, its chronological descent, its textual arrangement, and its approach to the problems of man and society. It constitutes a divinely-opened window on Reality.

Every discipline has its own demands. So has the Qurʾān. Anyone who wants to understand the Qurʾān, whether he actually believes in the Book or not, will be able to approach it properly only if he is clear, at the very outset, about the nature of this Book. The key to understanding the Qurʾān lies in appreciating its

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8. Nathan Soderblom has pointed out that in the history of religions Muhammad was the first to introduce the concept of a book religion — a differentiation of great importance for religious typology. Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam, Historia Religionum, op cit.*, p.168.

uniqueness. This Book — although called and treated as a book — is not to be understood as familiar types of books, general or specialized, nor even as religious books. It is not cast in the conventional forms developed by human genius, even when inspired. It is not a book in the sense of a study, a treatise or a dissertation, or a general or specialized discourse on a particular theme. It does not belong to the *genre* of one-dimensional approaches to fragmentary knowledge of the world and its elements. As such it is not a book in the ordinary sense of the word, a book cast in the artificial or conventional moulds devised by civilization.

To approach it in the hope that it will conform to any of the criteria of human scholarship would be frustrating. The Qur'ān is NOT such a book. It does not claim to be a book on 'religion', presenting in a systematic and coherent way, information, ideas and arguments relating to different aspects of the subject. Its different chapters and sections are not divided according to various aspects of its major theme. This is not the way the Qur'ān unfolds its contents. It does deal with the issues and themes of religion and philosophy, eschatology, ethics, sociology and economics, history and culture, law and jurisprudence, politics and international relations, as also with prayer and forgiveness, piety and sin and love and avarice. But it deals with them in a unique way. Unless one becomes familiar with its style, one will not be able to fathom the depths of the Qur'ān. Instead, one may seem to find lack of coherence and system in it. This would be the natural result of approaching the Qur'ān without understanding its style.

The Qur'ān also does not conform to the standard set by other sacred religious books. Although people familiar with the style of other revealed books, particularly the Old and the New Testament, will find that the Qur'ān does strike many a familiar chord in their hearts, the overall style and organization of matter are basically different. The Qur'ān was not written by different scribes, each dealing with a certain broad theme at a certain period in history. The Qur'ān contains the Word of God, pure and simple, with nothing added by the human mind and nothing lost

from the original Revelation. It is unique, being the Divine Word in a human language.

If the Qurʾān is not a book in any of the categories we are familiar with in religious and non-religious literature, then what type of book is it? This we can understand better if we reflect upon the nature of the Qurʾān and its historical function and role.

The Qurʾān is a book of guidance. It addresses itself to the totality of the human situation, internal as well as external. Its subject-matter is man in relation to this guidance — his beliefs, attitudes and motives, his personality and character, his individual and social life, his role in history. It is not a book of history or economics or law — it is a book of guidance to man. Guidance in the widest sense of the word.<sup>9</sup> It proposes to produce a new man and a new society. Its purpose is not simply to inform or to convince but to mould and change and transform. It does not address itself to any one faculty or aspect of man, but to his total personality, his entire being. As such, it tries simultaneously to inform, to persuade, to convince, and to motivate and mobilize men and women to fulfil their mission in life. This is what makes the Qurʾān different from other books. Its focus is on guidance and it adopts a methodology and a style most suited for this purpose.

Although the Qurʾān is primarily a book of guidance, it would be more appropriate to describe it as a guidebook for human life, a book that guides man towards the Right Path in the context of the all-embracing struggle between good and evil. The Qurʾān is not simply an academic treatise. It urges one on to action. It does not visualize man as a passive spectator of the drama of life but as an active participant with a clear moral commitment and the ambition to mould it in the right direction. The function of a prophet is not merely to convey the Divine Message, but also to produce moral and social change. The Muslim as an individual and the Islamic *umma* as a community are agents of change. Islam

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9. The Qurʾān describes itself as 'Guidance for the heedful' (2:2): a guide to what is more straightforward', 117-91, 'Instruction and Healing' and Guidance 110:57), as 'Guidance to mankind' and a 'Standard' (2:185), as 'light and a clear Book' (15:15).

represents a commitment to God on the one hand, and membership in a community on the other. The Qur'an visualizes the community of believers as composed of individuals undergoing reform and change and the guidance it provides is directed towards those engaged in this struggle. This provides the key to understanding the Qur'an. If it is approached as a guidebook, its system, its style, its methodology, its idiom, are all directed to serve that purpose.

This becomes all the more clear when we recapitulate the historical fact that the Qur'an was not revealed all at one time. It was revealed to the Prophet piecemeal, over a period of twenty-three years. These Revelations came in the form of brief orations, addressed to the Prophet and through him to the whole of mankind. The immediate context is important, as it shows how the Qur'an guided the steps of the first Islamic community established with the prophethood of Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and led by him. The Qur'an was revealed as a guide to these first followers of the Prophet and, through them, to the whole of mankind, and it remains so. The fact that it was not compiled in its chronological order shows that the Guidance it gave was not limited to that historical context. Its Guidance is universal and for all times to come. The particular context in which it was revealed is only illustrative of the universal condition that it seeks to help. The structural arrangement in which it is available moulds the particular with the universal. Nonetheless, the uniqueness of the Qur'an lies in being a guidebook; its meaning and message can be understood only if it is approached as such.<sup>10</sup>

### The Qur'anic Paradigm

Having seen the essential nature of the book, it would be useful to have a clear idea of the Qur'anic paradigm for the Universe, man and his destiny in it. The guidance that the Qur'an provides is given in the context of this basic framework. The Qur'anic ap-

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<sup>10</sup> For a candid and incisive discussion on this point, see Abul Ala Mawḥūdī *Tathīr al Qur'an*, Lahore: Maktaba Ta'mīr e Isnāniyat, 1967, pp. 13-37. For its English translation, see: Muwḥūdī, *The Meaning of the Qur'an*, vol. 1, pp. 5-25, or Altaf Gauhar *Translations from the Qur'an*, Lahore: Idāra Tarjūmānūl Qur'an, 1975, pp. 48-63.



proach is based on certain fundamental premises. These premises have been firmly established by the Qur'ān, and the guidance it provides, whether in the form of moral norms, social commands and legal precepts or of eschatological descriptions or historical anecdotes, is rooted in these premises. If this paradigm is kept in view, the relevance of each verse in the Qur'ān to its purpose and to its place in the overall framework will become evident. The main premises are as follows:

1. This world, the entire Universe and man's existence in it, in fact the whole of Creation, are not mere accidents of history or products of a fortuitous nature. The Universe has been created with a purpose. It is a law-governed Universe and is the creation of a Kind, Merciful, all-Powerful Creator and Master, God. Life is purposive. There is a moral order in the Universe and a moral law running beneath the entire drama of physical existence.

2. God is not just a Creator who, for all practical purposes, retired after creating the Universe and man. He is also the Sustainer, the Provider, the Ruler and the Master of all that exists. His authority is supreme and unrelenting. He is One and Unique. He Alone is the Creator, the Lord, the Law-Giver, the Sovereign. Everything else is His Creation and is governed by His Law, the violation of His Will and His Law being responsible for whatever disorder or disarray is found in the world. All that conforms to His Will is in harmony with Reality and in a state of peace and tranquility.

3. The Creator of the Universe established man on this earth as His representative, His deputy (*khalīfa*). He endowed man with the capacity to know and to judge. Man has been given the powers of thinking and understanding and the ability to distinguish between good and evil. He has been granted the faculty to discern and discriminate and the freedom to choose for himself. He enjoys a kind of autonomy — a free will to use his latent power in the exercise of his judgement. While investing man with this faculty and conferring on him the responsibility of acting as His representative, God made clear to him that He Alone was the Master and the Sovereign and that He Alone merited man's

worship, adoration and obedience. The proper course for man is neither to regard himself as independent of his Creator, nor to deem anyone other than God, celestial or human, to merit absolute and unreserved obedience and worship. Man's abode on earth is for a fixed term and is meant to be a period of trial. Whatever capabilities and powers have been given to him are with the purpose of judging his performance as their trustee. After this test is over, he will return to God to be finally evaluated in the light of his conduct and performance. Man has been shown the Right Path and given the freedom and opportunity to follow that path which will lead him to success in the world and salvation in the Hereafter. This means accepting God as the only object of worship, adoration and obedience, living with the consciousness that worldly life is a period of test and trial, and following the Will of the Sovereign with a view to being successful in the final Judgement of God. Every other course is inappropriate and erroneous. The option is his, but if he chooses the right course, he will enjoy peace and contentment in this world and will have eternal bliss in the life to come. If, on the contrary, he chooses to follow ways other than the right one, this will cause him suffering and distress and disorder in his worldly life and affliction in Hell. Man is clearly given to understand that he is subservient to none but God, his Creator and Master, and to Him Alone must he submit in total obedience and worship. This is the path of Islam (literally, submission and peace). Everything else that exists follows the laws that God has laid down for it. The whole of Creation, apart from man, follows His law involuntarily. Not man. He alone is free to obey or not to obey the laws revealed for his guidance. If he voluntarily accepts the Divine Law and follows it, he chooses to move in harmony with the rest of Creation and becomes a Muslim. This he is expected to do as God's representative on earth. This will enable him to be at peace with his own nature, with the rest of the world around him, and with his Creator. While everything else is Muslim by disposition, man can become Muslim by discretion.<sup>11</sup>

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11 From paragraph 3 to the end of this section is an adaptation from and an elaboration on the basic premises of the Qur'an as discussed by Mawdudi in his *Muqaddima* (Preliminary) to the *Tafhim al Qur'an*, *op. cit.* Acknowledgement is also made to Altaf Gauhar for utilizing parts of his translation of the above.

4. This is the position of man and the choice open to him, but he was not left in darkness to discover the right path through trial and error alone. He was endowed with the faculty of reason and intellect to distinguish between right and wrong and to organize his faculties and resources for the achievement of his objectives. He was also provided with Divine Guidance to have some knowledge of Reality and the Criterion for truth. Adam, the first man, began his career in the light of Knowledge. The first thing he received from his Lord was Knowledge — the names of all (things).<sup>12</sup> He was also the first prophet: the recipient of Divine Guidance. Through his revelation, the basic code of guidance was made known to mankind. They were invited to the path of obedience and peace, that is Islam. This message was conveyed to successive generations of man through different prophets: all inviting mankind to the same path. Man's response to the call of the prophets was not uniform. Some accepted their invitation and became the carriers of Light and Truth. Others refused to follow the lead given by the prophets and evolved their own ways of life. Some others remained indifferent to this struggle between godliness and godlessness. The message and the influence of the prophets were betrayed in more than one way. Through heedlessness and negligence people allowed the true guidance to be lost and forgotten. Through naivety, deliberate unscrupulousness of vested interests, some people changed and distorted the message of the prophets and consequently the word of God and the word of man were mixed up. The God-given knowledge of Truth (*al-'ilm*) in Qur'ānic terminology was polluted with all sorts of fancies, superstitions and philosophical formulations. The religion of God was lost in a plethora of religions. The right path, the divinely revealed principles of morals and of collective life (*Shari'a* in Qur'ānic terminology) was abandoned. Human history is a chronicle of man's drift between light and darkness, but true knowledge has been preserved in the form of the Qur'ān, unchanged and unchangeable.

5. God does not force man to follow the right path. It would be inconsistent with the autonomy conferred by God upon man and

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12. Qur'ān, 2: 31.

also with the fact that God has granted him a fixed term to offer his own response to the guidance given to him. God could punish and, indeed, eliminate the whole of mankind for its transgressions, but that would go against the concept of man's continuing struggle for good. A tenure on earth having been fixed it was essential that man should receive guidance and for this purpose God chose individuals gifted with the capacity to submit to His Will, and appointed them as His messengers. He blessed them with the knowledge of Truth and of the right code of life and they were ordained to invite all men to the right path from which they had strayed.

6. The messengers appeared in different lands and among different nations and the process continued for thousands of years. They all advocated one religion based on the Oneness of God and accountability on the Day of Judgement and subscribed to one way of life — the right way, which was shown to man on the first day. They all received guidance from the same source and followed the same moral principles originally established for man. And they had the same mission, namely, to summon people to the right path and to lead them to the right source of guidance. Their purpose was to organize those who responded to their call into a community which should follow Divine Guidance, actively upholding and propagating the Divine Order and frustrating all attempts at its violation or suppression. The messengers carried out their mission faithfully but there were always people who refused to respond to them and even those who did come into their fold succumbed to alien influences. While many lost sight of Divine Guidance, there were others who tampered with the Divine Commandments and misled the people by their ill-conceived interpolations and interpretations.

7. This process culminated with the designation of Muḥammad (peace be upon him) of Arabia for this mission. His audience was the common man, including those followers of earlier prophets who had gone astray. His task was to invite them to the right path and to build them into a community which should not only organize its own way of life in accordance with Divine Order but

also establish that Order for the whole world. The Qur'an spells out the Message which was revealed to Muhammad and which represents the permanent and ultimate source of guidance for mankind.

With this background, it should be possible to understand the central theme of the Qur'an. Man is its subject. A number of theories about God, the system of the universe, human existence have been formulated by man, based on a superficial understanding of objective Reality and depending on sensory experiences and speculation. As a result, certain attitudes and modes of living have been adopted with disastrous results. Reality is what was conveyed to man when he was designated as God's representative. This is the theme which runs through the Qur'an. The purpose of the Qur'an is to invite man to the right course of conduct and to reawaken in him his erstwhile knowledge of Divine Guidance.

If we keep three things in mind — the main subject, the central theme, and the purpose of the Qur'an — we will find that the entire Book possesses unique coherence and unity and, from the beginning to the end, discussion on different topics proceeds in a perfect manner. The Qur'an talks of the origin of man, the structure of the earth and the heavens, manifestations of the universe and civilizations. It recalls the beliefs and criticizes the conduct of different nations, analyses metaphysical problems and refers to many other things. The object, however, is not to give lessons in metaphysics, philosophy, history or any other science but to remove misunderstandings about Reality, to convey true Knowledge to man, to acquaint him with the results of actions which conflict with the Principles underlying Reality and to invite him to a course of action which conforms to Truth and leads man to contentment and bliss. A topic is taken up and discussed to the extent that it is relevant to the central theme. Once the object is served, all other details are ignored. The discourse is related always to the course of the Prophet's mission.

## On Understanding the Qur'ān

People turn to the Qur'ān with different objects in view. For those who wish to know in what manner the Book provides guidance to man in dealing with the problems of life, the following suggestions may be of help:<sup>13</sup>

Any preconceived notions and prejudices will cause the spirit of the Qur'ān to elude the reader. A single reading may be enough for a superficial acquaintance but to grasp its real sense it will have to be gone through again and again. It is only then that the complete scheme of thought which the Book offers may begin to unfold itself.

At first one should concentrate on the fundamental concepts of the Book and try to see how a whole system of life is built on those concepts. The present anthology will help the reader to have a clear idea of the Qur'ānic scheme of life and the set of priorities it states for man.

If one proceeds through the Qur'ān with this mental attitude, many questions will arise in one's mind. Make a note of them. It is possible that you may find an adequate answer on the second or third reading. The effort should be to identify and distinguish those acts or facets of human conduct which contribute to man's happiness and those which lead to his frustration and ruin. This exercise can be extended to beliefs, moral precepts, rights, duties, laws, politics, culture, war and peace.

The injunctions of the Qur'ān in relation to different fields of human activity will help you to fit them into a complete pattern of life. Those who wish to carry out detailed research on any specific subject should first make a study of relevant available literature and then try to understand the Qur'ānic view on that subject. They will often get a new light from a Qur'ānic verse which they may have read several times without really understanding its full meaning.

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13. This section is also adapted from Mawdūdī *op. cit.*

All these suggestions are intended to help you to study the Qur'ān properly. But reading is not enough if you wish to identify yourself with the spirit of the Qur'ān. For the Qur'ān is not a book of abstract theories. It does not set out to resolve metaphysical controversies or academic complexities. It is a book which contains an invitation and represents a force. The moment it began to be revealed, a man who was leading a quiet and pious existence was impelled to abandon the comfort of his private life and confront the whole world. He challenged all those who opposed the Truth and found himself locked in a bitter struggle with the lords of ignorance, disbelief and evil. He began to draw believers from every home and gathered them under the banner of Truth. The whole of Arabia erupted with anger but the believers carried on their mission relentlessly. The voice of a single individual started a movement and for twenty-three years the Book provided guidance to this glorious movement from the beginning till the establishment of a just order based on the principles given by this Book.

At every stage during this struggle between good and evil the Qur'ān provided the Prophet with inspiration, knowledge and strength. Is it possible to understand the mysteries of the Qur'ān without ever stepping into the battlefield of good and evil? One can understand the Book only when one begins to act upon it and when every step that one takes is guided by the injunctions that are contained in the Qur'ān. Then one learns how to deal with men of all kinds and begins to realize how to conduct oneself.

You will obtain a new kind of guidance — the Qur'ānic guidance. Every chapter and verse will reveal its full message to you and you will understand at what juncture during the original events they were revealed and what purposes they served. You may miss some grammatical or linguistic subtlety but it is not possible that you will not be exposed to the Qur'ān in its full light and glory. If there is any recipe for capturing the spirit of the Qur'ān within you, it is this.

Part 1

# Presenting the Qur'ān



## Chapter 1

### *THE OPENING*

*In the name of God, the Merciful, the Mercy-Giving*

Praise be to God, Lord of the Universe,  
the Merciful, the Mercy-Giving!  
Ruler of the Day for Repayment!<sup>1</sup>  
You do we worship and from You do we seek help.  
Guide us along the Straight Road,  
the Road of those whom You have favoured,  
with whom You are not angry,  
nor who are lost.

[Amen]

**The Opening 1:** 1–7  
(complete)

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<sup>1</sup> OR Doomsday *Dīn* in Arabic text see Glossary

## MUHAMMAD'S FIRST CALL

Read in the name of your Lord who creates,  
creates man from a clot!  
Read, for your Lord is most Generous,  
Who teaches by means of the pen,  
teaches man what he does not know.  
However man is so arrogant,  
for he sees himself as self-sufficient,  
Yet to your Lord will be the Return.

The Clot 96: 1-8

## THE SECOND CALL

You who are wrapped in a cloak,  
Stand up and warn!  
Magnify your Lord,<sup>2</sup>  
purify your clothing  
and steer clear of filth.  
Do not shower favours  
in the hope of getting more.  
Be patient towards your Lord.

[The Man] Wearing a Cloak 74 1-7

## THE UNIVERSAL CALL

Virtue does not mean that you turn your faces towards the East or West, but virtue means to believe in God [Alone], the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the prophets; and to give one's wealth away, no matter how one loves it,<sup>3</sup> to near relatives, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer and beggars, and towards freeing captives; and to keep up prayer and pay the welfare due;<sup>4</sup> and those who keep their word whenever they promise anything, and are patient under suffering and hardship and in time of violence. Those are the loyal, and those are the heedful.

The Cow 2: 177

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2 A believer responds to this by saying *Allāh Akbar* [God is Greatest.]

3 DR out of love for Him.

4 *Zakāt* in the Arabic text. see Glossary.

## THE FINAL CALL

Today I have perfected your religion<sup>5</sup> for you, and completed My favour towards you, and have consented to grant you Islam as the [only] religion.

The Table 5: 3\*

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5. *Dīn* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.

## Chapter 2

# THE BOOK

### INVOCATION TO THE BOOK

This is the Book which contains no doubt,  
[it is] a guidance for the heedful<sup>1</sup>  
who believe in the Unseen, keep up prayer,  
and spend from what We have provided them with;  
who believe in what has been sent down to you  
as well as what was sent down before you,  
while they are certain about the Hereafter;  
such people hold guidance from their Lord;  
such will be successful.

The Cow 2: 2-5\*

### DIVINE ORIGINS

The revelation of the Book which contains no doubt has been [made] by the Lord of the Universe.

Or do they say: "He has concocted it!"? Rather, it is the Truth from your Lord so that you may warn a folk to whom no warner has come before you, so that they may be guided.

Worship 32: 2-3

If you are in any doubt about what We have sent down to Our Servant, then **bring a chapter like it** and call in your witnesses, besides God, if you are truthful. If you do not — and you will never do so — then be on your guard against the fire which has been prepared for disbelievers and whose fuel is men and stones.

The Cow 2: 23-24

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1. *Muttaqī* in the Arabic text, see *taqwa* in Glossary.

Most of them only follow conjecture. But conjecture is no substitute for Truth. God is Aware of what they are doing.

This Qur'<sup>ān</sup><sup>2</sup> was not invented by anyone but God; but it is a confirmation from the Lord of the Universe of what was revealed earlier and serves as an expansion of the Book<sup>3</sup> which contains no doubt. Or do they say: "He has invented it"? SAY: "Produce a chapter like it, and appeal to anyone you can besides God if you are telling the truth."

Instead they deny what they cannot grasp, [especially] when its interpretation has not yet come to them. Likewise, those before them denied; so watch what is the outcome for wrongdoers!

Jonah 10: 36-39

## NATURE AND MISSION

This Qur'<sup>ān</sup> guides one to what is more straightforward and reassures believers who act honourably that they shall have great earnings. Yet We have reserved painful torment for those who do not believe in the Hereafter.

The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 9-10

O mankind, instruction has been given you by your Lord, and healing for whatever is in your breasts, plus guidance and mercy for believers.

Jonah 10: 57

We have sent you down the Book with the Truth, to confirm what was already there from the [previous] Book and to safeguard it.

The Table 5: 48

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2. Literally, this Reading.

3. That is, all previous Scriptures.

People of the Book,<sup>4</sup> Our messenger has come to you to explain much of what you have been concealing from the Book; yet he forgives many [of your offences]. Light and a clear Book have been brought to you from God. He thereby guides along the paths of peace those who follow His good pleasure. By His leave He brings them to light from darkness and guides them along a Straight Road.

**The Table 5:** 15-16

The month of Ramaḍān is when the Qurʾān was sent down as guidance for mankind, with explanations for guidance and as a Standard.

**The Cow 2:** 185

## TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD

SAY: "Truth has come and falsehood has perished;  
falsehood is so ephemeral  
We send down something from the Qurʾān  
as a healing and a mercy for believers,  
while wrongdoers are only increased in loss."

**The Night Journey 17:** 81-82

## THE QURʾĀN ON A MOUNTAIN

If We had sent down this Qurʾān<sup>5</sup> on to a mountain, you would have seen it humbly splitting apart out of awe for God. These are the parables We make up for mankind so that they may ponder.

**Banishment 59:** 21\*

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4. This refers to the Jews and the Christians, people to whom Books had been given earlier.

5. Literally, the Reading.

## JINN AND THE QUR'ĀN

Once We turned towards you a group of jinn so that they might hear the Qur'ān. When they were present at it, they said: "Listen!"

When it was finished, they went back to their folk as warners. They said: "Our people, we have just heard a Book sent down after Moses to confirm what came before it. It guides one to Truth and to a Straight Way. Our people, answer God's herald and believe in Him! He will forgive you some of your offences<sup>6</sup> and protect you from painful torment."

Anyone who does not answer God's herald will not escape on earth, nor will he have any patrons besides Him. Such people are in obvious error.

The Dunes 46: 29-32\*

## HEARING THE QUR'ĀN

BOW  
DOWN  
HERE<sup>7</sup>

Whenever the Qur'ān is being recited, listen to it quietly, so that you may receive mercy. Remember your Lord within your own soul, beseeching and fearfully, without raising your voice, both in the early morning and in the evening. Do not be heedless. Those who are with your Lord are not too proud to worship Him; they glorify Him and kneel down [with their foreheads on the ground] before Him.

The Heights 7: 204-206

Whenever you read the Qur'ān, We place a hidden curtain between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter. We place veils over their hearts lest they comprehend it, and dullness in their ears. When you mention your Lord Alone in the Qur'ān, they turn away in disgust.

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6. OR sins.

7. These are passages where the reader of the Arabic text and the listeners kneel down with their foreheads on the ground.

We are quite Aware of what they are listening for when they listen to you, and when they conspire together, wrongdoers say: "You are only following a man who is bewitched." See what sort of stories they make up about you! They have strayed away and are unable to find a way back.

The Night Journey 17: 45–48

We sent it down on the Night of **Power**<sup>8</sup>  
What will make you realize  
what the Night of **Power** is?  
The Night of **Power** is better  
than a thousand months. Angels and the Spirit<sup>9</sup>  
descend in it on every errand  
with their Lord's permission;  
[it means] peace till the approach of daybreak.

Power 97: 1–5 (complete)

## HOW TO RECITE THE QUR'ĀN

Whenever you read the Qur'ān, seek refuge with God from Satan the outcast; he has no authority over those who believe and rely on their Lord. His authority is only over those who take him as a patron, and who associate others with Him [God].

Bees 16: 98–100

Yet I swear by the stars' positions (it is a serious oath, if you only knew it!) that it is a **Noble Qur'ān** [kept as] a treasured book which none but the purified may touch, something sent down by the Lord of the Universe.

The Inevitable 56: 75–80

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8. OR *faṭṭa*.

9. The archangel Gabriel.



We have sent it down with the Truth, and it has come down with the Truth. We have sent you only as a herald and a warner; and for a Reading<sup>10</sup> which We have divided up so that you can read it to people in sittings. We have sent it down piecemeal.

BOW  
DOWN  
HERE

SAY: "Believe in it, or do not believe in it"; those who have previously been given knowledge fall down with their faces [on the ground] whenever it is recited to them, and they say: "Glory to our Lord! Our Lord's promise has come true!" They fall down with their faces [on the ground], weeping, and it increases them in reverence.

**The Night Journey** 17: 105-109

Do not hurry while reading [the Qur'ān] before its revelation has been accomplished for you; [rather] SAY: "My Lord, increase me in knowledge."

**Tā-Hā** 20: 114

Do not move your tongue over it in order to hurry it; it is for Us to collect it, as well as to read it. Whenever We read it, follow its reading: it is then for Us to explain it.

**Resurrection** 75: 16-19

## REFLECT ON THE QUR'ĀN

We have sent down a Book to you that is blessed so that they may ponder over its verses and the prudent ones may thereby be reminded.

**(The Letter) Sād** 38 29\*

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10 OR Qur'ān — note this indication that the Qur'ān may be read piecemeal as well as straight through

Do they not reflect on the Qur'an? Had it come from [any source] other than God, they would have found much contradiction in it.

Women 4: 82

#### FOLLOW THE BOOK

This is a blessed Book We have sent down, so follow it and do your duty so that you may receive mercy.

Livestock 6 155

## Part II

# Divine Principles

## Chapter 3

### *THE IDEA OF GOD*

Surely hearts feel tranquil  
whenever God is mentioned!

Thunder 13: 28

#### GOD THE UNIQUE

SAY: "God is Unique!  
God, the Source [of everything].<sup>1</sup>  
He has not fathered anyone  
nor was He fathered, and there  
is nothing comparable to Him!"

Sincerity 112: 1-4  
(complete)

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1. OR the ever Besought, the Self Existing.

O My servants who believe,  
My earth is vast,  
so Me should you worship.  
Every soul will taste death;  
then to Us will you return.

The Spider 29: 56-57

How many animals do not carry their own provision! God provides for them and for you. He is the Alert,<sup>2</sup> Aware.

The Spider 29: 60

Your Lord creates and chooses anything He wishes;  
while they have no choice.  
Praise be to God! Exalted is He  
over what they associate with Him!  
Your Lord knows anything their breasts conceal  
and anything they may disclose.

He is God; there is no deity except Him.  
Praise belongs to Him,  
in this world<sup>3</sup> as well as in the Hereafter.  
Discretion is His, and to Him will you return.

Tales 28: 68-70

God! There is no deity except Him,  
the Living, the Eternal!  
Slumber does not overtake Him, nor does sleep.  
What the Heavens hold and what Earth holds  
[belongs] to Him. Who is there  
to intercede with Him except with His permission?

---

2. Hearing everything, *as-Sami'* in the Arabic text. see Glossary

3. Literally, from the very first.

He knows what lies before them and what's behind them,  
while they comprehend nothing of His knowledge  
except what He may wish.  
His Seat<sup>4</sup> extends over Heaven and Earth;  
preserving them both does not overburden Him.  
He is the Sublime, the Almighty!

The Cow 2: 255

## GOD THE CREATOR

God is the One Who splits the seed and kernel.  
He brings the living from the dead, and is the One  
Who brings the dead from the living.  
Such is God: yet still you turn away!

Kindler of morn, He grants night for repose,  
and the sun and moon for reckoning time.  
Such is the measure of the Powerful, the Aware.

He is the One Who has placed the stars  
to guide you through darkness on land and on sea.  
We have spelled out signs for those who know.

It is He who has produced you from a single soul,  
and granted you a home [on Earth]  
and a resting place [after death].  
We have spelled out signs for those who understand.

It is He who sends down water from the sky. Thus We bring forth  
plants of every type with it; We produce green [vegetation] from  
it. We produce grain from it tight-packed on one another, and  
from the date-palm, clusters close at hand produced from its  
pollen, orchards full of grapes, olives and pomegranates, which  
are so similar and yet dissimilar. Look at its fruit as He causes it to  
grow and ripen. In that are signs for those who believe.

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4. That is, God's authority

They have set up jinn as associates with God although He created them. They have [even] dared to impute sons and daughters to Him without having any knowledge. Glory be to Him! Exalted is He over what they describe!

Deviser of Heaven and Earth! How can He have a son while He has no consort? He created everything and is Aware of everything.

Such is God, your Lord;  
there is no deity except Him,  
The Creator of everything,  
so serve Him. He is  
a Trustee for everything.<sup>5</sup>

[Our] powers of vision do not comprehend Him, while He comprehends [all] vision; He is the Gracious, the Informed. Insights have come to you from your Lord; he who observes [them], it is to his own gain, while he who acts blindly, it is to his own loss. I am not [set up as] a guardian over you.

Livestock 6: 95–104

Who created Heaven and Earth and has sent down water from the sky for you? We have caused lovely gardens to grow by means of it. You have no other way to make these trees grow.

Is there any deity besides God?  
Rather they are people  
who run away [from the Truth].<sup>6</sup>

Who set the earth up as a residence,  
laced it with rivers and placed mountains on it,  
and laid a barrier between the two streams?<sup>7</sup>

---

5 OR He is the Guardian over everything.

6 OR who set up equals (to God)

7 This refers to situations where two streams of sweet and salt water run side by side without any distinctly visible barrier between them, yet the two remain separate and distinct.

Is there any deity besides God?  
Yet most of them do not know.

Who answers the distressed man  
when he appeals to Him, and removes evil  
and makes you overlords<sup>8</sup> on Earth?

Is there any deity besides God?  
How seldom do you reflect [on this]!

Who guides you through darkness  
on land and on sea, and Who sends out  
[rain-bearing] winds as heralds  
His mercy?

Is there any deity besides God?  
Exalted is God over anything  
they may associate [with Him]!

Who first creates and then recreates  
again and again?  
Who provides for you from Heaven and Earth?

Is there any deity besides God?  
SAY: "Bring forth your proof if you are so truthful!"  
SAY: "No one in Heaven or Earth  
knows the Unseen except God."

The Ants 27: 60-65\*

## GOD THE PRIME MOVER

He owns everyone in Heaven and Earth. Those who are with Him are not too proud to serve Him, nor are they ever wearied; they glorify [Him] night and day, and never cease. Or have they taken gods from Earth who will raise the dead?

---

8 *Khalifa* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.



If there were other gods  
in either [Heaven or Earth],  
besides God [Alone],  
they would both dissolve in chaos.

Glory be to God, Lord of the Throne,  
beyond what they describe!  
He will not be questioned  
about what He does,  
while they will be so questioned.<sup>9</sup>

Yet do they adopt other gods instead of Him? SAY: "Bring forth your proof!" This is a Reminder for anyone who is with me, as this is a Reminder for anyone [who came] before me.<sup>10</sup> Instead most of them do not recognize the Truth, so they avoid it.

We did not send any messenger before you unless We revealed to him the fact that there is no deity except Me, so serve Me!

They say: "The Merciful has adopted a son. Glory be to Him!" Rather they are honoured servants; they do not try to speak ahead of Him, and they act at His command. He knows what lies in front of them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for him who has been approved. They are apprehensive being in awe of Him. Should any of them say: "I am a god besides Him"<sup>11</sup> that person we will reward with Hell. Thus We reward wrongdoers!

Prophets 21: 19-29\*

## GOD THE ONE

He is the One Who has furnished you with hearing, sight and intellect;<sup>12</sup> yet seldom are you grateful.

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9 Note this reference to the important philosophical concept of the Prime or First Mover, and of ultimate responsibility in the Universe

10 "Reminder" here means statement of basic realities revealed to the Prophet (that is, the Qur'ān) as they were stated to earlier prophets

11 This is the sin of arrogation for which SEE Chapter 16, section (c), pp. 184-86

12 We are using the word "intellect" in its original philosophical sense where it refers to the powers of understanding and reflection, not merely at the physical level but at metaphysical and spiritual levels. The Qur'ānic term is *al-'aql*, which refers to this vital faculty of man. See also Glossary, s.v. *al-'aql*.

He is the One Who has distributed you over the Earth, and to Him shall you be summoned.

He is the One Who gives life and brings death; He controls the alternation between night and day. Will you not reason?

Instead they say the same as their predecessors said; they say: "When we have died and become dust and bones, will we be raised up again? This was promised us and our forefathers long ago. These are only legends [made up] by primitive people."

SAY: "Who owns the Earth and everyone on it, if you know [anything]?" They will say: "It is God's". SAY: "Will you not bear it in mind?"

SAY: "Who is Lord of the Seven Heavens and Lord of the splendid Throne?" They will say: "They are God's". SAY: "Will you not then do your duty?"

SAY: "In Whose hand lies control over everything? He protects while against Him there is no protection, if you only realize it". They will say: "In God's [hands]". SAY: "How is it you are so bewildered?" Rather We have brought them the Truth, but they still deny it.

God has not adopted any son, nor is there any deity besides Him, otherwise each god would carry off whatever it has created, and some of them would overcome others.

Glory be to God, beyond what they describe | Knower of the Unseen and the Visible; Exalted is He over anything they associate [with Him] |

## GOD THE SOVEREIGN

SAY "O God, Holder of Sovereignty!<sup>13</sup>  
You grant control to anyone You will  
and deny control from anyone You will.  
You honour anyone You will  
and humble anyone You will.  
Good lies within Your hand;  
You are Capable of everything.

You merge night into daylight,  
and daylight into night.  
You draw the living from the dead,  
and draw the dead from the living.  
You provide for anyone You will  
without any reckoning."

The House of 'Imrān 3: 26-27\*

Have you not seen how your Lord  
lengthens the shadow? if He so willed,  
He would make it stand still.

Then We placed the sun  
as a signal for it.

Next We gradually pulled it towards Us.  
He is the One Who made night  
as a garment for you, and sleep for repose.  
He made daytime for rising again.

He is the One Who has sent the winds  
as heralds announcing His mercy.  
We send pure water down from the sky,  
that We may bring life to a dead land,  
and let everything We have created drink from it  
such as livestock and men aplenty.

---

13. OR control or dominion

We spelt it out for them [again and again],  
that they may bear it in mind; yet most men  
refuse [to do] anything  
except disbelieve [in it].

**The Standard 25: 45-50\***

Have they adopted other patrons instead of God? He is the [Only] Patron; He revives the dead. He is Capable of everything. No matter how you have differed in any way, the judgement is still with God.<sup>14</sup>

Such is God, my Lord;  
on Him have I relied  
and to Him do I turn.  
Originator of Heaven and Earth,  
He has granted you spouses  
from among yourselves  
as well as pairs of livestock  
by means of which He multiplies you.

There is nothing like Him!  
He is the Alert, the Observant.  
He holds the key to Heaven and Earth;  
He extends sustenance and measures it out  
to whom He wills.  
He is Aware of everything.

He has instituted the [same] religion for you [Muslims] as He recommended for Noah, and which We have inspired in you and recommended for Abraham, Moses and Jesus; "Keep up religion and do not stir up divisions in it."

**Consultation 42: 9-13**

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14. This establishes the principle of God's sovereignty universal as well as juridical. SEE also 4: 59, 33: 36

## GOD THE OMNIPRESENT

The East and West are God's  
Wherever you may turn,  
there is the face of God;  
God is Boundless, Aware.

**The Cow 2: 115**

## GOD THE MERCIFUL

Seek forgiveness from your Lord,  
then turn towards Him;  
My Lord is Merciful, Affectionate.

**Hūd [The Messenger] 11: 90**

God is Gracious towards His servants. He sustains  
whom He wishes;  
He is the Strong, the Powerful.

**Consultation 42: 19**

Your Lord is Forgiving, the Possessor of Mercy. If He were to take them to task for what they have earned, He would hasten torment for them; instead they have their appointment from which they will never find refuge.

**The Cave 18: 58**

He is the One Who accepts repentance from His servants and overlooks [their] evil deeds. He knows anything that you do.

**Consultation 42: 25**

He who does evil or harms his own soul, then seeks forgiveness from God, will find that God is Forgiving, Merciful. He who acquires a vice, acquires it only for himself. God is Aware, Wise.

**Women 4: 110–111**

“Prescribe what is good for us in this world and in the Hereafter;  
we have turned to You for guidance.”<sup>15</sup>

He said: “I afflict anyone I wish with My torment while My mercy  
embraces everything. I shall prescribe it for those who heed and  
pay the welfare due, and who believe in Our signs . . .”

The Heights 7: 156\*

SAY “My servants who have done violence to themselves, do not  
despair of God’s mercy. God forgives all offences; He is the  
Forgiving, the Merciful. Turn in repentance towards your Lord and  
commit yourselves obediently to Him before torment comes to  
you; then you will not be supported.”

Throns 39: 53–54\*

Whenever those who believe in Our signs come to you, SAY:  
“Peace be upon you!” Your Lord has prescribed mercy for  
Himself; He will be Forgiving, Merciful to any of you who commits  
evil out of ignorance, then repents later on and reforms.

Livestock 6: 54

## GOD THE LIGHT

God is the **Light** of Heaven and Earth.  
His **Light** may be compared to a niche  
in which there is a lamp; the lamp  
is in a glass; the glass  
is just as if it were a glittering star  
kindled from a blessed olive tree,  
[which is] neither Eastern nor Western,  
whose oil will almost glow though fire  
has never touched it. **Light** upon **light**,  
God guides whom He will to His **Light**.  
God sets up parables for mankind;  
God is Aware of everything.

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15. OR “We have been guided towards You . . .”

There are houses God has permitted to be built,  
Where His name is mentioned; in them  
He is glorified morning and evening  
by men whom neither business nor trading  
distract from remembering God,  
keeping up prayer, and paying the welfare due.  
They fear a day when their hearts and eyes  
will feel overcome, unless God rewards them  
for the finest things they may have done,  
and gives them even more out of His bounty.  
God provides for whom He wills  
without any reckoning.

Those who disbelieve [will find] their deeds  
are like a mirage on a desert:  
the thirsty man will reckon it is water  
till, as he comes to it,  
he finds it is nothing.  
Yet he finds God stands beside him  
and He pays him his due;  
God is Prompt in reckoning.

Or like darkness on the unfathomed sea;  
one wave covers up another wave,  
over which [hang] clouds:  
layers of darkness, one above the other.  
When he stretches out his hand,  
he can scarcely see it. Anyone  
to whom God has not granted **Light**  
will have no **Light**.

Have you not seen how everyone in Heaven and Earth glorifies  
God, even to the birds lined up in flight? Each knows its prayer  
and how to glorify [Him]. God is Aware of whatever they do. God  
holds control over Heaven and Earth; to God is the [final] Return.

Have you not seen how God drives along the clouds, then masses  
them together, next piles them up? You see a downpour coming  
from them. He sends down mountainous masses from the sky

with hail in them, and assails anyone He wishes with it, and wards it off from anyone He wishes. A flash from His lightning almost takes one's sight away. God alternates night and day; in that lies a lesson for those possessing insight.

God has created every animal out of water; some of them move on their belly, while others walk on two legs, and still others walk on four. God creates anything He will; God is Able [to do] everything.

**The Light 24: 35-45**

SAY: "Have you considered, if God should lay perpetual night over you until Resurrection Day, what deity besides God would bring you any radiance? Will you not listen?"

SAY: "Have you considered, if God should lay perpetual daylight over you until Resurrection Day, what deity other than God would bring you night wherein you might find rest? Will you not observe [these things]? Out of His mercy He has granted you night and day that you may rest in the one and seek some of His bounty [in the other], and so that you may be grateful."

**The Story 28: 71-73**

## GOD'S SIGNS

Among His signs is [the fact] that He created you from dust; then you were dispersed as human beings.

Among His signs is [the fact] that He has created spouses for you from among yourselves so that you may console yourselves with them. He has placed love and mercy between you; in that are signs for people who reflect.

Among His signs are the creation of Heaven and Earth as well as the diversity in your tongues and colours. In that are signs for those who know.



Among His signs are your sleeping at night and by day, and your pursuit of His bounty. In that are signs for folk who hear.

Among His signs is that He shows you lightning for both fear and anticipation. He sends water down from the sky that He may revive the earth with it after its death. In that are signs for folk who use their reason.

Among His signs are [the fact] that the sky and earth hold firm at His command. Then when He calls you forth out of the earth once and for all, you will come forth. Everyone who is in Heaven and Earth belongs to Him; all are subservient to Him.

He is the One Who begins creation; then He recreates it again and again. It is quite simple for Him [to do]. His is the Supreme Example in Heaven and Earth; He is the Powerful, the Wise.

The [East] Romans (OR The Byzantines) 30: 20-27

God is the One Who has granted you night that you may rest in it and daytime for seeing. God possesses bounty for mankind, even though most men are not grateful for it.

Such is God your Lord,  
the Creator of everything.  
There is no deity except Him;  
how then are you misled?  
Thus those who have repudiated God's signs are misled.

God is the One Who has granted you the Earth to settle down on, and the sky as a canopy, and has shaped you. He has made your shapes handsome and provided you with wholesome things.

Such is God, your Lord;  
so Blessed is God,  
Lord of the Universe.  
He is the Living;  
there is no deity except Him.

so appeal to Him sincerely,  
making Religion exclusively His.  
Praise be to God,  
Lord of the Universe!

SAY: "I have been forbidden to serve those you appeal to instead of God, since clear proofs have reached me from my Lord, and I have been ordered to commit myself to obey the Lord of the Universe.

"He is the One Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then from a clot. Next He brings you forth as a child, then lets you reach maturity. Then you will grow elderly, though some of you may pass away earlier, and you will reach an appointed deadline so that you may use your reason. He is the One Who gives life and brings death. Whenever He has decided on some matter, He merely says to it: "Be!", and it is."

**The Believer (OR The Forgiving {God}); 40: 61-68\***

## THE MAN-GOD RELATIONSHIP: ITS FOUNDATIONS

### (a) **The Love of God**

Yet there are some people who adopt partners beside God whom they love just as they should love God. Those who believe are firmer in their love of God; if only those who do evil might see, when they face torment, how strength is wholly God's, and God is Severe with torment.

**The Cow 2: 165**

### (b) **Thankfulness**

You who believe, eat any wholesome things We have provided you with, and thank God, if it is He Whom you serve.

**The Cow 2: 172**

(c) **Heedfulness**

God's Command is coming, so do not seek to hasten its appearance. Glory be to Him! Exalted is He over anything they may associate [with Him].

He sends down angels with the Breath of His command on those of His servants He may wish: "Warn that there is no deity except Me; so heed Me!"

**Bees 16:** 1-2

(d) **Service and Worship**

You serve only images instead of God, and create a sham. The ones you serve instead of God do not control any sustenance for you, so seek sustenance from God Himself and serve Him. Be grateful towards Him. To Him will you be returned.

**The Spider 29:** 17

(e) **Remembrance**

I have chosen you, so listen to what is revealed. I am God [Alone]! There is no god but Myself, so serve Me and keep up prayer to remember Me by. The Hour is approaching. I am keeping it hidden so that each soul may be rewarded for what it accomplishes.

**Tā-Hā 20:** 13-15

(f) **Obedience**

To every nation We have granted ritual so that they may mention God's name over any heads of livestock He has provided them with. Your Deity is God Alone, so commit yourself to Him obediently and proclaim good news to the

mEEK, whose hearts tremble whenever God is mentioned and are patient with anything that may happen to them, and those who keep up prayer and spend out of what We have provided them with.

**Pilgrimage 22: 34–35\***

Follow whatever has been sent down to you by your Lord and do not follow any sponsors besides Him: yet how seldom do you remember!

**The Heights 7: 3**

They have adopted their scholars and monks as lords beside God and [also] Christ the son of Mary, although they have been ordered to serve only God Alone. There is no god but Him. Glory be to Him! He is beyond what they associate [with Him]. They want to blow out God's light with their mouths while God refuses [everything] except that His light be perfected, no matter how disbelievers may hate it.

**Repentance 9: 31**

**(g) Seeking His Help**

You do we serve; from You do we seek help.

**The Opening 1: 4**

If God supports you, there is no one who will overcome you: while if He should forsake you, who is there to support you? On God should believers rely.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 160**

Moses said: "My people, if you believe in God, then rely on Him, if you are Muslims." They said: "On God have we relied. Our Lord, do not make us a trial for wrongdoing folk. Save us through Your mercy from such disbelieving folk."

So We inspired Moses and his brother: "Settle your people in houses in Egypt and make your houses places of worship; keep up prayer and proclaim good news to believers."

Jonah 10: 84-87

"Our Lord, You have not created this in vain. Glory be to You! Save us from the torment of Fire.

"Our Lord, anyone You sentence to the Fire You will humiliate. Wrongdoers will have no supporters.

"Our Lord, we heard a crier calling for belief [saying], 'Believe in your Lord'; so we have believed.

"Our Lord, forgive us our offences, remove our evil deeds from us and gather us up [after death] with the virtuous.

"Our Lord, give us what You have promised us through Your messengers, and do not humiliate us on Resurrection Day. You never break a promise."

The House of 'Imran 3 191-194

#### (h) Total Dedication

SAY "As for me, my Lord has guided me along a Straight Road, [leading to] an established religion, the way of Abraham, the upright.<sup>16</sup> He was no associator."

SAY: "My prayer and my devotions,<sup>17</sup>  
my living and my dying,  
[all] belong to God, Lord of the Universe;  
no partner has He,  
with that am I commanded,  
and I am the first of the Muslims."

Livestock 6: 162-163

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16 *Hanif* in the Arabic text, see Glossary

17 OR sacrifices.

## Chapter 4

### *THE UNSEEN*

God holds the Unseen in Heaven and Earth,  
and unto Him does every matter return,  
so serve Him, and rely on Him.  
Your Lord is not unmindful  
of what you are doing.

Hūd [The Messenger] 11: 123

The matter of the [final] Hour<sup>1</sup> will be but as the twinkling of an eye, or even quicker. God is Capable of everything.

Bees 16: 77

#### KEYS TO THE UNSEEN

He holds the keys to the Unseen;  
only He knows them. He knows  
whatever exists on land and at sea:  
no leaf falls unless He knows it,  
nor any seed [lies] in the darkness of the earth,  
nor any tender [shoot] nor any withered [stalk]  
but it is [predicted] in a clear Book.  
He is the One Who recalls you at night.  
He knows what you have accomplished by day;  
then He revives you in it  
so that a stated period may be fulfilled.  
Then your Return will be unto Him,  
when He will notify you  
about whatever you have been doing.

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1. That is, the Hour of Judgement.

He is the Irresistible, [Who  
reigns Supreme] above His servants.  
He sends guardians [to watch] over you,  
so that when death comes for one of you,  
Our messengers will gather him in.  
They will not neglect their duty;  
then they will be sent back to God  
their true Guardian. Surely discretion  
belongs to Him.  
He is the Swiftest Reckoner.

**Livestock 6: 59-62**

God knows what every female bears, and how wombs may issue too soon or else may wait too long. Everything has its measure with Him; Knowing the Unseen and the Visible, [He is] the Great, the Exalted. He is Indifferent whether one of you is secretive about what he says or speaks out about it, and whether he keeps to himself at night or moves around by day; he has two [angels] watching from both before him and behind him; they guard him at God's Command.

God does not change what any people have until they change what is in themselves.

**Thunder 13: 8-11\***

## GOD THE ALL-KNOWING

God has knowledge about the [final] Hour.<sup>2</sup>  
He sends down rain and knows  
what all wombs contain. Yet no person knows  
what he will earn tomorrow,  
nor does any person know  
in what land he will die.  
Still God is Aware, Informed.

**Luqmān 31: 34**

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2 That is, the Hour of Judgement).

He is God,  
beside Whom there is no [other] god.  
Knowing the Unseen and the Visible;  
He is the Merciful, the Mercy-giving.

He is God,  
beside Whom there is no [other] god,  
the Sovereign, the Holy, the [Source of] Peace,  
the Secure, the Preserver, the Powerful,  
the Compeller, the Proud.  
Glory be to God, [Who is] above what  
they may associate [with Him]!

He is God,  
the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper.  
His are the Finest Names,  
Everything in Heaven and Earth  
celebrates Him. He is  
the Powerful, the Wise!

**Banishment 59: 22-24**

## GOD'S TRUST

We offered the trust to Heaven and Earth,  
and to the mountains too,  
yet they declined to carry it,  
and shrank back from it.  
However man accepted it:  
he is so unjust, ignorant.

**The Confederates 33: 72**

## GOD'S WORDS

SAY: "If the sea were an inkwell  
for the words of my Lord,  
the sea would be drained  
before my Lord's words were spent  
even though We brought  
the same again to replenish it."



SAY. "I am only a human being like yourselves; it has been revealed to me that your god is God Alone. Anyone who is hoping to meet his Lord should act honourably<sup>3</sup> and not associate anyone in the worship due to his Lord."

The Cave 18: 109-110

If all the trees on earth were pens  
and the sea [were ink], replenished  
with seven other seas, God's words  
would never be exhausted;  
God is Powerful, Wise.

Your creation and your rebirth  
are only as a single soul.  
God is Alert, Observant.  
Have you not seen how God  
merges night into daylight  
and merges daylight into night?  
He has regulated the sun and moon;  
each runs along a fixed course.  
God is Informed about anything you do.  
That is because God is the Truth  
while what they appeal to instead of Him  
is false. God is the Sublime, the Great.

Luqmān 31: 27-30\*

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3 *Salih* in the Arabic text see Glossary

## Chapter 5

### *THE STORY OF CREATION*

God is the One Who has raised the Heavens up without any visible support. Then He mounted the Throne and regulated the sun and moon; each runs along on a specific course. He directs the matter; He manifests signs so that you may be convinced about meeting your Lord.

He is the One Who has spread out the earth and placed mountains and rivers on it, and has placed two pairs<sup>1</sup> for every kind of fruit on it. He merges daylight into night. In that are signs for those who reflect.

**Thunder 13: 2-3**

#### FRESH AND SALT WATER

Both seas are not alike; this one is sweet, fresh, refreshing to drink, while the other is salty, briny. From each you eat fresh meat and extract jewelry to wear. You see ships sailing along on it so that you may seek His bounty and so that you may feel thankful.

**Originator (OR The Angels) 35: 12**

#### BEES AND HONEY

Your Lord has inspired the bees: "Set up hives in the mountains and in trees and anything they may build. Then eat some of every kind of fruit and slip easily along your Lord's byways."

From their bellies comes a drink with different colours which contains healing for mankind. In that is a sign for people who meditate.

**Bees 16: 68-69**

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<sup>1</sup> *Zawjain* refers to the male and female elements existing in the vegetable kingdom as also in animal and human organisms.

## THE FLY

O mankind, a parable has been set forth, so listen to it! Those to whom you appeal other than God can never create a fly, even though they combined together to do so.

If the fly should snatch anything away from them, they would not even know how to recover it from it. How weak the seeker is and anything he seeks!

Pilgrimage 22: 73

God is the One Who created Heaven and Earth as well as whatever lies between them, in six days. Then He mounted the Throne. You have no patron nor any intercessor besides Him. Will you not bear this in mind?

He organizes the affair from Heaven [down] to Earth; then it will soar back to Him on a day whose measure is a thousand years according to the way you count. Such is the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible, the Powerful, the Mercy-Giving Who makes everything He creates so fine.

He began by creating man from clay; then He made his progeny from an extract of discarded water; next He completed him and breathed some of His own spirit into him. He has granted you hearing, sight and intellect.<sup>2</sup> Yet little thanks do you give for it.

Worship 32: 4-9\*

He created man from ringing clay  
as baked pottery is, while He created  
jinn from the glow in the fire.  
So which of your Lord's blessings  
will both<sup>3</sup> of you deny?

The Merciful 55: 14-16

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2 SEE above, chapter 3, note 12, P 62

3 That is, man and jinn.

We created man from an extract of clay; then We placed him as a drop of semen in a safe resting-place. Then We turned the semen into a clot; next We turned the clot into tissue; and then We turned the tissue into bones and clothed the bones with flesh. Then We made it a new creation. Blessed be God, the Best of Creators!

Believers 23 12-14

He is the One Who created you from a single soul. He made its mate from it, so that he might settle down with her. When he covers her, she conceives a light burden and walks about with it [unnoticed]. Then when she feels heavy, they both appeal to God, their Lord: "If You will grant us a healthy [child], we will be grateful."

Once He gives them a healthy child, they both set up associates with Him despite what He has given them. Exalted is God over anything they may associate [with Him]. Do they associate something [with God] that has never created anything, while they themselves have been created? They cannot offer them any support nor can they even assist themselves. If you summon them to guidance, they will not follow you; it is the same for you whether you appeal to them or keep silent. "Those you appeal to instead of God are servants just like yourselves. Appeal to them so that they may respond to you if you are truthful. Have they feet to walk with or hands to grasp things with, or eyes to see, or ears with which to listen?"

The Heights 7: 189-195

#### MAN: GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE ON EARTH

So when your Lord told the angels: "I am placing a representative<sup>4</sup> on earth", they said: "Will you place someone there who will corrupt it and shed blood, while we hymn Your praise and sanctify You?" He said: "I know what you do not know."

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4 *Khalifa* in the Arabic text. See Glossary

He taught Adam all the names of everything; then presented them to the angels, and said: "Tell me the names of these, if you are truthful." They said: "Glory be to You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the Aware, the Wise!" He said: "Adam, tell them their names."

Once he had told them their names, He said: "Did I not tell you that I know the Unseen in Heaven and Earth? I know whatever you disclose and whatever you have been hiding."

The Cow 2: 30-33

We created you; then We shaped you. Then We said to the angels: "Bow down before Adam." They bowed down on their knees, except for Diabolis;<sup>5</sup> he was not one to bow down on his knees.

He said: "What prevents you from bowing down when I have commanded you to [do so]?" He said: "I am better than he is; You created me from fire, while You created him from clay." He said: "Go down from here; you have no reason to be so proud about it. Go away; you are such a mean person."

He said: "Let me wait until the day when they are raised up again." He said: "You are one who will be allowed to wait." He said "Since You have let me wander off, I'll waylay them along Your Straight Road; then I'll come at them from in front of them and from behind them, on their right and on their left. You will not find most of them to be grateful." He said: "Go away from here, despised, rejected! I'll fill Hell with all of those who follow you."

"And Adam, settle down in the Garden, you and your wife. Eat from wherever you wish; yet do not approach this tree lest either of you should become wrongdoers."

So Satan whispered to them, to show them their private parts which had gone unnoticed by either of them. He said: "Your Lord

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5. *Iblīs* in Arabic

only forbids you this tree so that you will not become angels, or lest you become immortal." He swore to them: "I am a sincere counsellor for both of you." He led them on by deceiving [them].

When they tasted [the fruits of] the tree, their private parts became apparent to both of them, and they started to patch together leaves from the Garden for themselves.

Their Lord called out to them: "Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you both that Satan is an open enemy of yours?" They said: "Our Lord, we have harmed ourselves. If You do not forgive us and grant us mercy, we will be losers." He said: "Go down! You are one another's enemies.<sup>6</sup> Yet you shall have a residence on earth and a living for a while." He [further] said: "On it will you live and on it will you die, and from it will you be brought forth [again]."<sup>7</sup>

"Children of Adam, We have sent you down clothing with which to conceal your private parts and to dress in. Yet the clothing of heedfulness<sup>8</sup> is best." That is one of God's signs, so that they may be reminded.

The Heights 7: 11-26\*

## DIABOLIS' FALL

Once your Lord told the angels: "I am about to create a human being out of clay. When I have fashioned him and breathed some of My spirit into him, fall down on your knees before him." The angels all bowed down on their knees together except for Diabolis; he was too proud and a disbeliever.

He said: "Diabolis, what prevents you from kneeling down before something I have created with My own hands? Have you become too proud, or are you overbearing?" He said: "I am better than he is; You created me from fire while You created him from clay." He said: "Go down from here. You are an outcast; upon you My curse will rest till the Day for Repayment."<sup>9</sup>

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6. That is, Satan and human beings.

7. This refers to Man's career on earth as God's representative.

8. *Taqwa* in the Arabic text see Glossary

9. OR the Day of Judgement.

He said: "My Lord, spare me until the day when they will be raised up again." He said: "You are one of those who have leave till the appointed day."

He said: "By Your glory, I'll seduce them all except for those among them who are Your sincere worshippers." He said: "Such is the Truth, and the Truth do I speak: I shall fill Hell with you and everyone of them who follows you."

(The Letter) Sād 38: 71-85\*

We had already made a pledge with Adam, which he forgot. We found he had no determination.

When we told the angels: "Bow down on your knees before Adam," they [all] knelt down except for Diabolis, who refused [to do so]. We said: "Adam, this is an enemy for both you and your wife. Do not let him turn either of you out of the Garden, so that you will regret it. You have so much in it that you will never be exposed to hunger or nakedness; you will neither thirst there nor feel sunstruck."

Satan whispered to him, saying: "Adam, shall I lead you to the Tree of Immortality and such power as will never disappear?" So they both ate some of it, and their private parts became apparent to them. They set to covering themselves with leaves from the Garden. Adam had disobeyed his Lord and was misled.

Afterwards his Lord chose him, and He relented towards him and guided [him]. He said: "Go down from here, both of you. Some of you will become enemies of others.<sup>10</sup> Should guidance ever come to you from Me, no one who follows My guidance will stray away nor regret it; while anyone who fails to remember Me will have a hard life and We shall summon him as a blind person on Resurrection Day. He will say: "My Lord, why have you summoned me as a blind man when I was endowed with sight?""

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10. This refers to the two parties — man and Diabolis.

He will say: "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot them; that is why you have been forgotten today."

**Tā-Hā 20: 115–126**

## MAN'S NATURE

God wants to lighten things for you,  
since man was created so weak.

**Women 4: 28**

Man has been created from impatience. I will show you My signs,  
so do not try to hurry Me.

**Prophets 21: 37**

Man has been created small-minded; so he panics when any evil  
touches him, and becomes miserly when some good touches him;

except for the prayerful who are constantly at their prayers and in  
whose wealth comprises an acknowledged right for the beggar  
and the destitute;

and the ones who affirm the Day for Repayment, and those who  
are apprehensive about their Lord's torment — their Lord's tor-  
ment is nothing to feel safe from — and the ones who preserve  
their chastity, except with their spouses or whosoever is under  
their control;<sup>11</sup> with such they are blameless.

Those who seek to go beyond that are the transgressors. And the  
ones who keep their trusts and commitments; and the ones who  
stand by their testimony; and the ones who watch over their  
prayer — those will be honoured in Gardens.

**Ascending Stairways 70: 19–35**

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11. This refers to captives or wards.



He was not trusting and did not pray,  
but said: "No!" and turned away.  
Then he stalked off haughtily  
to his family. Though closer to you,  
[lies doom] and even closer.  
Then closer to you  
and still closer.<sup>12</sup>

Does man think he'll be left forlorn?  
Was he not once a drop of ejected semen?  
Then he became a clot,  
and He created and fashioned [him]  
and made him into two sexes,  
male and female. Is such a Being  
not Able to revive the dead?

Resurrection 75: 31-40

We have created man and know  
what his soul is whispering within him.  
We are closer to him  
than his jugular vein.

When both encountering [angels] meet,  
seated on the right and on the left,  
he will utter no statement  
unless he has an observer at hand  
ready [to note it down].

(The Letter) Qāf 50 16-18

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12 OR: Alas for you: your destruction is near!

## Chapter 6

### *THIS WORLD AND THE HEREAFTER*

Our Lord, give us something fine in this world,  
as well as something fine in the Hereafter,  
and shield us from the torment of Fire.

The Cow 2: 201

Worldly life may be compared to water We send down from the sky. It mingles with the plants of the earth on which mankind and livestock feed until, when the earth takes on its trimmings and looks attractive, and its inhabitants think that they will be able to use them as they like, Our Command comes to it by night or day, and We mow it down just as though it had not been so flourishing the day before. Thus We spell out signs for people who reflect.

Jonah 10: 24

#### WORLDLY LIFE

What they spend during this worldly life can be compared to a wind containing bitter frost, which strikes the crop of people who have injured<sup>1</sup> themselves and so destroys it. God has not injured them, but rather they wrong themselves.

The House of 'Imrān 3: 117

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1. *Zulm* in the Arabic text. See Glossary

For anyone who wants the fleeting present, We hasten therein what We wish to whom We wish.

Then We set up Hell for him; he will roast in it, condemned, disgraced. Anyone who wants the Hereafter and makes a proper effort to achieve it while he is a believer — such will have their effort gratified. Each We shall supply, these as well as those, with a gift from your Lord; your Lord's gift will never be withheld.

**The Night Journey 17: 18–20**

Set forth an example for them about worldly life being like water We send down from the sky. The plants on the earth swell up with it; yet it will become dry stalks which the winds will blow away. God is Capable of everything.

Wealth and children are an attraction during worldly life. Yet honourable things that last for ever are better as a recompense from your Lord and even better to hope for.

Some day We shall set the mountains travelling along and you will see the earth lying exposed. We will summon them and not one of them shall We omit; they shall be marshalled in ranks before your Lord.<sup>2</sup> You have come to Us just as We created you in the first place even though you claimed We would never make any appointment for you."

The Book will be produced and you will see the guilty apprehensive about its contents. They will say: "It's too bad for us! What a book this is! It omits nothing either small or large but records it there." They will find whatever they have done presented there, and your Lord will not wrong anyone.

**The Cave 18: 45–49**

## THE SLAVE, THE MASTER AND THE DUMB MAN

Do not compare God with anything;<sup>2</sup> God knows while you do not know.

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2. OR make up parables about God.

God has made a comparison between a slave owned [by someone else] who cannot accomplish a thing, and someone whom We have provided for handsomely. He spends some of it privately and publicly. Are they both equal? Praise be to God! Rather most of them do not know.

God has made another comparison between two men, one of whom is dumb and cannot do a thing, and is a nuisance to his master. Wherever he sends him on an errand, he brings [him] no good. Is he equal to someone who commands justice and is on a Straight Road?

**Bees 16: 74-76**

Competition<sup>1</sup> has distracted you  
until you go down to your graves.  
Nevertheless you soon shall know;  
once more, you soon shall know!

Of course, if you realized  
with absolute certainty  
that you will see Hades;  
then you would see it  
with the eye of certainty;  
next you will be questioned  
about bliss on that day.

**Competition 102: 1-8 (complete)**

When the sky bursts apart,  
when planets are dispersed,  
when the seas spill forth,  
when graves are overturned,  
[each] soul will know what it sent on ahead  
and what it left behind.

**Bursting Apart 82: 1-5**

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3. *Takāthur* in the Arabic text: see Glossary

## DOOMSDAY

By the Mount and a Book recorded  
on unrolled parchment,  
and the thriving House<sup>4</sup>  
and the roof raised [over it],  
and the swollen sea,  
your Lord's torment is bound to happen.  
There will be no one to avert it  
on the day when the sky will shift to and fro  
and the mountains will fly apart.

The Mount 52: 1-10

The pangs of death will come [and confront you] with the Truth;  
that is what you have been trying to escape. The Trumpet will be  
blown: that will be the day of the Threat.

Every soul will come along; each will have a driver and a witness:  
"You have been too heedless of this, so We have removed your  
blinders from you today so your sight is keen." His companion<sup>5</sup>  
will say: "I have brought him who was under my custody." "Toss  
every stubborn disbeliever into Hell [who is] hindering good,  
aggressive, suspicious, who has set up some other god alongside  
God. Toss him into severe torment."

His companion will say: "Our Lord, I did not make him act  
arrogantly, but he had gone too far astray." He will say: "Do not  
argue in My presence. I have already sent the Threat ahead for  
you. The sentence will not be changed. This is not My way. Nor  
am I unjust towards My worshippers."

(The Letter) Qaf 50: 19-29\*

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4. That is, the Ka'ba in Makka

5. That is, the angel who keeps watch over every soul.

By the [winds] sent forth for a purpose,  
and gales that rage on and on,  
scattering things around;  
then dividing them up,  
either delivering a Reminder  
as a plea or a warning,  
you are surely promised,  
something inevitable.

When the stars fade away,  
when the sky splits open,  
when mountains are pulverized  
and when the messengers' time is set,  
till which day will they be put off?

Till the Day<sup>6</sup> for Sorting [things] out.  
What will make you realize  
what the Day for Sorting is?  
It will be too bad  
for rejecters on that day!

**Winds sent Forth 77: 1-15**

## THE LAST TRUMPET

The Day for Sorting has been appointed,  
the day when the Trumpet shall be blown  
and you will come in droves,  
and the sky will open up  
as if it had gates,  
and the mountains will travel along  
as if they were a mirage.

**The Announcement 78: 17-20**

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6. OR Day of Judgement Doomsday.

## THE PIOUS<sup>7</sup>

Hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden broader than Heaven and Earth which has been prepared for the heedful, who spend [for others] in happiness and hardship, and suppress their anger and overlook what other people do. God loves the kindly, and those who remember God and seek forgiveness for their offences when they commit an indecent act or harm themselves — for who forgives offences besides God? — and do not knowingly persist in what they have done. Those will have forgiveness from their Lord as their reward, and Gardens through which rivers flow, to live in for ever. How blissful will be the reward of such workers.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 133-136**

## THE GARDEN

Here is what the Garden promised to the heedful will be like: rivers will flow through it; its food and its shade will be perpetual. Such is the compensation for those who have done their duty, while the outcome for disbelievers will be the Fire.

**Thunder 13 35**

## RIVERS IN THE GARDEN

Here is what the Garden promised to the heedful will be like: there will be rivers of never stagnant water, and rivers of milk whose flavour never changes, and rivers of wine, so delicious for those who drink it, and rivers of clarified honey. They will have every [sort of] fruit in it, as well as forgiveness from their Lord. Are they like someone who will remain for ever in the Fire and be given scalding water to drink, so that it rips into their bowels?

**Muhammad 47: 15**

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7. OR Heedful

## HELL AND HEAVEN

The ones who disbelieve will be driven along to Hell in throngs until, when they come up to it, its gates will swing open and its keepers will tell them: "Did not messengers come to you from among yourselves reciting your Lord's verses to you and warning you about meeting [Him] on this day of yours?" They will say: "Of course!" But the sentence about torment has become due for disbelievers. Someone will say: "Enter Hell's gates to remain there. What an awful lodging will it be for the overbearing!"

The ones who have heeded their Lord will be led along to the Garden in throngs until, when they come to it, [they will find] its gates swung open and its keepers will say to them: "Peace be upon you! You have been good, so enter it to remain [there] for ever." They will say: "Praise be to God who held true to His promise to us and let us inherit the earth. We shall settle down anywhere we wish in the Garden. How favoured are such workers' wages!"

You will see the angels clustering around the Throne hymning their Lord's praise. Judgement will be pronounced on them truthfully, and it will be said: "Praise be to God, Lord of the Universe!"

Throongs 39: 71-75

The infernal tree will be food for the sinner; like molten copper, it will seethe inside [their] bellies like boiling water: "Take him and drag him into the midst of Hades! Then pour some torment of scalding water over his head. Taste it; you were such an almighty noble! This is what you were so doubtful about."

The heedful will be in a safe place among gardens and springs. They will wear fine silks and brocade as they sit facing one another. Thus shall it be. And We will wed them to black-eyed damsels. They will call confidently for every kind of fruit in it. They



will not taste death there except the very first death. He will shield them from the torment of Hades as a boon from your Lord; that will be the Supreme Achievement.

**Smoke 44:** 43-57

They will have severe torment on a day when their tongues, their hands and their feet will testify against them concerning what they have been doing. On that day God will repay them with their rightful due; they will realize that God is the obvious Truth.<sup>8</sup>

**The Light 24:** 23-25

On the day when God's enemies are summoned to the Fire, they will be paraded forth so that when they come up to it, their hearing, eyesight and their skins will testify against them concerning what they have been doing. They will say to their skins: "Why have you testified against us?"

They will say: "God, Who grants speech to everything, has given us speech. He created you in the first place, and to Him are you returning. You tried to disguise yourselves<sup>9</sup> [never apprehending that] your hearing, your sight or your skins would still testify against you; rather did you assume that God did not know much about what you were doing. That supposition of yours which you conceived about your Lord has brought you face to face with ruin, so you have awakened among the losers."

**Set Forth in Detail 41:** 19-23

## RETRIBUTION

Even if those who do wrong had absolutely everything on earth and the like of it again with which to redeem themselves from the worst torment on Resurrection Day, something they had not been figuring on will be shown to them by God. The evil deeds they have earned will appear before them, and what they were mocking at will beset them.

**Throngs 39:** 47-48

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<sup>8</sup> OR God is the One Who sustains the Truth

<sup>9</sup> That is when you were committing offences on earth.

## REWARDS FOR GOOD AND EVIL

When earth is shaken in her [final] quaking,  
and earth throws forth her burdens,  
and every man says: "What is wrong with her?"

On that day she will tell her news  
since your Lord has inspired her to.  
On that day men will appear in droves  
to be shown their actions,  
and whoever has done an atom's weight  
of good will see it; while whoever  
has done an atom's weight of evil  
will see it.

**The Earthquake** 99: 1-8  
(complete)

## Part III

# Prophets

## Chapter 7

# PROPHETHOOD

We have despatched a messenger to every nation: "Serve God [Alone] and turn aside from the arrogant ones."<sup>1</sup>

Bees 16: 36

## MESSENGERS FOR EVERY NATION

Every nation has a messenger. Once their messenger has come, judgement will be passed upon them in all fairness and they will not be wronged. They will say: "When will this promise be, if you have been truthful?" SAY: "I have no power to harm or benefit myself, except what God may wish."

"Every nation has a deadline: when their time comes, they shall not postpone it for an hour, nor shall they advance it."

Jonah 10: 47-49\*

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1 *Yaghūt* in the Arabic text, see Glossary

There has been no nation but a warner has passed among them.

**Originator 35: 24\***

We have told you about some messengers [sent] previously, while other messengers We have not yet told you about. God spoke directly to Moses. [We have sent] messengers bringing good news and a warning so that mankind would have no argument against God after the messengers [had come]. God is Powerful, Wise.

**Women 4: 164-165\***

We have sent messengers before you, about some of whom We have told you while We have not told you about others. No messenger may bring any sign unless it is with God's permission. Once God's command comes, [matters] will be decided correctly and that is when the quibblers will lose out.

**The Believer (OR The Forgiving [God]) 40: 78**

## HERALDS AND WARNERS

Mankind was [once] one nation, so God despatched prophets as heralds and warners. He sent the Book down with them to bring the Truth, that it might decide among mankind concerning whatever they had been disagreeing about.

**The Cow 2: 213**

We have sent down a Book to you in order to bring men out of darkness into Light by their Lord's permission; towards the road of the Powerful, the Praiseworthy. . .

**Abraham 14: 1**

## GUIDES AND LEADERS

God has shown favour to believers when He sent them a messenger from among themselves, to recite His verses to them and purify them, and teach them the Book and wisdom, whereas previously they had been in plain error.

The House of 'Imrān 3: 164

He is the One Who has sent His messenger with guidance and the True Religion, so that He may make it prevail over every other religion no matter how those who associate [others with God] may hate it.

Battle Ranks 61: 9\*

## UPHOLDERS OF JUSTICE

We have sent Our messengers with explanations, and sent the Book and the Balance down with them, so that mankind may conduct themselves with all fairness.

Iron 57: 25

Their messengers told them: "We are only human beings like yourselves, but God showers blessings on whom of His servants He wishes."

Abraham 14: 11

## OBEYING THE PROPHETS

We have not sent any messenger unless he was to be obeyed with God's permission.

Women 4: 64

Anyone who obeys the Messenger has obeyed God [Himself], . . .

**Women 4: 80**

Accept anything the Messenger may give you, and keep away from anything he forbids you. Heed God [Alone]: God is Stern in punishment!

**Banishment 59: 7\***

SAY "If you have been loving God, then follow me; God will then love you and forgive you your offences. God is Forgiving, Merciful."

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 31**

Yet by your Lord, they will never believe until they name you to judge concerning what they are quarrelling over among themselves; then they will not find any inconvenience for themselves concerning whatever you have decided, and will accept wholeheartedly.

**Women 4: 65**

You who believe, **obey God and His Messenger**; do not turn away from him after hearing [his commands].

**Booty 8: 20\***

## Chapter 8

# SOME MAJOR PROPHETS

### (a) Abraham

Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was dedicated<sup>1</sup> [to seek Truth], a Muslim; he was no associator [of others with God].

The House of 'Imrān 3: 67

### ABRAHAM AND IMAGES

We gave Abraham his integrity [in thought and action]<sup>2</sup> long ago, and We knew him well. He said to his father and his people: "What are these images to which you are so devoted?" They said: "We found our forefathers serving them." He said: "You and your forefathers have been in obvious error!"

They said: "Have you brought us the Truth, or are you one of those who just play around?" He said: "Rather your Lord is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, and the One Who originated them, while I am another witness to that. By God, I shall certainly confound your idols once you have turned your backs."

So he broke them into fragments except for the biggest one of them, so that they might come back to [question] it. They said: "Who did this to our gods? He must be some wrongdoer." They said: "We heard a young man mentioning them; he is called Abraham." They said: "Bring him before the people's eyes, so that they may witness it."

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1. *Hanif* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.

2. *Rushd* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.



They said: "Is it you who did this to our gods, Abraham?" He said: "Rather this big one did it. Ask them, if they can speak." They turned to one another and said: "You yourselves are the wrongdoers." Then they hung their heads: "You know those things do not utter [a word]." He said: "So do you worship something instead of God that does not benefit you in any way nor does it harm you? Shame on you and on what you worship instead of God! Do you not use your reason?" They said: "Burn him and support your gods if you must do something."

We said: "Fire, be cool, and safe for Abraham." They wanted to outwit him, so We made them lose the most. We rescued him and Lot, [bringing them] to a land which We had blessed for [everyone in] the Universe. We bestowed Isaac and Jacob on him as an additional boon; each We made into honourable men.<sup>3</sup> We made them leaders who guided [others] by Our command and We inspired them to perform good deeds, keep up prayers and pay the welfare due. They have been serving Us.

Prophets 21. 51-73

#### ABRAHAM'S PRAYER

"My Lord, bestow discretion<sup>4</sup> on me and acquaint me with honourable men. Grant me a truthful reputation among later men. Grant me an inheritance in the Garden of Bliss. Forgive my father even though he has been among the lost. Do not disgrace me on the day they are raised up again, the day when neither wealth nor children will benefit anyone, except someone to whom God has given a sound heart."

Poets 26: 83-89

#### SEARCHING FOR GOD

Thus Abraham said to his father Āzar:<sup>5</sup> "Do you accept idols as

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3. *Ṣāliḥ* in the Arabic text see Glossary

4. *Hukm* stands for wisdom, discretion, knowledge and the power to see things in their true perspective

5. He is called Torah in the Old Testament

gods? I see you and your folk are in obvious error." Therefore We showed Abraham sovereignty over Heaven and Earth<sup>6</sup> that he might feel reassured.

When night descended on him, he saw a star. He said: "Will this be my lord?" When it set, he said: "I do not like setting things."

Then, as he saw the moon rising, he said: "Will this be my lord?", and when it set, he said: "If my Lord did not guide me, I would be a member of the lost ones."

When he saw the sun rising, he said: "Will this be my lord? This is [even] greater." When it set, he said: "My folk, I am innocent of what you associate [with God]. I have turned my face enquiringly<sup>7</sup> [after Truth] to Him Who originated Heaven and Earth. I am no associator."

His people argued with him. He said: "Are you disputing with me concerning God, while He has guided me? I do not fear what you associate with Him, unless my Lord should wish for something else. My Lord encompasses everything in knowledge. Will you not be reminded? How should I fear what you associate [with Him] while you do not fear having associated something with God for which you have been sent down no authority? Which of the two groups deserves more security, if you know anything? Those who believe and do not clothe their faith with wrongdoing will feel more secure and will be better guided."

Livestock 6: 74-82

## AT MAKKA

When his Lord tested Abraham by means of [certain] words, and he fulfilled them, He said: "I am going to make you into a leader for mankind." He said: "What about my offspring?" He said: "My pledge does not apply to evildoers."

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6. That is, God granted Abraham insight into the laws of the Universe

7. OR righteously *Hanif* in the Arabic text see Glossary.

Thus we set up the House<sup>8</sup> as a resort for mankind and a sanctuary, and [said]: "Take Abraham's station as a place of prayer." We entrusted both Abraham and Ishmael with purifying My House for those who circle around and are secluded [praying] there, and who bow down on their knees in worship.

So Abraham said: "My Lord, make this countryside safe and provide those of its inhabitants who believe in God and the Last Day with produce from it." He said: "Even anyone who disbelieves I'll let enjoy things for a while, then drive him towards the torment of Fire. How awful is such an end!"

Thus Abraham and Ishmael laid the foundations for the House: "Our Lord, accept this from us. You are the Alert, Aware. Our Lord make us peacefully committed to<sup>9</sup> You, and make our offspring into a nation in harmony with You. Show us our ceremonies<sup>10</sup> and relent towards us. You are so Relenting, Merciful. Our Lord, send a messenger to them from among themselves who will recite Your verses to them, teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them, for You are the Powerful, the Wise."

The Cow 2: 124–129

## ANOTHER PRAYER

So Abraham said: "My Lord, make this city<sup>11</sup> safe and keep me and my sons from worshipping idols. My Lord, they have led so many men astray! Anyone who follows me belongs to me, while anyone who disobeys me [will still find] You are Forgiving, Merciful.

"Our Lord, I have had some of my offspring settle in a valley without any crops, beside Your Hallowed House, our Lord, so that they may keep up prayer. Make men's hearts fond of them, and provide them with fruit that they may be grateful.

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8. The Ka'ba in Makka.

9. OR "Muslims before You" For the meaning of Muslim, see *Islam*, in Glossary.

10. That is, ways of worship.

11. Makka.

“Our Lord, You know whatever we hide and whatever we display: nothing on earth nor in the sky is hidden from God. Praise be to God Who has bestowed Ishmael and Isaac on me in my old age. Surely my Lord hears every appeal.

My Lord, make me keep up prayer,  
and (also) let my offspring [do so too].  
Our Lord, accept my appeal,  
Our Lord, forgive me, my parents,  
and believers on the day  
the Reckoning will be set up.”

Abraham 14: 35–41

(b) **Moses**

MOSES' STORY

We inspired Moses' mother [as follows]: “Nurse him. If you should fear for him, then cast him into the river. Do not fear nor feel sad; We will return him to you, and appoint him as a messenger.”

Pharaoh's household took him in, so that he became an enemy and [a source of] sadness for them. Pharaoh and Hāmān as well as their troops were mistaken. Pharaoh's wife said: “[He'll be] a comfort for me and for you. Do not kill him. Perhaps he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son.” They did not foresee [what was to come].

Moses' mother felt empty-hearted; she almost revealed who he was, if We had not strengthened her heart so that she would be a believer. She said to his sister: “Keep track of him.”

So she watched for him from a distance while they did not notice it. We kept him from nursing at first, and so she said: “Shall I lead you to a family who will look after him for you? They will take good care of him.” Thus We restored him to his mother so that he

might comfort her and that she might not feel sad, and so that she would know that God's promise is true, even though most of them do not realize it.

When he reached maturity and came of age. We gave him discretion and knowledge. Thus We reward those who act kindly.

He entered the city at a time when its people were lax, and found two men fighting there, one from his own faction and the other from his enemy's. The one who was from his own faction appealed for his assistance against the one who was from his enemy's. Moses punched him and he dropped dead.

He said: "This is some of Satan's work; he is an enemy, a plain misleader." He said: "My Lord, I have wronged my own soul. Forgive me!" So He forgave him; He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. He said: "My Lord, since You have shown me such favour, I shall never support any criminals [again]."

Yet he felt fearful next morning in the city; he was on the alert, when the man he had tried to support the day before called out to him for help [again]. Moses said to him: "You are clearly a troublemaker." When he wanted to catch the one who was an enemy to them both, he said: "Moses, do you want to kill me just as you killed a person yesterday? You only want to become a bully on earth; you do not want to be a reformer."

A man came hurrying up from the further end of the city; he said: "Moses, the council are deliberating about you, whether they should have you killed. So depart. I am giving you sincere advice." He left it fearfully, on the alert. He said: "My Lord, save me from such wrongdoing folk."

## MOSES IN MIDIAN

As he made his way towards Midian,<sup>12</sup> he said: "Perhaps my Lord will guide me along a level path." When he reached the water of

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<sup>12</sup> A country to the East of Egypt near Sinai

Midian, he found a group of men watering [their flocks] at it, and found two girls besides them, holding [theirs] aloof. He said: "What is the matter with you?" They said: "We cannot draw any water until the herdsmen move on. Our father is a very old man."

So he did the watering for them. Then he went off towards the shade, and said: "My Lord, [I am] in need of whatever good You may send down." One of the two girls came up to him, walking bashfully. She said: "My father invites you, in order to reward you with some sort of payment since you have done the watering for us."

When he came up to him, he related the tales to him. He said: "Do not fear; you have escaped from wrongdoing folk."

One of the two [girls] said: "Father, hire him. The best man you can hire is a strong, trusty one." He said: "I want to marry you to one of these daughters of mine, provided you hire yourself to me for eight seasons. If you should complete ten, then that will be your own affair. I do not want to be hard on you. You will find me an honourable man if God so wills." He said: "That is up to you and me; whichever term I may fulfil, there will be no injustice done to me. God is Trustee for anything we say."

When Moses had completed the term [he was to work], and was travelling away with his family,<sup>13</sup> he glimpsed a fire on a slope of Mount [Sinai]. He said to his family: "Stay here! I have glimpsed a fire. Perhaps I may bring you some news from it, or an ember from the fire so that you may warm yourselves."

## THE BURNING BUSH

When he came up to it, someone called out to him from the tree in the blessed hollow on the right bank of the valley: "Moses, I am God, Lord of the Universe! Throw down your staff."

When he saw it twitching as if it were a snake, he turned round

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13 OR wife

and tried to escape. "Moses, come closer and do not be afraid. You will be safe. Slip your hand into your shirtfront; it will come out [gleaming] white without [showing] any blemish. And gather up your courage<sup>14</sup> against any apprehension. These will be two proofs from your Lord for Pharaoh and his council; they have been immoral folk."

He said: "My Lord, I have killed a person among them, and fear they may execute me. My brother Aaron is more eloquent with his tongue; send him along with me to help me [and] to vouch for me. I fear they will refute me." He said: "We shall strengthen your arm by means of your brother and grant you both authority so that they will not overtake either of you. Because of Our signs you will both win, as well as anyone who follows you."

The Story 28: 7-35

#### ANOTHER VERSION

Has Moses' story ever reached you? Once he saw a fire and said to his household:<sup>15</sup> "Wait here; I have glimpsed a fire. Perhaps I can bring you a live coal from it, or find some guidance at the fire."

As he came up to it, [a voice] called out: "Moses, I am your Lord. Take off your sandals; you are in the sacred valley of Tuwā.<sup>16</sup> I have chosen you, so listen to what is revealed: I am God [Alone]! There is no god but Me, so serve Me and keep up prayer to remember Me by. The Hour is coming. I am keeping it hidden so that each soul may be rewarded for what it accomplishes. So do not let anyone who does not believe in it and follows his own passion, bar you from it; for that shall bring about your downfall.

"What do you have in your right hand, Moses?" He said: "It is my staff. I lean on it, and beat down fodder for my sheep and goats

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<sup>14</sup> Literally wing.

<sup>15</sup> OR wife

<sup>16</sup> near Mt. Sinai

with it; and I have still other uses for it." He said: "Throw it down, Moses."

So he threw it down, and behold! it became a snake that crawled along. He said: "Pick it up, and do not be afraid. We will return it to its original shape. And press your hand into your armpit; it will come out [gleaming] white without [showing] any blemish, as another sign, so that We may show you some of Our greatest signs. Go to Pharaoh; he has been arrogant."

### MOSES' PRAYER

He said:

"My Lord, ease my breast for me!  
Make my task easier for me,  
and loose the knot from my tongue  
so that they may understand what I say.  
Grant me a helpmate from my own people,  
Aaron my brother.

Support me by means of him,  
and let him share in my task  
so that we may glorify You frequently  
and mention You often, since You  
have been so Observant of us."

He said: "You have been granted your request, Moses. We endowed you another time when We revealed what was revealed to your mother: 'Cast him into the chest, and toss it into the river. The stream will throw him up on the shore where an enemy of Mine as well as an enemy of his will pick him up.'

"I have lavished love of My own on you so that you may grow up under My care. So your sister was walking along, and said: 'Shall I lead you to someone who will take care of him?' Thus We returned you to your mother to comfort her<sup>17</sup> and so that she would not feel so sad.

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17. OR so that her sight might be refreshed



"You killed a soul and We saved you from grief. We tested you severely, and you stayed among the people of Midian for years. Then you came just as fate [decreed], Moses. I have made you for Myself. Take My signs with you, both you and your brother, and do not neglect to mention Me. Go to Pharaoh; he has been arrogant. Speak a soft word to him so that he may be reminded or even feel afraid."

They both said: "Our Lord, we fear lest he may exceed against us or act arrogantly." He said: "Do not fear; I am with you both. I both hear and see. So go to him and say: 'We are both messengers from your Lord. Send the Children of Israel with us and do not torment them. We have brought you a sign from your Lord, and may Peace be on whoever follows guidance.'<sup>18</sup> As for us, it has been revealed to us that torment is for anyone who says it is a lie and turns away."

Tā-Hā 20: 9-48

### (c) David and Solomon

#### DAVID'S JUDGMENT

Has the news of the litigants reached you, how they climbed over the wall into the sanctuary? Thus they burst in upon David and he was startled by them. They said: "Don't be afraid; [we are] two litigants, one of whom has injured the other; so judge correctly between us and do not be too stern. Guide us along the Level Road.

"This is my brother; he has ninety-nine ewes while I have only a single ewe. He has said: 'Turn her over to me,' and has spoken harshly to me."

He said: "He has wronged you by asking for your ewe [to be added] to his own ewes. Many partners try to take advantage of one another, except for those who believe and perform honourable deeds. Such are few indeed."

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18. This phrase is the traditional greeting to a mixed group of believers and disbelievers.

David suspected that We were merely testing him, so he sought forgiveness from his Lord and dropped down on his knees [in worship] and repented. So We forgave him that. He enjoys precedence with Us and the finest response. David, We have placed you as an overlord<sup>19</sup> on earth, so judge among men correctly and do not follow whims which will lead you away from God's path. Those who stray from God's path will have severe torment because they have forgotten the Day of Reckoning.

(The Letter) Sād 38: 21-26

## DAVID AND SOLOMON

We gave David bounty from Ourselves: "O mountains, echo [God's praises] with him, and [so may] the birds." We softened iron for him: "Make suits of armour and measure out the links in mail, and act honourably; I am Observant of what you do."

For Solomon we had harnessed the wind; its morning course would cover a month's journey and its evening course would cover a month's [journey]. We melted down a font of brass for him. There were some jinn who worked in front of him by his Lord's permission, and We let any of them who wavered from Our command taste torment from the Blaze. They worked for him as he wished on shrines and images, bowls as big as troughs, and built in cauldrons: "Give thanks, O House of David!" Yet few of My servants are grateful.

When We determined he should die, nothing indicated his death to them except a termite from the earth which was eating away at his cane. When he fell down, the jinn realised clearly that if they had known the Unseen, they would not have had to continue in such humiliating torment.

Sheba 34: 10-14\*

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19 *Khalīfa* in the Arabic text, see Glossary

## SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

We gave David and Solomon knowledge, and they said: "Praise be to God, Who has made us excel over many of His believing servants." Solomon fell heir to David, and he said: "O mankind, we have been taught the speech of birds, and been given [a little] of everything. This is manifest bounty."

His armies of jinn, men and birds were drawn up before Solomon; they were paraded forth until, when they came to the Valley of the Ants, an ant said: "O ants, enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his armies crush you without even noticing it."

So he smiled, laughing at its statement, and said: "My Lord, arrange things for me to be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed on me and my parents, that I may act honourably so that You will approve of it. Admit me through Your mercy among Your honourable servants."

He inspected the birds, and said: "What is wrong with me that I do not see the lapwing?<sup>20</sup> Or is it absent? I shall punish it severely or slaughter it, unless it brings me some clear authority."

It was not long in coming, and said: "I have just acquired some information you have not heard, for I bring you reliable news from Sheba. I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given everything and has a splendid throne. I found both her and her people bowing down on their knees to the sun instead of to God. Satan has made their actions seem attractive to them and diverted them from the Way.

BOW  
DOWN  
HERE

"They are not guided,  
so they do not bow down  
on their knees before God  
Who brings forth what is hidden  
in Heaven and Earth and knows

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20. *Hudhud* in the Qur'ān, like the Plover or Killdeer in North America.

what you hide as well as  
what you display.  
God, there is no deity except Him,  
Lord of the splendid Throne.”

He said: “We will see whether you have been truthful or are a liar. Take this letter of mine and deliver it to them. Then leave them and see what they send back.”

She said: “Councilmen, an important letter has been delivered to me. It is from Solomon, and it [reads]: ‘In the name of God, the Merciful! the Mercy-giving! Do not act haughtily towards me, and come to me committed to [live in] peace.’”<sup>21</sup>

She said: “Councilmen, give me your opinion concerning my affair; I have never settled any matter unless you were present with me.” They said: “We possess strength and can be extremely violent, while command<sup>22</sup> rests with you; so attend to whatever you will command.”

She said: “Whenever kings enter a town and plunder it, they turn its important men into the lowest. Thus they act. I am sending them a gift and shall see what the emissaries bring back.”

When it reached Solomon, he said: “Will you furnish me with wealth? What God has given me is better than what He has given you; [your gift is returned to you], yet you rejoice in your gift. Go back to them, for we shall come to them with armies they can never resist. We shall expel them from there in disgrace, and they will be humiliated.”

He said: “Councilmen, which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me committed to [live in] peace?”<sup>23</sup> An imp among the jinn said, “I’ll bring it to you before you even rise up from your place. I am strong enough to be entrusted with it.” Someone who had knowledge of the Book said, “I shall bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye.”

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21 OR as Muslims, living in harmony with the Divine Will.

22 OR executive authority.

23 OR as Muslims

When he saw it set before him, he said: "This is some of my Lord's bounty, so that He may test me whether I am thankful or thankless. Anyone who is thankful gives thanks only on his own behalf, while with anyone who is thankless my Lord is Self-Sufficient, Generous." He said: "Disguise her throne for her; let us see whether she is guided or is one of those who are not guided."

When she came, someone said: "Is your throne like this?" She said: "It seems to be similar. We were given knowledge before and have become Muslims."<sup>24</sup> What she had been worshipping instead of God distracted her; she belonged to disbelieving folk.

Someone said to her: "Enter the hall." When she saw it, she thought it was a pool [of water] and bared her legs. He said: "It is a hall paved with glass slabs." She said: "My Lord, how I have wronged myself! I commit myself peacefully along with Solomon, to God, Lord of the Universe."

The Ants 27: 15-44\*

#### (d) **Jesus, the son of Mary**

When Mary's son is quoted as an example, why, your people resist him. They say: "Are our gods better, or is he?" They quote him to you only for the sake of argument; indeed they are such quarrelsome folk.

He was only a servant whom We favoured and set up as an example for the Children of Israel.

Luxury 43: 57-59

#### GOD NEEDS NO SON

They say: "The Merciful has adopted a son." You have brought something monstrous. The heavens almost burst apart with it,

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24 OR had committed to live in peace with God and His creation.

while the earth splits open and the mountains fall down with a crash that they should ascribe a son to the Merciful. It is not fitting for the Merciful to adopt a son.

Everyone who is in Heaven and Earth comes to the Merciful as a servant. He counts them and numbers them exactly. All of them will come to Him on Resurrection Day, each as an individual. The Merciful will grant love to those who have believed and performed honourable deeds.

We have made it easy for your tongue  
so you may announce good news about it  
to the heedful, and warn  
headstrong folk by means of it.  
How many generations  
have We wiped out before them?  
Do you find any trace of them,  
or hear a murmur from them?

**Mary 19: 88-98\***

SAY: "If the Merciful had a son, I would be the first to worship [him]." Glory be to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, Lord of the Throne, above what they ascribe to [Him]! Leave them to speculate and play around until they face their day which they have been promised.

He Alone is God in Heaven  
and God on Earth; He is the Wise, Aware.  
Blessed is He Who holds control  
over Heaven and Earth  
and anything in between them.  
He has knowledge of the Hour,  
and to Him will you be returned.

**Luxury 43: 81-85**

## JESUS ON HIS OWN "GODHOOD"

When God said: "Jesus, son of Mary, have you told people: 'Take me and my mother as two gods along with God [Alone]?' " He said: "Glory be to You! It is not my place to say what I have no right to [say]. If I had said it, You would have known it already: You know what is on my mind, while I do not know what is on Yours. You are the Knower of Unseen things. I have told them nothing except what You commanded me: 'Worship God as my Lord and your Lord.' "

The Table 5 116-117

## MARY

And she who guarded her chastity, We breathed of Our spirit into her, and made both her and her son as a sign for [everyone in] the Universe.

Prophets 21: 91\*

Mention in the Book how Mary withdrew from her people to an Eastern place. She chose to be secluded from them. We sent her Our spirit,<sup>25</sup> who presented himself to her as a faultless human being. She said: "I take refuge with the Merciful from you, if you are heedful."

He said: "I am only your Lord's messenger [sent] to bestow a pure son on you." She said: "How can I have a boy when no human being has ever touched me, nor am I a loose-living woman?" He said: "Thus your Lord has said: 'It is a simple matter for Me [to do]. We will make him as a sign for mankind and as a mercy from Ourselves. It is a matter that has been decided.' "

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25 The archangel Gabriel

She conceived him, and withdrew to a remote place to bear him. Birth pains came over her by the trunk of a datepalm. She said: "If only I had died before this, and been forgotten, overlooked!"

Someone called out to her from below where she was: "Do not feel sad. Your Lord has placed a brook at your feet. Shake the trunk of the datepalm towards you and it will drop some fresh dates on you. Eat and drink, and refresh yourself.<sup>26</sup> Should you see a single human being, then say, 'I have vowed to keep a fast to the Merciful whereby I will not speak to anyone today.'"

She carried him back to her folk. They said: "Mary, you have brought something hard to believe. Kinswoman<sup>27</sup> of Aaron, your father was no evil man, nor was your mother a loose-living woman." She pointed to him. They said: "How shall we talk to someone who is a child in the cradle?"

#### JESUS' SPEECH AS A BABY

He said: "I am God's servant. He has given me the Book and made me a prophet. He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and commissioned me to pray and [pay] the welfare due as long as I live, and [to act] considerately towards my mother; He has not made me domineering, hard-hearted. Peace be on the day I was born, and the day I shall die, and on the day when I am raised to life again!"

Such was Jesus, the son of Mary: [it is] a true statement over which they are still disputing. It is not for God to adopt a son. Glory be to Him! When He decides upon some matter, He merely tells it, "Be!" and it is. God is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a Straight Road [to follow].

Mary 19: 16-36\*

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26 Literally, refresh your eye.

27 OR sister, since Aaron was one of her ancestors.



## THE TRINITY

People of the Book,<sup>28</sup> do not exaggerate in your religion and tell nothing but the Truth about God: Christ<sup>29</sup> Jesus, the son of Mary, was merely God's messenger and His word which He cast into Mary, and a spirit [proceeding] from Him. Believe in God and His messengers, and do not say: "Three!" Refrain; [it] will be better for you. God is only God Alone; glory be to Him, beyond His having any son! He owns whatever is in Heaven and whatever is on Earth; God suffices as a Trustee.

Women 4: 171

God has stamped them [the Jews] for their disbelief. They only believe a little, because of their disbelief and their uttering such terrible slander about Mary, and (also) for their saying, "We killed God's messenger Christ Jesus, the son of Mary." They neither killed nor crucified him, even though it seemed so to them.

Women 4: 155-157

We had Jesus, the son of Mary, follow in their footsteps in order to confirm what had come before him from the Torah,<sup>30</sup> and We gave him the Gospel, which contains guidance and light, to confirm what had come before him in the Torah, and as guidance and a lesson for the heedful. Let the people of the Gospel judge by what God has sent down in it; those who do not judge by what God has sent down are perverse.

The Table 5: 46-47

Those who say that God is Christ, the son of Mary, have disbelieved. Christ [himself] said: "Children of Israel, serve God [Who is] my Lord as well as your Lord." God will ban the Garden to anyone who associates anything else with God; his lodging will be the Fire.

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28 Jews and Christians.

29. OR the Messiah. *Masih* in Arabic.

30. The first five books of the Old Testament.

Wrongdoers will have no supporters. Those who say: "God is the third of three," have disbelieved. There is no deity except God Alone. If they do not stop saying what they say, painful torment will afflict those of them who disbelieve. Why do they not turn towards God and seek His forgiveness? God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Christ, the son of Mary, was only a messenger; messengers have passed away before him. His mother was sincere. They both ate food.

**The Table 5: 72-75**

## CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS

You will find that the people most violently hostile towards those who believe are the Jews and those who associate [others with God]; while you will find the most affectionate among them towards those who believe are those who say: "We are Christians." That is because some of them are priests and monks; they do not behave proudly.

**The Table 5: 82**

## Chapter 9

### *MUHAMMAD, THE LAST PROPHET*

We have sent you as a messenger to mankind; God suffices as a Witness. Anyone who obeys the Messenger has obeyed God [Himself], while We have not sent you to be a taskmaster over anyone who turns away.

**Women 4: 79–80**

We have inspired you as We inspired Noah and the Prophets following him.

**Women 4: 163**

SAY: "I am not an innovation among messengers. I do not know what will happen to me or to you. I only follow what is revealed to me and am merely a plain warner."

**The Dunes 46: 9"**

Muhammad is only a messenger. Messengers have passed away before him. If he should die or be killed, will you turn back on your heels? Anyone who turns on his heels will never harm God in any way, while God will reward the grateful.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 144**

O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness, newsbearer and warner; and as someone who invites people to God by His permission, and as a shining lamp.

**The Confederates 33: 45–46**

We have not sent you except as a newsbearer and warner to all mankind, even though most men do not realize it.

Sheba 34: 28

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but [he is] God's messenger and the Seal of the Prophets. God is Aware of everything.

The Confederates 33: 40

### A PREDICTION ABOUT MUHAMMAD

Thus Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "Children of Israel, I am God's messenger to you, confirming whatever came before me in the Torah<sup>1</sup> and announcing a messenger coming after me whose name will be Ahmad."<sup>2</sup> When he brought them evidence, they said: "This is sheer magic."

Battle Ranks 61: 6

### THE MAN AND THE MISSION

By the morning bright  
and at night when all is still,<sup>3</sup>  
your Lord has not forsaken you  
nor is annoyed. The Hereafter  
will be even better for you  
than the first [life] was.  
Your Lord will give you something soon  
which will leave you satisfied.

Did He not find you an orphan  
and sheltered [you]? He found you lost  
and guided [you]. He found you destitute  
and made you rich.

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1. The first five books in the Old Testament

2. OR most praiseworthy.

3. OR it enshrouds, broods.

Thus the orphan must not be oppressed;  
and the beggar<sup>4</sup> should not be brushed aside.  
And proclaim your Lord's favours.

**Morning Bright 93: 1–11 (complete)**

You who are wrapped up,  
stay up all night,  
except for a little while; half of it  
or a little less than that  
or even add some to it,  
and chant the Qur'ān distinctly  
as it should be chanted. We will cast  
a weighty statement<sup>5</sup> on you.

Rising at night is more effective for subduing [the soul] and more appropriate for speaking in.<sup>6</sup> You have lengthy employment during daylight. Mention your Lord's name and devote yourself to Him utterly. Lord of the East and the West, there is no deity except Him, so accept Him as your Defence. Be patient with anything they say, and steer clear of them in a polite manner. Let Me deal with rejecters who are enjoying their leisure; bear with them for a while. Before Us lie fetters and Hades, and food which chokes, and painful torment on the day when the earth and mountains will rumble and the mountains spill over as if they had been [turned into] sand.

We have sent a messenger to you (all) to act as a witness concerning you, just as We sent Pharaoh a messenger. Yet Pharaoh defied the messenger, so We seized him mercilessly.

If you disbelieve so how will you protect yourself on the day when children will turn grey-haired? The sky shall split open with it; His promise will be fulfilled. This is a Reminder, so let anyone who wishes, adopt a way unto his Lord.

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4 OR petitioner.

5 That is, the Qur'ān. NOTE how serious the Prophet's mission was.

6 That is, for reciting the Qur'ān.

Your Lord knows that you stay up nearly two-thirds of the night [in prayer], half of it, or even a third of it; and [so do] a group of those who are with you. God measures out both night and day; He knows that you never count it, so He has relented towards you.

Read whatever seems feasible from the Qur'ān. He knows that some of you may be ill while others are out travelling around the earth seeking God's bounty, and still others are fighting for God's sake. So read any of it that seems feasible, and keep up prayer and pay the welfare due, and advance God a handsome loan. Anything good you send on ahead for yourselves, you will find [later on] with God; it is better and more important as earnings.

Seek forgiveness from God;  
God will be Forgiving, Merciful.

**Wrapped up** 73: 1–20  
(complete)

Did We not expand your breast for you  
and remove your burden from you  
which weighed down on your back?  
We have raised up renown of you.

Yet hardship will be followed by ease.  
Indeed, hardship will be followed by ease.  
So whenever you have finished,  
still toil on. Towards your Lord  
should be your longing.

**Consolation** 94: 1–8 (complete)\*

... those who follow the Messenger, the Unlettered Prophet whom they will find mentioned for them in the Torah and the Gospel. He commands them to be decent and forbids them to behave improperly. He permits them wholesome things and forbids them evil things, and relieves them of their obligation and the shackles which have lain upon them. Those who believe in him, revere him and support him, and follow the Light which was sent down with him; those will be successful.

SAY: "Mankind, for all of you I am but a messenger from God, Who holds control over Heaven and Earth. There is no god except Him; He gives life and brings death. Believe in God and His messenger, the Unlettered Prophet who himself believes in God [Alone] and His words: follow him so that you may be guided."

The Heights 7 157-158

## THE PROPHET'S ASCENSION

Glory be to Him Who transported His servant by night from the Hallowed Mosque<sup>7</sup> to the Further Mosque<sup>8</sup>, whose surroundings We have blessed so that We might show him some of Our signs. He is the Alert, the Observant.

The Night Journey 17: 1

By the star as it sets, your companion  
has neither strayed nor is he misguided.  
He does not speak from some whim;  
it is no less than an inspiration  
that has been revealed [to him].

Someone firm in strength<sup>9</sup> has taught him,  
someone possessing such ability  
that he soared up and stood,  
poised at the highest [point on the] horizon.  
Then he approached and came on down,  
and stood two bow-lengths off  
or even closer. He inspired  
whatever he inspired in His servant.  
His heart<sup>10</sup> did not deny whatever he saw.  
Will you dispute with him  
about what he saw?

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7. At Makka.

8. At Jerusalem, which makes it the third sanctuary in Islam after Makka and Madina.

9. This was the archangel Gabriel.

10. *Fu'ad* in the Arabic text, see *af'ida* in Glossary.

He saw him in another descent  
near the Hawthorn<sup>11</sup> on the Boundary  
by the Garden of Repose.  
When whatever covered the Hawthorn,  
covered it, his sight did not waver  
nor was it carried away. He saw  
some of his Lord's greatest signs.

**The Star 53: 1-18**

## PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

Remind, for by your Lord's favour, you are no fortune-teller nor madman. Or do they say: "[He is] a poet. We will await some quirk of fate to [upset] him." SAY: "Lie in wait; I am waiting along with you."

**The Mount 52: 29-31**

We have not taught him any poetry, nor would it be fitting for him.

**Yā-Sīn 36: 69**

SAY: "I am only human like you. It has been revealed to me that your god is God Alone. Go straight towards Him and seek His forgiveness; How awful will it be for associators."

**Set Forth in Detail 41: 6**

We have not sent anyone before you except men from among the townfolk whom We have inspired. Have they not travelled around the earth and seen what the consequence was for those who preceded them? A home in the Hereafter will be better for those who do their duty. Will they not use their reason?

**Joseph 12: 109**

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11. *Sidra* in the Qur'ān.



A messenger has come to you from among yourselves; he is concerned that you have come to grief, is anxious for you, compassionate, merciful towards believers.

Repentance 9: 128

Perhaps you will fret yourself to death worrying over them if they do not believe this report.<sup>12</sup>

The Cave 18: 6\*

You have been [formed] with tremendous character.

The Pen 68: 4

We have sent you only as a mercy for [everybody in] the Universe.

Prophets 21: 107

## MUHAMMAD AND BELIEVERS

Muhammad is God's messenger,<sup>13</sup> while those who are with him are strict with disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You will see them bowing, kneeling, and seeking bounty and approval from God. Their sign [shows] on their faces from the effect of bowing down on their knees [in worship].

Such is their description in the Torah,<sup>14</sup> while their description in the Gospel is like a field crop which puts forth its shoots so that it swells up, till it grows thick enough to stand straight on its stalk in the way farmers admire, so that unbelievers are exasperated by them. God has promised forgiveness and splendid earnings to any of those who believe and perform honourable deeds.

Victory 48: 29

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12. That is, the teachings of the Qur'an.

13. This is the second part of our confession of Faith, the first part being "There is no deity except God [Alone]."

14. The first five books in the Old Testament.

## HOW TO TREAT THE PROPHET

You who believe, do not press forward in the presence of God and His messenger. Heed God; God is Alert, Aware. You who believe, do not raise your voices over the Prophet's voice nor shout at him as you shout at one another, lest your actions miscarry while you do not even notice it.

**The Apartments 49: 1-2**

In God's messenger you have a fine model for someone who looks forward to [meeting] God and to the Last Day, and mentions God frequently.

**The Confederates 33: 21**

God and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. You who believe, pray for [God's] blessings for him and greet him properly. God has cursed those who [try to] annoy God and His messenger in this world and the Hereafter, and has prepared shameful torment for them.

**The Confederates 33: 56-57\***

You who have received the Book, believe in what We have sent down to you as a confirmation of what you already have, lest We deform your faces and set them on backwards, or curse them as We cursed the people of the Sabbath. God's command must be fulfilled.

**Women 4: 47**

## Part IV

# Belief and Practice

## Chapter 10

# *OUR CREED AND ITS COMMANDMENTS*

### PROFESSION OF FAITH

Your God is God Alone.

**The Cow 2: 163**

Muhammad is God's Messenger.

**Victory 48: 29**

SAY: "We believe in God and what has been sent down to us, and what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants, and what was given to Moses, Jesus and the prophets by their Lord. We do not discriminate against any one of them, and are committed to [live at] peace with Him."<sup>1</sup>

**The House of 'Imrân 3: 84**

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1. OR are Muslims before Him, see Glossary s.v. Islam.

The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and [so do] believers: everyone believes in God and His angels, His books and His messengers. We do not differentiate between any of His messengers. They say: "We have heard and obey; [we ask] Your pardon, our Lord! Towards You lies the Return."

God assigns to a soul only what it can cope with: in its favour stands whatever it has earned, while it is held responsible for anything it has brought upon itself.

Our Lord, do not take us to task  
if we have forgotten or erred.  
Our Lord, do not lay any obligation upon us  
such as You have laid on those before us.  
Our Lord, do not overburden us  
with more than we can bear.  
Pardon us, forgive us, and grant us mercy.  
You are our Protector,  
so support us against disbelieving folk.

The Cow 2 285-286\*

O Prophet, whenever believing women come to swear allegiance to you, saying they will not associate anything with God, nor steal, nor misbehave sexually, nor kill their children, nor bring any slander that they may invent between either their hands or legs,<sup>2</sup> nor disobey you in any decent matter; then accept their allegiance and seek forgiveness from God for them. God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Examining Her 60 12

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2. That is, either fabricated gossip or sexual misconduct.

## MAJOR COMMANDMENTS

SAY: "Come, I will recite what your Lord has forbidden you:

- [I] Do not associate anything with Him;
- [II] And [show] kindness towards both [your] parents.
- [III] Do not kill your children because of poverty;  
We shall provide for you as well as for them.
- [IV] Do not indulge in shameful acts, be they open or secret.
- [V] Do not kill any person whom God has forbidden, except through [due process of] law. He has instructed you in this so that you may reason.
- [VI] Do not approach an orphan's wealth before he comes of age, except to improve it.
- [VII] Give full measure and weight in all fairness. We do not assign any person more than he can cope with.
- [VIII] Whenever you speak, be just even though it concerns a close relative.
- [IX] Fulfil God's covenant. Thus has He instructed you so that you may bear it in mind.
- [X] This is My Straight Road, so follow it and do not follow [other] paths which will separate you from His path. Thus has He instructed you so that you may do your duty."

Livestock 6: 151-153

Do not place any other deity beside God, lest you sit back disgraced, forsaken.

Your Lord has decreed that you should worship nothing except Him, and [show] kindness to your parents; whether either or both of them attain old age [while they are] still with you, never say to them: "Ugh!" nor scold either of them. Speak to them in a generous fashion.<sup>3</sup> Serve them with tenderness and humility<sup>4</sup> and SAY: "My Lord, show them mercy, just as they cared for me<sup>5</sup> as a little child."

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3. OR with dignity and respect.

4. Literally, lower a gentle wing of mercy on them both.

5. OR as they [carefully] brought me up.

Your Lord is well Aware of what is on your minds; if you behave honourably, then He will be Forgiving towards those who are penitent.

Render your close relative his due, as well as the pauper and the wayfarer. Do not squander [your wealth] extravagantly; spendthrifts are the devils' brothers, and Satan has always been ungrateful towards his Lord. Yet if you have to avoid them,<sup>6</sup> seeking some mercy which you may expect from your Lord, still speak a courteous word to them. Do not keep your hand gripping at your neck nor stretch it out as far as it will reach,<sup>7</sup> lest you sit back blameworthy, destitute. Your Lord extends sustenance to anyone He wishes, and measures it out [to anyone He wishes]; He is Informed, Observant about His servants.

Do not kill your children in dread of poverty; We shall provide for both them and you. Killing them is a grievous sin.<sup>8</sup>

Do not commit adultery. It is shameful and an evil way to act.

Do not kill any soul whom God has forbidden you to, except through [due process of] law. If anyone is killed unjustly, We have given his nearest relatives authority [to act], yet let him not exceed the limits in killing; surely he shall be supported.

Do not approach an orphan's property before he comes of age unless it is to improve it.

Fulfil your promises; every promise will be enquired into.

Give full measure whenever you measure anything, and weigh with proper scales; that is better and the finest way of acting.

Do not pursue something of which you have no knowledge: your hearing, sight and intellect<sup>9</sup> will all be questioned concerning it.

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6. That is, the relatives, paupers and wayfarers.

7. That is, be neither a miser nor a spendthrift.

8. Literally, a serious error.

9. *Fu'ad* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.

Do not walk exultantly on the earth; you can never tunnel through the earth nor rival the mountains in height.

The evil [aspects] of all this is hateful in the sight of your Lord. Such is some of the wisdom Your Lord has revealed to you.

**The Night Journey 17: 22–39\***



## Chapter 11

### WHO ARE MUSLIMS?

By the Time<sup>1</sup>  
man is at a loss  
except for those who believe,  
perform honourable deeds,  
recommend Truth and encourage patience<sup>2</sup>

The Time 103 1-3 (complete)

#### GOD'S SERVANTS

The servants of the Merciful are those who walk modestly on earth and say, "Peace!" whenever ignorant men address them, and spend the night bowing down on their knees and standing before their Lord, and who say:

Our Lord,  
ward off Hell's torment from us.  
Its torment is atrocious;  
it is such an evil residence and station:

who when they spend, neither give too lavishly nor yet hold back, and keep a happy medium; who do not appeal to any other deity besides God, nor kill any soul whom God has forbidden [them to] except through [due process of] law, nor misbehave sexually,

The Standard 25: 63-68

1. That is, time as it is wearing to an end. *Al-'Asr* means time, age, epoch, as well as evening. Here it is invoked in testimony to the final outcome of the historic struggle between good and evil.
2. *Sabr* in the Arabic text; see Glossary.

Anyone who repents and acts honourably should turn to God in repentance;

and those who will not bear false witness, and when they pass by people [engaged in] idle talk, pass by in a dignified manner;

who, whenever they are reminded of their Lord's signs, do not drop down deaf and blind to them;

and [rather] who say: "Our Lord, grant us, in our spouses and our offspring, the comfort of our eyes and make us a model for those who do their duty."<sup>3</sup>

**The Standard 25: 71-74\***

SAY: "My servants who believe, heed your Lord. Those who act kindly in this world will have kindness [as their reward]. God's earth is vast. Surely the patient will be paid their wages without any reckoning."

SAY: "I have been ordered to serve God sincerely, [making] religion exclusively His. I am commanded to be the first Muslim."<sup>4</sup>

**Throgs 39: 10-12**

## TRUE MUSLIMS

You who believe, heed God in the way He should be heeded, and do not die unless you are Muslims.

Cling firmly together by means of God's rope, and do not be divided. Remember God's favour towards you when you were enemies; He united your hearts so that you became brothers because of His favour. You were on the brink of a fiery pit, and He saved you from it. Thus, God explains His signs to you, so that you may be guided.

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3. OR grant us leadership among the heedful.

4. OR those who are committed to live at peace with God.

Let there be a community among you who will invite [others] to [do] good, command what is proper and forbid what is improper; those will be prosperous. Do not be like those who split up and disagreed after explanations had come to them; those will have awful torment!

The House of 'Imrān 3: 102-105

Anything you are given is only for [fleeting] enjoyment during worldly life, while what God possesses is better and more enduring for those who believe and rely on their Lord, who refrain from the greatest offences<sup>5</sup> and sexual misconduct, and forgive whenever they have been angry, and who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer; and whose business is [conducted] through consultation among themselves, and spend some of what We have provided them with, and who protect themselves whenever any outrage happens to them. The reward for an injury should be an injury proportionate to it.

Yet anyone who overlooks things and becomes reconciled shall have his payment from God; He does not love wrongdoers. Those who protect themselves after being wronged will have no blame brought against them; blame can be brought only against those who mistreat [other] men and act outrageously on earth without any right to do so. Those will have painful torment. Anyone who acts patiently and forgives, [shows] perseverance in affairs.

Consultation 42: 36-43

## THE GRATEFUL AND THE UNGRATEFUL FARMERS

Set forth the example of two men for them: We granted two vineyards to one of them, and bordered them with datepalms and planted field crops in between. Each garden produced its food and did not fail to yield its best; We even caused a river to spring forth in the midst of them.

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5. OR sins, misdeeds.

One man had fruit [in abundance] and told his companion while he was discussing things with him: "I am wealthier than you are, and have a bigger following." He entered his garden while he was thus harming his own soul. He said: "I think that this will never disappear. I do not think the [final] Hour is at hand. If I am ever sent back to my Lord, I shall find something better than it in exchange."

His companion told him while he was discussing things with him: "Have you disbelieved in the One Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen; then fashioned you into a man? As for me, He is God my Lord, and I do not associate anyone with my Lord. Why, as you entered your garden, did you not say: 'Whatever God wills; there is no strength except through God [Alone]!?' Even if you see that I am less wealthy than you are and have fewer children, perhaps my Lord will still give me something better than your garden and send a reckoning down from Heaven on it, so that it will become a bald hilltop, or its water will sink down and you will never manage to find it [again]."

His produce was destroyed and he began to wring his hands over what he had spent on it, since it had tumbled down from its trellises. He kept saying: "It is too bad for me; I should never have associated anyone with my Lord!"

He had no party to support him against God, so he was not supported. In such a situation [it becomes evident] that protection comes from the True God [Alone]. He is Best as a recompense and Best in results.

The Cave 18: 32-34

## BAD AND GOOD WIVES

God has made up a parable for those who disbelieve: Noah's wife and Lot's wife. They were married to two of Our honourable servants, yet they betrayed them both. Neither received any help at all from them so far as God was concerned. They were told: "Enter the Fire along with the [rest of those] who are entering it."

God has (also) made up a parable for those who believe, concerning Pharaoh's wife. She said: "My Lord, build a house for me in the Garden along with You, and save me from Pharaoh and his actions. Save me from such wrongdoing folk."

And [concerning] Mary, the descendant of 'Imrān, who preserved her chastity. We breathed some of Our spirit into her, and she [thereby] confirmed her Lord's words and books. She was of the obedient.

**Prohibition 66:** 10-12

Believers will succeed!

[This means] those who are reverent in their prayer, who refrain from idle talk, who are active in [providing] the welfare due<sup>6</sup> and who guard their private parts except with their spouses and those their right hands may control, since then they are not blameworthy. Those who seek anything beyond that are transgressors. And those who hold to their trust and their pledge and who attend to their prayers will be the heirs who shall inherit Paradise to live there forever.

**Believers 23:** 1-11\*

God has bought their persons and their property from believers, so that they may have the Garden [instead]. They fight for God's sake: they kill and are killed, as a promise binding upon Him [to be found] in the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'ān. Who is more Trustworthy with His pledge than God? So rejoice in your bargain which you have reached with Him. That is the supreme achievement [for] those who repent, who worship, who praise [God], who travel, who bow their heads and knees [in prayer], who command what is proper, forbid what is improper, and keep within God's limits; spread such news to believers.

**Repentance 9:** 111-112

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6. OR who are active in promoting moral purification.

## THE TRANQUIL SOUL

O tranquil soul,  
return to your Lord,  
well-pleased and pleasing [Him].  
Enter among My servants  
and enter My Garden.

Daybreak 89: 27-30

## Chapter 12

# PRAYER

### GOD'S GUIDANCE

SAY: "God's guidance means [real] guidance. We have been ordered to become Muslims before<sup>1</sup> the Lord of the Universe: 'Keep up prayer and heed Him!' He is the One before Whom you will be summoned."

Livestock 6: 71–72

I am God [Alone]! There is no deity except Myself, so serve Me and keep up prayer to remember Me by.

Tā-Hā 20: 14

### PRAISING THE LORD

When God's support comes,  
as well as victory, and you see  
people entering God's religion<sup>2</sup> in droves:  
then hymn your Lord's praise  
and ask Him for forgiveness;  
for He is so Relenting.

Support 110: 1–3 (complete)

Do not say about anything: "I am doing that tomorrow," unless [you add]: "Should God so wish." Remember your Lord whenever you forget, and SAY: "Perhaps my Lord will guide me even closer than this to proper behaviour."

The Cave 18: 23–24

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1. OR commit ourselves to live in peace with

2. *Dīn* in the Arabic text, see Glossary

Glory be to God when you reach evening  
and when you arise in the morning!  
Praise belongs to Him in Heaven and on Earth;  
[glorify Him] in the late afternoon  
and when you enter the noon hour.

He brings forth the living from the dead  
and brings forth the dead from the living,  
and He revives the earth after its death.  
Thus shall you be brought forth again.

The [East] Romans (OR The Byzantines) 30: 17-19

## CONDITIONS FOR PRAYER

### (a) **Washing before Prayer (*Wuḍūʾ*)**

You who believe, whenever you intend to pray, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads and [wash] your feet up to the ankles.

### (b) **A Full Bath (*Ghusl*) if Soiled<sup>3</sup>**

If you are soiled, take a full bath. If you are ill or on a journey, or one of you has just come from the closet or had any contact with women, and you do not find any water, then resort to wholesome soil and wipe your faces and hands with some of it.

God does not want to place any inconvenience on you, but He does want to purify you and to complete His favour towards you, in order that you may be grateful.

The Table 5 6

You who believe, do not attempt to pray while you are drunk<sup>4</sup> until you know what you are saying; nor after a seminal emission

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3. That is, in a state of ceremonial impurity, *junub* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.

4. This relates to the period when the use of intoxicants (*ikhmār*) was not totally banned. Nonetheless the instruction, by analogy and inference remains applicable to situations where a person is not in a state of full consciousness.



— except when travelling — until you take a full bath. If you are ill or on a journey, or one of you has come from the closet, or has had contact with any women, and you do not find any water, then pick up some wholesome soil and wipe your faces and your hands with it. God is Pardoning, Forgiving.

Women 4: 43

**(c) Cleanliness in Dress**

Children of Adam, wear your best clothes to every place of worship.

The Heights 7: 31

... purify your clothing and steer clear of filth.

[The Man] Wearing a Cloak 74: 4–5

**(d) The Direction of Prayer**

No matter where you may set out from, turn your face towards the Hallowed Mosque.<sup>5</sup> Wherever you may be, turn your faces towards it.

The Cow 2: 150

**(e) The Times for Prayer**

Prayer is prescribed for believers at fixed times.

Women 4: 103

Keep up prayer at both ends of the day and at the approach of night. Good deeds remove evil deeds: that is a Reminder for such persons as will be reminded.

Hūd [the Messenger] 11: 114

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5 That is, the Ka'ba in Makkah.

Keep up prayer from the decline of the sun until twilight before nightfall;

and read the Qurʾān<sup>6</sup> at daybreak, since the Reading at daybreak will be witnessed.

At night, wake up and pray<sup>7</sup> during it as an extra benefit for yourself; perhaps your Lord will raise you up again to a praiseworthy standing.

SAY: "My Lord, let me enter through a rightful entrance and leave by a rightful exit. Grant me supporting authority from Your presence.

**The Night Journey 17: 78–80**

So be patient about anything they may say and hymn your Lord's praise before sunrise and before its setting and in the small hours of the night. Glorify [Him] as well at both ends of the day so that you may meet approval.

Do not strain your eyes towards what We let some types of them enjoy, the flowering of worldly life, so that We may test them by means of it. Your Lord's provision is better and more lasting.

Order your household to pray and to discipline themselves by means of it. We do not ask you for any provision; We will provide for you, and the outcome rests on doing your duty.

**Tā-Hā 20: 130–132**

**(f) Prayer in Congregation**

When you are among them [Muḥammad], and have stood up to lead them in prayer . . .

**Women 4: 102**

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6. OR Reading

7. *Tahajjud* in the Arabic text, see Glossary

... worship along with those who bow their heads.

**The Cow 2: 43**

**{g} Other Conditions for Prayer**

SAY: "Appeal to God, or appeal to the Merciful: whichever Name you may invoke. He still has the Finest Names."

Do not shout in your prayer nor say it under your breath; seek a course in between.

**The Night Journey 17: 110**

Recite whatever has been revealed to you from the Book, and keep up prayer: prayer restrains one from indecency and misconduct. Yet mentioning God is even more important,<sup>8</sup> for God knows whatever you do.

**The Spider 29: 45\***

... chant the Qur'ān distinctly as it should be chanted.

**Wrapped up 73: 4**

**FRIDAY PRAYER**

You who believe, when [the call to] prayer is announced on the day of Congregation,<sup>9</sup> hasten to remember God and stop trading. That will be better for you if you only realized it.

Once prayer has been performed, then disperse throughout the land and seek God's bounty. Remember God often so that you may prosper. Yet whenever they see some business or some sport, they flock towards it and leave you standing there [alone].

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8. Literally the greatest [thing].

9. OR on Friday.

SAY "What God has is better  
than any sport or business.  
God is the best Provider!"

Congregation [OR Friday] 62: 9-11

## THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER

Remember Me, I shall remember you! Thank Me, and do not be  
ungrateful to Me.

You who believe, seek help through patience and prayer . . .

The Cow 2: 152-153

Believers will succeed! [This means] those who are reverent in  
their prayers.

Believers 23: 1-2

Bow down on your knees and come closer [to God].

The Clot 96: 19

Seek help through patience and prayer, since it is exacting except  
for the submissive . . .

The Cow 2: 45

. . . except for the prayerful who are constant at their prayers . . .

Ascending Stairways 70: 22-23

It will be too bad for the prayerful who are absent-minded as they  
pray, who aim to be noticed . . .

Small Kindnesses<sup>10</sup> 107: 4-6

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10 *Mē'ūn* in the Arabic text which means small acts of charity or kindness public assistance. It also means common necessities.

## Chapter 13

### *SOME MAJOR DUTIES*

#### FASTING

You who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you, just as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may do your duty, on days which have been fixed. Any of you who is ill or on a journey [should choose] a number of other days. For those who can afford it, making up for it means feeding a poor man; if someone voluntarily offers even more, it is even better for him; although it is better for you to fast, if you only knew.

The month of Ramadān is when the Qur'ān was sent down as guidance for mankind, and with explanations for guidance, and as a Standard. Let any of you who is at home during the month, fast in it; anyone who is ill or on a journey shall [set] a number of other days.

God wants things to be easy for you and does not want any hardship for you, so complete the period and magnify<sup>1</sup> God because He has guided you, so that you may be grateful.

#### GOD'S CARE

Whenever My servants ask you about Me,  
[tell them] **I am Near.**

I answer the appeal of the prayerful  
whenever he appeals to Me.

Let them respond to Me  
and believe in Me  
so they may be directed.

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1. SAY God is Greatest! (*Allāh Akbar!*)

It is lawful for you to have sex with your wives on the night of the Fast: they are garments for you while you are garments for them. God knows how you have been deceiving yourselves, so He has relented towards you and pardoned you. Now [feel free to] go to them and seek what God has prescribed for you.

Eat and drink until the white streak [of dawn] can be distinguished from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until nightfall and have no dealings with women while you are secluded at your devotions in the mosques.<sup>2</sup> Such are God's limits, so do not try to cross them. Thus God explains His signs to mankind that they may do their duty.

**The Cow 2:** 183-187

#### THE WELFARE DUE

Those who recite God's Book, keep up prayer and spend something both secretly and openly from whatever He has provided for them, may hope for business which will never slacken, so that He may repay them their wages and grant them even more out of His bounty. He is Forgiving, Appreciative.

**Originator (OR The Angels) 35:** 29-30

Accept charity<sup>3</sup> from their wealth; you will cleanse and purify them by means of it.

**Repentance 9:** 103

Charity<sup>3</sup> is [meant] only for the poor, the needy, those working at [collecting and distributing] it, those [possible converts] whose hearts are being reconciled [to yours], for [freeing] captives and debtors, and [in fighting] in God's way, and for the wayfarer, as a duty imposed by God. God is Aware, Wise.

**Repentance 9:** 60

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2. *Itikāf* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.

3. *Ṣadaqāh* in the Qur'an which literally means charity. But in this context it refers to *Zakāt*, which we have called the welfare due. For *Zakāt*, see Glossary.

Have you seen someone who rejects religion?<sup>4</sup>  
That is the person who pushes the orphan aside  
and does not promote feeding the needy.

It will be too bad for the prayerful  
who are absent-minded as they pray,  
who aim to be noticed  
while holding back small kindnesses.

**Small Kindnesses** 107: 1-7 (complete)

## PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrimage to the House<sup>5</sup> is a duty imposed on mankind by God for anyone who can afford a way to do so.

**The House of 'Imrān** 3: 97

Pilgrimage falls during specific months.<sup>6</sup> Anyone who undertakes the pilgrimage during them should not indulge in any sexual act, nor any immorality or wrangling during the pilgrimage. God knows about any good you do. Make provision; yet the best provision is heedfulness. Heed Me, those who are prudent.

**The Cow** 2: 197

Thus We settled Abraham at the site of the House, [saying]: "Do not associate anything with Me;

and purify My house for those who walk around it, and those who stand there [praying], and those who bow and kneel down with their foreheads on the ground [in worship].

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4. OR [the concept of] Repayment, the final Judgement in the Hereafter

5. The Ka'ba in Makka.

6. Shawwāl, Dhu l-Qa'da and the first nine days of Dhu l-Hijja constitute the months of the *Hajj* during which one can enter into *ihrām* (the obligatory dress for the *Hajj*). The actual days on which the *Hajj* is performed are from the 8th-12th of Dhu'l-Hijja when a man can enter into the state of *ihrām* for performing the Pilgrimage

"Proclaim the Pilgrimage among mankind: they will come to you on foot and on every lean beast [of burden];

let them come from every deep gully,<sup>7</sup> to bear witness to the advantages they have, and to mention God's name on appointed days over such heads of livestock as He has provided them with.

"Then eat some of it and feed the needy pauper.

"Then let them attend to their grooming, fulfil their vows, and let them circle round the Ancient House."

Pilgrimage 22 | 26-29

#### PROMOTING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL

Let there be a community among you who will invite [others] to [do] good, command what is proper and forbid what is improper; those will be prosperous.

The House of 'Imrān 3: 104\*

You who believe, shall I lead you to a bargain that will save you from painful torment? You should believe in God and His messenger, and strive<sup>8</sup> in God's way with your property and persons; that will be better for you if you only knew. He will forgive you your offences and show you into Gardens through which rivers flow, and pleasant dwellings in the Gardens of Eden. That will be the supreme achievement. And something else you will love [to have]: support from God and victory close at hand. Proclaim such to believers.

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7 OR distant quarter.

8 *Jāhidū* in the Arabic text, derived from *J-H-D* signifying effort and struggle. *Jihād* is a noun from the same root — see Glossary s.v. *Jihād*.



You who believe, act as God's supporters as Jesus, the son of Mary told the disciples: "Who will be my supporters [on the way] to God?" The disciples said: "We are God's supporters." A faction from the Children of Israel believed, while another faction disbelieved. We assisted the ones who believed against their enemy till they held the upper hand.

**Battle Ranks 61:** 10-14

Prepare any [military] force you can muster against them, and any cavalry posts with which you can overawe God's enemy and your own enemy, as well as others besides them whom you do not know. God however knows them.

**Booty 8:** 60

SAY: "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your spouses and your family ties, as well as the wealth you have acquired and the business you dread will slump, and dwellings you are so fond of, are all dearer to you than God and His messenger, or striving for His sake, then wait till God brings His command to pass. God does not guide immoral folk.

**Repentance 9:** 24\*

## Part V

# Aspects of Morality

## Chapter 14

# MORAL VALUES

## VIRTUE

Virtue does not mean that you turn your faces towards the East or West, but virtue means to believe in God [Alone], the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the prophets; and to give one's wealth away, no matter how one loves it,<sup>1</sup> to near relatives, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer and beggars, and towards freeing captives; and to keep up prayer and pay the welfare due; and those who keep their word whenever they promise anything, and are patient under suffering and hardship and in time of violence. Those are the ones who are loyal, and those are the heedful.

**The Cow 2: 177**

You will never attain virtue until you spend something you are fond of; while God is Aware of anything you may spend.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 92**

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1. OR out of love for Him.

## HEEDFULNESS

O mankind, We have created you from a male and female and set you up as nations and tribes, so that you may recognize one another. The noblest among you before God are those of you who best perform their duty; God is Aware, Informed.

**The Apartments 49: 13**

Is someone who founds his building on doing his duty and pleasing God, better or someone who founds his building along the edge of a crumbling bluff, so that it crumbles along with him into Hell-fire? God does not guide such wrongful folk: the building which they have built is an unceasing source of doubt within their hearts, until their hearts are torn to pieces. God is Aware, Wise.

**Repentance 9: 109-110**

## THE GOLDEN RULE

Who is finer in speech than someone who appeals to God, acts honourably, and says: "I am a Muslim"?<sup>2</sup> A good deed and an evil deed are not alike: repay [evil] with something that is finer, and see how someone who is separated from you by enmity will become a bosom friend.

Yet only those who discipline themselves will attain it; only the most fortunate will achieve it.

Nevertheless if some impulse from Satan should prompt you, seek refuge with God; He is Alert, Aware.

**Set Forth in Detail 41: 33-36**

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2. OR I have committed myself to live in peace [with God].

## PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

If they should reject you, then say: "My behaviour is my own concern, while your behaviour is your concern. You are innocent of anything I do, while I am innocent of what you are doing."

**Jonah 10: 41**

Anyone who submits to guidance will be guided only for his own benefit while anyone who strays away, strays only to his own harm. No burdened soul shall bear another's burden.

**The Night Journey 17: 15\***

God only holds a person responsible for something He has given him. God will grant ease following hardship.

**Divorce 65: 7**

## TRUTHFULNESS

You who believe, heed God and stand by those who are truthful.

**Repentance 9: 119**

... so God may reward the truthful for their truthfulness.

**The Confederates 33: 24**

Who does more wrong than someone who lies about God and denies the truth when it comes to him? Is there not room in Hell for such disbelievers? He who brings the truth and he who confirms it, are heedful. They will have anything they wish from their Lord: that is the reward for those who act kindly.

God will erase for them the worst that they have done: He will reward them by paying them for the finest part of anything they have done.

**Throongs 39: 32-35\***

Believers are merely the ones who believe in God and His messenger; then never doubt and strive for God's sake with their property and persons. Those are the truthful.

**The Apartments 49: 15**

You who believe, stand steadfast before God as witnesses for justice, even though it is against yourselves, your own parents or your own close relatives; whether it concerns a rich or a poor man, God stands closer to them both. Do not follow any passion so that you deal justly. If you twist or turn away, God is still Informed of what you do.

**Women 4: 135\***

#### KEEPING ONE'S WORD

Do not use God as an excuse in your oaths, to keep yourselves from being virtuous, doing your duty and improving matters among mankind. God is Alert, Aware.

**The Cow 2: 224**

God will not take you to task for any slip in your oaths, but He does take you to task for whatever you have sworn to solemnly [and then ignored].

**The Table 5: 89**

God commands justice, kindness and giving [their due] to near relatives, while He forbids sexual misconduct, impropriety and insolence. He instructs you so that you may be mindful.

Fulfil God's agreement once you have pledged to do so and do not break any oaths once they have been sworn. You have set up God as a Surety for yourselves; God knows whatever you do.

**Bees 16: 90-91\***

## TRUSTWORTHINESS

God orders you to restore things entrusted [to you] to their [rightful] owners.

Women 4: 58

If you are on a journey and do not find any literate person,<sup>3</sup> then a deposit may be held as a lien. If one of you entrusts [something to] another, the one who has been entrusted with it should hand over his security and he should heed God his Lord and not hide any testimony. Anyone who hides it has a sinful heart. God is Aware of what you do.

The Cow 2: 283

And those who preserve their trusts and their pledge and who attend to their prayers will be the heirs who shall inherit Paradise to live there for ever.

Believers 23: 8-10

## JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY

We have sent Our messengers with explanations, and sent the Book and the Balance down with them, so that mankind may conduct themselves with all fairness . . .

Iron 57: 25

Whenever you judge between people, you should judge with [a sense of] justice.

Women 4: 58

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3. *Katib*, literally one who can write. The verse lays down the principle that dealings involving debt should be put into writing.

Whenever you speak, be just, even though it concerns a close relative.

**Livestock 6:** 153

## PATIENCE AND DISCIPLINE

Be patient, just as those messengers who were steadfast were patient.

**The Dunes 46:** 35

You who believe, be patient, discipline yourselves, and hold yourselves ready. Heed God so that you may prosper.

**The House of 'Imrān 3:** 200

You who believe, seek help through patience and prayer; God is with the patient.

Do not say: "They are dead," about anyone who is killed for God's sake. Rather are they living, even though you do not perceive it.

We shall test you with a bit of fear and hunger, as well as loss of wealth and lives and produce. Announce [good news] to patient people, who say, whenever misfortune strikes them: "We belong to God and are returning to Him," — that they will have blessings from their Lord and mercy. Those are the guided ones.

**The Cow 2:** 153-157\*

## ELEMENTS OF PATIENCE

### (a) **Endurance**

Endure patiently whatever may afflict you, for that shows determination in [handling] matters.

**Luqman 31:** 17



Anyone who acts patiently and forgives [shows] perseverance in affairs.

**Consultation 42:** 43

Be patient with anything they say, yet steer clear of them in a polite manner.

**Wrapped Up 73:** 10

(b) **Steadfastness**

“Seek help from God and be patient; the earth belongs to God. Anyone He wishes from among His servants shall inherit it.

**The Heights 7:** 128

Follow what has been revealed to you and be patient until God judges, for He is the best Judge.

**Jonah 10:** 109\*

“Our Lord, fill us full of patience and make our feet firm. Support us against disbelieving folk.”

**The Cow 2:** 250

(c) **Controlling Desire**

Restrict yourself to those who appeal to their Lord in the morning and evening, desiring His Countenance;<sup>4</sup> do not let your eyes wander too far away from them, desiring the attraction of worldly life.

**The Cave 18:** 28

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4. Literally, face, signifying His Pleasure

## PATIENCE AND ITS REWARDS

... Who persevere in seeking their Lord's Countenance. And keep up prayer and spend whatever We have provided them with, both secretly and publicly, and ward off evil with good; those will have the compensation of the [final] Home.

**Thunder 13: 22**

Surely the patient will be paid their wages without any reckoning.

**Throings 39: 10**

Those will be rewarded with the Mansion because they have been so patient, and welcomed there with greetings as well as 'Peace!', to live there for ever. How fine is such a residence and status!

**The Standard 25: 75-76**

"Peace be upon you because you have been so patient." How blissful will be the final Home!

**Thunder 13: 24**

## COURAGE

Those whom people have told: "Some people have gathered to [oppose] you, so be on your guard against them;" yet it increased them in faith and they said, "God is Sufficient for us; and how splendid is such a Guardian!"

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 173\***

When the believers saw the confederate forces<sup>5</sup> they said, "This is what God and His Messenger have promised us. God and His Messenger have told the truth." It only increased them in faith and submission.

**The Confederates 33: 22\***

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5. *Al-Ahzāb* means the 'parties' or allied or confederate groups. Here in the Qur'an this refers to the combined forces of the Arab tribes and Jews who invaded the city state of Madīna in 5 A.H. (626 C.E.).

## TOLERANCE

Let there be no compulsion in religion. The Right Way<sup>6</sup> has been distinguished from error; so he who disbelieves in the arrogant ones<sup>7</sup> and believes in God has grasped the Firmest Handle, which will never break. God is Alert, Aware.

God is the Patron of those who believe.  
He brings them out of darkness into Light,  
while those who disbelieve have the arrogant ones<sup>7</sup>  
for their patrons; they will lead them  
out of Light into darkness. Those are  
inmates of the Fire; they will remain there.

The Cow 2: 256-257

Do not drive away those who appeal to their Lord, seeking His Countenance<sup>8</sup> in the early morning and the evening. You have nothing to do with their reckoning, while they have nothing to do with your reckoning. Should you drive them off, you would be a wrongdoer.

Livestock 6: 52

Do not abuse those they appeal to instead of to God, lest they abuse God out of enmity without realizing it. Thus We have made their action seem attractive to every nation; then their return will be to their Lord, so He may notify them about how they have been acting.

Livestock 6: 108

## SELF-DEFENCE

Those who have been wronged are permitted to fight [back] — since God is Able to support them — they who have been driven from their homes, without any justification, merely because they say: "Our Lord is God [Alone]."

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6. *Rushd* in the Arabic text, see Glossary.

7. *Tāghūt* in the Arabic text see Glossary

8. Literally, face signifying His Pleasure.

If it were not because God repels some men by means of others, cloisters, churches, synagogues and mosques where God's name is mentioned frequently would have been demolished.

**Pilgrimage 22: 39–40**

God will support anyone who retaliates insofar as he has suffered, then is set upon again; God is Pardoning, Forgiving.

**Pilgrimage 22: 60**

## MODERATION

### (a) In Prayer

Do not shout in your prayer nor say it under you breath; seek a course in between.

**The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 110**

### (b) In Charity

Do not keep your hand gripping at your neck nor stretch it out as far as it will reach,<sup>9</sup> lest you sit back blameworthy, destitute.

**The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 29**

### (c) In Spending

. . . who, when they spend, neither give too lavishly nor yet hold back, and keep a happy medium . . .

**The Standard 25: 67**

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9. That is, be neither a miser nor a spendthrift.

#### (d) In Speech and Action

Be modest in the way you walk, and lower your voice: the ugliest sound is a donkey's braying.

Luqman 31: 19

#### KINDNESS (*IHSAN*)

Those who act kindly will have kindness and even more besides, while neither soo: nor any disgrace will line their faces. Those will be inhabitants of the Garden; they will live in it for ever.

Jonah 10: 26

... act kindly just as God has treated you kindly.

The Story 28: 77

#### GENEROSITY

Those who spend their wealth night and day, both privately and publicly, will receive their earnings from their Lord. No fear will lie upon them nor need they ever feel saddened.

The Cow 2: 274

#### FORGIVENESS

... let them act forgivingly and show indulgence. Do you not like God to pardon you? God is Forgiving, Merciful.

The Light 24: 22

Practise forgiveness, command decency and avoid ignorant people.

The Heights 7: 199

## KINDNESS AND AFFECTION

It is because of mercy from God that you have been so lenient with them. If you had been harsh and cruel-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. Pardon them, seek forgiveness for them, and consult them on the matter.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 159**

## REPAYING BAD WITH GOOD

A good deed and an evil deed are not alike: repay [evil] with something that is finer and see how someone who is separated from you because of enmity will become a bosom friend!

**Set Forth in Detail 41: 34**

Repay evil with something that is finer.

**Believers 23: 96**

... ward off evil with good; those will have the compensation of the [Final] Home, gardens of Eden which they will enter . . .

**Thunder 13: 22-23**

## HUMILITY

... and the Merciful's servants who walk modestly on the earth and say: "Peace [be upon you]," whenever ignorant men address them.

**The Standard 25: 63**

Do not sneer down your cheek at other men nor walk brashly around the earth: God does not love any swaggering boaster.

**Luqmān 31: 18**

## SELF-RESPECT

. . . when they pass by [people] gossiping,<sup>10</sup> pass by in a dignified manner . . .

**The Standard 25:** 72

[Take care] of the poor who, being totally absorbed in working for God's cause, cannot manage to travel [freely] on the earth [seeking their livelihood]. An ignorant person may assume they are rich because of their modesty; yet you will recognize them from their signs: they do not make insistent demands on people.

**The Cow 2:** 273

## MODESTY AND CHASTITY

O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters, and believers' wives as well, to draw their cloaks close around themselves. That is more appropriate so that they may be recognized and not molested. God is Forgiving, Merciful.

**The Confederates 33:** 59

He [Satan] led them on by deceiving [them]. Once they had tasted the [fruit of the] tree, their private parts became apparent to both of them, and they started to patch together leaves from the Garden for themselves.

**The Heights 7:** 22

Tell believers to avert their glances and to guard their private parts; that is purer for them. God is informed about anything they may do. Tell believing women to avert their glances and guard their private parts, and not to display their charms except what [normally] appears of them.

**The Light 24:** 30–31

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<sup>10</sup> *Leghw* refers to things that are vain, idle and futile.

Do not indulge in indecent acts, be they open or secret.

**Livestock 6:** 151\*

## ETIQUETTE

Whenever you are welcomed with a greeting, then answer back with something finer than it, or [at least] return it. God is a Reckoner for everything.

**Women 4:** 86

You who believe, do not enter any houses except your own unless you are sure of their occupants' consent, and greet them politely; that is best for you, so that you may remember. If you do not find anyone in them, still do not enter them until permission has been granted you. If you are told: "Go back," then turn back; it is more fitting for you. God is Aware of anything you do.

**The Light 24:** 27-28\*

## THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

You who believe, let those whom your right hands control,<sup>11</sup> and those of you who have not yet reached puberty, ask permission from you on three occasions: before the daybreak prayer; when you take your clothes off at noon [for a siesta]; and after the late evening prayer. You have three times for privacy. Outside these times, there is no objection for you nor for them moving about attending on each other. Thus God explains signs to you; God is Aware, Wise.

Whenever any children of yours reach puberty, let them ask permission just as those before them have had to ask for such permission. Thus God explains His signs to you; God is Aware, Wise.

**The Light 24:** 58-59

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<sup>11</sup> Household servants, wards and captives.



## RELIANCE ON GOD

Why should we not rely on God when He has guided us along our ways? And so we will patiently endure your persecution of us. On God [Alone] should the reliant rely.

Abraham 14: 12

God suffices for anyone who relies on Him.

Divorce 65: 3

## Chapter 15

### *NORMS OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR*

#### UNITY

Cling firmly together by means of God's rope and do not be divided. Remember God's favour towards you when you were enemies; He united your hearts so that you became brothers because of His favour.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 103**

#### BROTHERHOOD AND FRATERNITY

Believers are but brothers, so set things right between your brothers and heed God so that you may find mercy.

**The Apartments 49: 10\***

#### GREETINGS

Whenever those who believe in Our signs come to you, SAY: "Peace be upon you!"

**Livestock 6: 54**

Whenever you are welcomed with a greeting, then answer back with something finer than it, or [at least] return it.

**Women 4: 86**

#### MUTUAL HELP AND CO-OPERATION

Co-operate with one another for virtue and heedfulness, and do not co-operate with one another for the purpose of vice and aggression.

**The Table 5: 2**

Believers, whether men or women, must [act as] friends to one another; they command what is proper and forbid what is improper, keep up prayer, and pay the welfare due.

**Repentance 9: 71\***

... command what is proper and forbid what is improper.

**Luqmān 31: 17**

... say kind things to [other] people ...

**The Cow 2: 83**

## RESPECT FOR LIFE

Anyone who kills a believer deliberately will receive as his reward [a sentence] to live in Hell for ever. God will be Angry with him and curse him, and prepare dreadful torment for him.

**Women 4: 93**

## RESPECT FOR FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

You who believe, do not let one [set of] people make fun of another set; perhaps they are better than they are. Nor let any [set of] women [make fun of] other women; perhaps they are even better than they are themselves. Nor should you defame yourselves<sup>1</sup> nor insult one another by using nicknames; it is bad to use an evil name after [entering the] faith [of Islam]. Those who do not turn away from it are wrongdoers.

**The Apartments 49: 11**

Those who commit crimes have been laughing at those who believe. Whenever they pass by them, they wink at one another. Then when they go back to their own people, they return exultant.

**The Cheats 83 29-31**

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<sup>1</sup> This implies that a man shows his own bad character by defaming others

## MANNERS AT MEETINGS

You who believe, whenever someone tells you to make room at meetings, then make room; God will make room for you [elsewhere]. When it is said: "Move up," then move on. God will raise in rank those of you who believe as well as those who are given knowledge. God is Informed about anything you do.

The Pleading Woman 58: 11

## PROTOCOL WITH PUBLIC BUSINESS

Believers are merely those who believe in God and His Messenger. Whenever they are with him on some common errand, they should not leave until they have asked him for permission to do so. Those who do ask you for such permission are the ones who believe in God and His Messenger.

Whenever they ask you permission [to attend] to some business of their own, then give leave to anyone of them you may wish, and seek forgiveness from God for them. God is Forgiving, Merciful.

The Light 24: 62

## RULES FOR DISCUSSION

Whenever you see those who speculate about Our signs, avoid them till they speculate about some other topic. If Satan should cause you to forget [to do so], still do not sit with such wrongful folk once you remember. Those who do their duty are not accountable for them in any way except to remind [them], so that they [in turn] may do their duty.

Stay away from those who take their religion as a sport and an amusement. Worldly life has lured them on. Remind [them] of it lest any person should face ruin because of what he has earned;

he will have no patron nor any other intercessor besides God. Even if he were to proffer every reparation, such would not be accepted from him.

**Livestock 6: 68–70**

Do not argue with the People of the Book<sup>2</sup> unless it is in the politest manner, except for those of them who do wrong. SAY: "We believe in what has been sent down to us and what has been sent down to you. Our God and your God is [the same] One, and we are Muslims before Him."<sup>3</sup>

**The Spider 29: 46**

## INTERVENTION AND RECONCILIATION IN CASE OF HOSTILITIES

Whenever two factions of believers fall out with one another, then try to reconcile them. If one of them should oppress the other, then fight with the one who acts oppressively until he complies with God's command. If he complies, then set things right again between them in all justice, and act fairly. God loves those who act fairly.

**The Apartments 49: 9**

## PRAYING FOR OTHER MUSLIMS

... beg forgiveness for your offence, as well as for believing men and believing women.

**Muhammad 47: 19**

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2 Those with a revealed religion such as the Jews and Christians.

3 OR are committed to [live in] peace [with Him].

## Chapter 16

### *THE THREE DEADLY SINS*

(a) **Disbelief (*Kufr*)**

SAY: "O disbelievers!

I do not serve<sup>1</sup> what you serve  
nor are you serving what I serve.

I will not worship what you have worshipped  
neither will you worship what I worship.

You have your religion  
while I have my religion."

**Disbelievers** 109: 1-6 (complete)

Announce painful torment for those who disbelieve in God's signs and kill prophets without any right to, and who kill those people who enjoin fair dealing. Those are the ones whose actions will miscarry in this world as well as in the Hereafter; they will have no supporters.

Have you not seen those who were given a portion of [Knowledge] from the Book? They were invited to [accept] God's Book so that it might judge between them; then a group of them turned away and disregarded [it].

That is because they say: "The Fire will never touch us except for a few days." What they have invented about their religion has led them astray.

How will it be when We gather them in on a Day there is no doubt about, and every soul will be paid according to what it has earned? They will not be wronged.

**The House of 'Imrān** 3: 21-25\*

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1. OR worship.

## ASHES IN THE WIND

The works of those who disbelieve in their Lord may be compared to ashes which the wind whips about on a stormy day. They have no control over what they have earned. That is straying far afield.

Abraham 14: 18

Some of them listen to you until, once they have left your presence, they ask those who have been given knowledge: "What did he say just now?" Those are the ones whose hearts God has sealed off; they follow their own whims.

Muhammad 47: 16

## THE PROUD MAN

Then he looked; next  
he frowned and scowled;  
then he stepped back,  
looked around haughtily  
and said: "This is just some magic  
which has been handed down;  
this is only a statement  
made by some human being."

I'll cast him into Hell!<sup>2</sup>  
What will make you realize  
what Hell<sup>2</sup> is? It spares nothing  
and leaves nothing over  
as it shrivels human [flesh].

[The Man] Wearing a Cloak 74: 21-29

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2 *Saqar*, in the Arabic text. It is one of the several names of Hell.

## RENEGADES AND HYPOCRITES

Those who disbelieve after their [profession of] faith, then increase in disbelief, will never have their repentance accepted; those are lost [souls].

The House of 'Imrān 3 90

Spread word to hypocrites that they shall have painful torment. Do those who enlist disbelievers as sponsors instead of believers, seek [to gain] prestige through them? Prestige rests entirely with God.

Women 4 138-139

On the day<sup>1</sup> hypocritical men and hypocritical women will tell the ones who believe: "Wait for us; we need to borrow a light from you." They will be told: "Go back the way you came, and seek a light [somewhere else]."

So a wall will rise up between them which will have a door in it; inside there will be mercy, while outside facing it there will be torment. They will call out to them: "Were we not with you?"

They will say: "Of course, but you tempted one another, and let yourselves waver and doubt. Your vain hopes deceived you till God's command came along. The Deceiver has deluded you even about God. So today no redemption will be accepted from you nor from those who disbelieve; your lodging will be the Fire; it is your patron and how awful is such a destination!"

Iron 57: 13-15<sup>a</sup>

Do not be supporters of disbelievers. Do not let them distract you from [observing] God's signs once they have been sent down to

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3. That is, the Day of Judgement, Doomsday.



you. Invite [people] to your Lord and do not be an associator; do not appeal to any other deity along with God; there is no god except Him.

**The Story 28:** 86–87

## THE DISBELIEVING TOWN

God has made up a parable about a town which had been safe and tranquil; its livelihood was brought to it comfortably from every quarter.

Yet it disbelieved in God's favours, and God let it taste a pall of hunger and fear because of what they had been doing. A messenger came to them from among themselves and they rejected him. Torment seized them while they were doing wrong.

**Bees 16:** 112–113

### (b) **Association** (*Shirk*)

God does not forgive anyone for associating something with Him; He forgives whomever He wishes to for anything besides that. Anyone who gives God associates has indeed invented an awful offence.

**Women 4:** 48

God does not forgive one's associating [others] with Him; He forgives whomever He wishes to for anything besides that. Anyone who associates [others] with God has strayed far afield. They only appeal to females instead of to Him; they only call on Satan, the rebel.

**Women 4:** 116–117

SAY: "Should I crave some other lord than God, when He is Lord of everything? Each soul is responsible only for its own self, while no burdened [soul] shall bear another's burden. Soon your return will be unto your Lord, so that He may advise you concerning whatever you have been differing over.

"He is the One Who has placed you as overlords on earth and raised some of you higher than others in rank, so that He may test you by means of what He has given you. Your Lord is Swift in punishment; yet He is Forgiving, Merciful."

Livestock 6: 164-165

SAY: "Praise be to God Who has adopted no son and has no partner in the kingdom. He needs no protector against any weakness [since He has none]. Magnify Him greatly."<sup>4</sup>

The Night Journey 17: 111\*

SAY: "Have you ever considered what you appeal to instead of to God? Show me which part of Earth they have created! Have they any partnership in Heaven? Bring me a book previous to this one or any other trace of knowledge if you are truthful."

Who is further astray than someone who appeals to something which will not respond to him until Resurrection Day, instead of to God [Alone]? They are oblivious of their being appealed to. When mankind is summoned, they will become enemies of theirs and renounce their worship.

The Dunes 46: 4-6

Does not pure religion belong to God? The ones who take on [other] patrons instead of Him [claim]: "We do not serve them ex-

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4. This verse gives authority for saying *takbīr* or "God is Greatest" which we hear in the Call to Prayer and as an expression of astonishment and applause.

cept to bring us closer to God in homage." God will judge among them concerning whatever they have been disagreeing over; God does not guide anyone who is an ungrateful liar. If God had wanted to adopt a son, He could have chosen anyone He wished from what He has created.

Glory be to Him! He is God Alone,  
the Irresistible! He has created  
Heaven and Earth with Truth.  
He wraps night up in daytime,  
and wraps daytime up in night.  
He regulates the sun and moon:  
each runs on a specific course.  
Is He not the Powerful, the Forgiving?

**Throns 39: 3-5**

SAY: "Travel around the earth and see what was the outcome for criminals." Do not feel saddened about them nor in any anxiety over what they are plotting.

**The Ants 27: 69-70**

Those who adopt other patrons instead of God may be compared to the spider who makes a house for himself. The flimsiest house is the spider's house, if they only realized it.

God knows anything they may appeal to besides Himself; He is the Powerful, the Wise.

**The Spider 29: 41-42**

### (c) **Arrogation (*Tughyān*)**

Some people say: "We believe in God and the Last Day," while they are not believers. They would like to deceive God and those who believe, while they only outwit themselves and do not even

realize it. Their hearts contain malice, so God has increased their [share of] malice. They will have painful torment because they have been lying.

Whenever someone tells them: "Do not be so depraved on Earth,"<sup>5</sup> they say: "We are only improving matters." They are indeed mischief-makers, but they are not aware of it. When someone tells them: "Believe as other people believe," they say: "Are we to believe just as simpletons believe?" Surely they are the simpletons, even though they do not realize it.

When they meet those who believe, they say: "We believe," but once they are alone with their ringleaders,<sup>6</sup> they say: "We are with you; we were only joking." God will mock at them and let them go on acting arrogantly in their blind fashion. Those are the ones who have bought error at the price of guidance, so their bargain does not profit them, nor have they been guided.

The Cow 2: 8-16

It is not proper for any human being to whom God has given the Book as well as discretion and prophethood, and yet he should say to people: "Be my worshippers instead of God's," but rather [he would say]: "Be the Lord's [Alone] as is [the demand of] the Book you have been teaching and studying." He does not order you to adopt angels and prophets as lords; would He order you to disbelieve once you have become Muslims?

The House of 'Imrān 3: 79-80\*

SAY: "People of the Book,<sup>7</sup> [let us] rally to a common proposition, to be binding both on us and you, that we shall worship only God

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5. *Lā tufsidū* in the Arabic text which has been derived from *fasād*. For *Fasād* see Glossary

6. Literally Satans, meaning leaders in the service of evil.

7. Jews and Christians, those with a revealed religion.

[Alone] and associate nothing else with Him; nor shall any of us take others as lords instead of God."

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 64**

Should any of them say: "I am a god as well as He," that person We will reward with Hell. Thus We reward wrongdoers.

**Prophets 21: 29**

Who is guilty of greater injustice than someone who invents a lie about God or has rejected His signs? Wrongdoers will never prosper. One day We will summon them all together, then tell those who have associated [others with Us]: "Where are your associates which you have been claiming [to have]?" Then there will be no excuse for them, except to say: "By God, our Lord, we have not been associators." See how they lie even about themselves! What they have invented has misled them.

**Livestock 6: 21-24\***

We leave those who do not hope to meet Us groping along in their arrogance.

**Jonah 10: 11**

## Chapter 17

# *CRIME AND MORAL FAILINGS*

### FALSEHOOD AND HYPOCRISY

Restrain from deceptive speech.

**Pilgrimage 22:** 30

... God's curse will rest on him if he is a liar.

**The Light 24:** 7

Whenever hypocrites come to you, they say: "We admit that you are God's Messenger." God knows that you are His Messenger, while God testifies that hypocrites are liars.

**Hypocrites 63:** 1

Whenever they meet those who believe, they say: "We believe," but once they are alone with their ringleaders, they say: "We are with you; we were only joking."

**The Cow 2:** 14

... so He planted hypocrisy in their hearts till the day when they will meet Him because they broke their word to God which they had promised Him and because they had been lying.

**Repentance 9:** 77

## CONCEIT AND VANITY

God does not love someone who is conceited and boastful . . .

**Women 4:** 36

Do not swagger haughtily on the earth; you can never tunnel through the earth or rival the mountains in height.

**The Night Journey 17:** 37\*

Is there not a home in Hell for the overbearing?

**Throngs 39:** 60

Do not consider that those who feel delighted about what they have been given and [who] love to be praised for something they have not done — do not reckon that they can escape from torment. They will have painful torment.

**The House of 'Imrān 3:** 188

Those who spend their wealth for God's sake, then do not follow up what they have spent with any reproach or injury,<sup>1</sup> will receive their wages from their Lord. No fear should lie upon them nor will they feel saddened. Kind words and forgiveness are better than an act of charity followed by an injury.

**The Cow 2:** 262–263

## JEALOUSY

Many People of the Book would like to turn you back into disbelievers following your [profession of] faith, out of their envy.

**The Cow 2:** 109\*

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<sup>1</sup> That is they do not spoil their charitable efforts by blowing their own trumpet, bragging about their benevolence and hurting the feelings of the needy whom they have helped.

Or do they envy people because of what God has given them out of His bounty?

Women 4: 54

SAY: "I seek refuge [with the Lord of Dawn] from the evil of some envier when he envies."

Dawn 113: 5

### NIGGARDLINESS

Let not those who are niggardly with anything God has given them out of His bounty consider it is better for them; rather it will be worse for them: they will be charged<sup>2</sup> on Resurrection Day with what they were niggardly about.

The House of 'Imran 3: 180\*

How awful [will it be] for every backbiting slanderer who amasses wealth and keeps on counting it.  
He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal.  
Nevertheless he will be flung  
into the Bonecrusher.<sup>3</sup>

What will make you realize  
What the Bonecrusher is?

The Gossipmonger 104: 1-5

God does not love someone who is conceited and boastful, nor those who are tight-fisted and encourage<sup>4</sup> [other] people to be stingy . . .

Women 4: 36-37

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2. Literally, have it hung round their necks.

3. *Hutama* in the Qur'an. It is one of the names of Hell.

4. Literally, order.



## EXTRAVAGANCE

Do not squander [your money] extravagantly; spendthrifts are the devils' brethren, and Satan has always been ungrateful towards his Lord.

**The Night Journey 17: 26–27**

... give away what they ought to on their harvest day. Yet do not be extravagant for He does not love extravagant people.

**Livestock 6: 141**

## EXPLOITATION

Do not be like a woman who unravels her yarn after its strands have been firmly spun. You use your oaths to snatch at advantages over one another, just because one nation may be more prosperous than another nation. God is only testing you by means of it; He will explain to you on Resurrection Day what you have been disagreeing about.

If God had willed, He would have set you up as one community, but He lets anyone He wishes go astray, and guides anyone He wishes. You shall be questioned about whatever you have been doing.

**Bees 16: 92–93**

You who believe, do not betray God and the Messenger, nor knowingly betray your trusts.<sup>5</sup>

**Booty 8: 27**

... and anyone who defrauds will bring along whatever he has been defrauding on Resurrection Day. Then every soul will be repaid for whatever it has earned, and they will not be wronged.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 161**

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5. OR embezzle funds entrusted to you.

## INTRIGUE

Intrigue comes only from Satan, so that he may sadden those who believe. Yet he cannot harm them in any way except with God's permission; so on God let believers rely.

**The Pleading Woman 58: 10**

Have you not seen that God knows whatever in Heaven and whatever on Earth? No private conversation ever takes place among three [persons] unless He is their Fourth, nor among five unless He is their Sixth, nor [any number] less than that nor greater unless He is with them, wherever they may be. Then on Resurrection Day, He will tell them of what they have been doing. God is Aware of everything.

**The Pleading Woman 58: 7**

## GOSSIP AND RUMOUR

You who believe, if a scoundrel should bring you some piece of news, clear up the facts lest you hurt some folk out of ignorance, and afterwards feel regretful over what you have done.

**The Apartments 49: 6**

Do not spy on one another, nor let any of you backbite others. Would one of you like to eat his dead brother's flesh? You would loathe it. Heed God, for God is Relenting, Merciful.

**The Apartments 49: 12**

Do not obey every contemptible oathmonger, fault-finder who goes about spreading slander . . .

**The Pen 68: 11**

## GREED

Anyone who is miserly,  
is miserly only against his own soul.  
God is All-Sufficient  
but you are poor. If you should turn away,  
He will replace you with some other folk  
who then will not be like you at all.

Muhammad 47: 38

## LIQUOR AND GAMBLING

They will ask you about liquor and gambling. SAY: "In each of them there lies serious vice as well as some benefits for mankind. Yet their vice is greater than their usefulness."

The Cow 2: 219

You who believe, liquor and gambling, idols and raffles, are only a filthy work of Satan; avoid them so that you may prosper. Satan only wants to stir up enmity and jealousy among you by means of liquor and gambling, and to hinder you from remembering God and from praying. So will you stop?

The Table 5: 90-91

## MANSLAUGHTER AND MURDER

No believer should kill any believer unless it happens by mistake. Anyone who kills a believer by mistake should free a believing captive and deliver blood-money to his family unless they treat it as an act of charity<sup>6</sup>. If he was from a people which is at war with you and yet he was a believer, then free a believing captive; while if he were from a people with whom you have a treaty, then

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6 That is, overlook it or remit it as a kindness.

blood-money should be delivered to his family and a believing captive set free. Anyone who does not find the means for it should fast for two consecutive months as penance from God. God is Aware, Wise.

Anyone who kills a believer deliberately will receive as his reward [a sentence] to live in Hell for ever. God will be angry with him and curse him, and prepare awful torment for him.

You who believe, whenever you set out [on an expedition] for God's sake, discriminate carefully and do not say to someone who proffers you a greeting: "You are no believer".<sup>7</sup> You crave the display of worldly life, while God holds many more prizes. That is what you were like previously, though God has showered His benefits on you; so discriminate. God is Informed about what you do.

Women 4: 92-94

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7. Muslims must thus not prejudge other Muslims' faith.

## Part VI

# Society and the State

## Chapter 18

# *FAMILY AND SOCIETY*

### MARRIAGE

We have sent messengers before you [came], and granted them spouses and offspring.

**Thunder 13: 38**

Marry off any single persons among you, as well as your honourable servants and maids. If they are poor, God will enrich them from His bounty. God is Boundless, Aware. Yet let those who do not find [any way to] marry, hold off themselves<sup>1</sup> until God enriches them from His bounty.

**The Light 24: 32-33**

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<sup>1</sup> That is, refrain from sexual activity.

## OBJECTIVES IN MARRIAGE

### (a) To continue the Human Race

Mankind, heed your Lord who has created you from a single soul, and created its mate from it, and propagated many men and women from them both.

Women 4: 1

Your wives are [meant] for you to cultivate: so go to your cultivation whenever you wish. Send things ahead for yourselves, and heed God; know that you will be meeting Him. Proclaim [this] good news to believers.

The Cow 2: 223

### (b) To Protect Chastity and Moral Excellence

And respectable believing women<sup>2</sup> [are lawful to marry] as well as respectable women from among those who were given the Book before you, once you have given them their marriage portions<sup>3</sup> and taken them in wedlock, not in illicit affairs, nor having [them] as secret lovers.

The Table 5: 5\*

... so marry them with their family's permission and give them their marriage portions decently [so that they live] a protected life [in marriage], not indulging in illicit affairs, nor having secret lovers.

Women 4: 25\*

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2. *Muḥṣanāt* (singular *muḥṣana*) means 'protected' women, that is, women who live in a home that is respectable and chaste. This includes both married and unmarried women.

3. *Ujūr* in the Arabic text which refers to *Mahr*, see Glossary, s.v. *Mahr*.

... they are garments for you while you are garments for them.

The Cow 2 187

(c) **To Sustain Mental Peace, Love and Affection**

Among His signs is [the fact] that He has created spouses for you from among yourselves so that you may console yourselves with them. He has planted affection and mercy between you; in that are signs for people who reflect.

The [East] Romans (OR The Byzantines) 30 21

He is the One Who has created you (all) from a single soul, and made its mate from it, that he might find comfort with her.

The Heights 7. 189\*

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH IN  
THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT

Do not marry women who associate [others with God] until they believe. A believing maid is better than an associating woman, no matter how attractive she may seem to you.

Do not [let your women] marry men who associate [others with God] until the latter believe; a believing slave is better than an associator, no matter how attractive he may seem to you.

Those people invite [one] to the Fire while God invites [us] to the Garden and to forgiveness by His permission. He explains His signs to mankind so that they may bear them in mind.

The Cow 2: 221

Bad women are for bad men, and bad men are for bad women; while good women are for good men and good men are for good women.

The Light 24: 26



An adulterous man may marry only an adulterous woman or one who associates [others with God]; while an adulterous woman may be married only to an adulterous man or one who associates [others with God]. Such [conduct] is forbidden to believers.

The Light 24: 3

#### FREEDOM IN SELECTING A MATE

... then marry such women as may seem good to you ...

Women 4: 3

#### DEGREES FOR INTERMARRIAGE

Do not marry any women whom your fathers have already married, unless this is a thing of the past;<sup>4</sup> it is a shameful act and disgusting, and an evil way.

Forbidden to you [in marriage] are your mothers, your [own] daughters, your sisters, your aunts on your father's side as well as your aunts on your mother's side, and your brother's and your sister's daughters, your foster-mothers and your foster-sisters, your mothers-in-law and step-daughters who are under your guardianship [since their mothers are] wives of yours with whom you have consummated marriage (however if you have not consummated it with them, it will not be held against you), and wives of your sons who are your own flesh-and-blood; nor may you bring two sisters together [under one roof], unless this is a thing of the past.<sup>4</sup> God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Nor [should you marry any already] married women except the ones under your control.<sup>5</sup> [Such is] God's legislation for you. Anything beyond that is lawful for you, provided you court them

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<sup>4</sup> That is, it occurred before the revelation of this verse.

<sup>5</sup> This refers to prisoners of war.

by means of your wealth, marrying them properly rather than taking them on as mistresses. Since you have thereby sought enjoyment with them, give them their marriage portions as is stipulated. Yet it will not be held against you should you come to terms about it even after what has been stipulated. God is Aware, Wise.

Any of you who cannot afford to marry respectable, believing women should then [seek] one of the believing maids under your control. God is well Aware of your faith. Each one of you has ties to others, so marry them with their family's permission and give them their marriage portions decently [so that they live] a protected life, not indulging in illicit affairs, nor having secret lovers. Once they are married, should they commit some sexual offence, they should receive half the punishment [prescribed] for free married women. That<sup>6</sup> goes for any of you who worries lest he may not control his [sexual] impulses; however it is better for you to discipline yourselves. God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Women 4: 22–25\*

## POLYGAMY

... then marry such women as may seem good to you, two or three or four [at a time]. If you fear that you will not act justly, then [marry] one woman [only] or someone your right hand controls. That is more likely to keep you from committing an injustice.

Women 4: 3

You will never manage to deal equitably with your wives no matter how eager you may be [to do so]; yet do not turn completely aside [from one] so that you leave another in suspense. If you maintain proper conduct<sup>7</sup> and do your duty, God will be Forgiving, Merciful.

Women 4: 129

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6. That is, marrying captive women.

7. Literally, come to terms.

## RESPECTIVE ROLES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

Women have the same [rights in relation to their husbands] as are expected in all decency from them; while men stand a step above them.<sup>8</sup>

The Cow 2: 228

Men are the ones who support women since God has given some persons advantages over others, and because they spend their wealth [on them].

Women 4: 34

## A HUSBAND'S OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS HIS WIFE

### (a) The Marriage Portion

Since you have thereby sought enjoyment with them, give them their marriage portions, as is stipulated. Yet it will not be held against you should you come to terms about it even after what has been stipulated.

Women 4: 24

Give women their marriage portions with no strings attached. If they themselves give some of it back to you,<sup>9</sup> then consume it with good cheer.

Women 4: 4

### (b) Maintenance or Marital Support

Provide for them, the well-to-do according to his means and the straitened according to his means; a provision according to custom. [This is] an obligation for those who act kindly.

The Cow 2: 236\*

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8 That is, have the final word in most situations.

9. OR waive some of it.

A man of means should spend out of his means, while anyone whose income is more limited should spend some of what God has granted him.

**Divorce 65: 7\***

**(c) Treating One's Wife Fairly**

Treat them politely; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which God has placed much good.

**Women 4: 19**

You who believe, some of your spouses and children may be your own enemies, so be careful with them. Yet if you pardon, condone and forgive [them], God will [likewise] be Forgiving, Merciful.

**Haggling 64: 14**

Once you divorce women and they have reached the end of their waiting period, then either retain them in all decency or part from them decently. Do not retain them only to cause harm to them, exceeding the limit. He who does that merely hurts himself. Do not take God's signs as a joke.

**The Cow 2: 231\***

**A WIFE'S DUTIES**

Honourable women are devout, guarding the unseen<sup>10</sup> just as God [orders it to be] guarded.

**Women 4: 34**

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<sup>10</sup> That is, respecting their husbands' rights

If some woman fears abuse or desertion by her husband, it should not be held against either of them if they should try to come to terms; coming to terms is best while greed is ever present in the [human] soul. Yet if you act kindly and do your duty, God will be Informed of anything you do.

**Women 4: 128**

Admonish those [women] whose surliness<sup>11</sup> you fear, and leave them alone in their beds, and [even] beat them [if necessary]. If they obey you, do not seek any pretext [to proceed] against them.

**Women 4: 34**

## MARITAL RECONCILIATION

If you fear a split between a man and his wife, send for an arbiter from his family and an arbiter from her family. If both want to be reconciled, God will adjust things between them. God is Aware, Informed.

**Women 4: 35**

## DIVORCE AND ITS REGULATIONS

It will not be held against you if you divorce women when you have never had contact with them, nor assigned them any marriage portion.

**The Cow 2: 236**

O Prophet, whenever you [and other Muslims] divorce women, send them away for their waiting period and count up the number [of months carefully], and heed God your Lord. Do not turn them

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11. This refers to either the wife's or husband's bad behaviour towards the other.

out of their homes, nor should they have to leave except when they have committed some flagrant act of sexual misconduct. Such are God's limits, and anyone who oversteps God's limits thereby harms himself. You do not know whether God may let a new thing<sup>12</sup> happen later.

Thus whenever women reach their term, return them decently, or part from them decently.

**Divorce 65:** 1–2

Divorce may be [pronounced] twice; then either your mate should be retained decently, or else released with kindness.

**The Cow 2:** 229

Once you divorce women, and they have reached the end of their waiting period, then either retain them in all decency or part from them decently.

**The Cow 2:** 231

It is not lawful for you to take anything you have given any woman unless both parties fear that they will not keep within God's limits. If you fear that they will not keep within God's limits, then there is no blame on either of them if she redeems herself with that.<sup>13</sup>

**The Cow 2:** 229

Whenever you divorce women and they have reached the end of their waiting period, do not hinder them from marrying their [new] husbands if they have agreed to do so with proper formalities among themselves. Whoever among you believes in God and the Last Day is instructed to act thus; that is purer for you and more orderly. God knows while you do not know [what is fitting].

**The Cow 2:** 232

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12. That is a reconciliation

13. This refers to the woman's right to obtain a divorce from her husband, and is known, in the terminology of Islamic law, as *khul'* see Glossary, s.v. *khul'*.

## MODESTY AND ITS REGULATIONS

Whenever you ask [the Prophet's wives] for any object, ask them for it from behind a curtain. That will be purer for your hearts and for their hearts.

The Confederates 33: 53

O wives of the Prophet, you are not like any other women. If you do your duty, do not be too deferential while talking [to others] lest someone whose heart contains malice may thereby be encouraged. Employ suitable speech.

The Confederates 33: 32

Remain in your homes and do not [publicly] display your beauty in the way they used to do during [the time of] primitive ignorance.<sup>14</sup>

The Confederates 33: 33

O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters, and believers' wives as well, to draw their cloaks close around themselves. That is more appropriate so that they may be recognized and not molested.

The Confederates 33: 59

Tell believers to avert their glances and to guard their private parts; that is purer for them. God is Informed about anything they may do. Tell believing women to avert their glances and guard their private parts, and not to display their charms except what [normally] appears of them. They should fold their shawls<sup>15</sup> over their bosoms and show their charms only to their husbands, or

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14. *Jāhiliyya* in the Arabic text. see Glossary.

15. OR veils.

their fathers or their fathers-in-law, or their own sons or stepsons, or their own brothers and nephews on either their brothers' or their sisters' side; or their own womenfolk, or anyone their right hands control, or male attendants who have no sexual desire, or children who have not yet shown any interest in women's nakedness. Let them not stomp their feet in order to let any ornaments they may have hidden be noticed. Turn to God, all you believers, so that you may prosper.

The Light 24: 30-31

Those [elderly] women sitting around [after their menopause] who do not expect to marry will meet with no objection if they take off their [outer] clothing, though without displaying their charms. Yet it is best for them to act modestly. God is Alert, Aware.

The Light 24: 60

Flog both the adulterous woman and the adulterous man with a hundred lashes, and do not let any pity for either party distract you from [complying with] God's religion if you believe in God and the Last Day. Let a group of believers witness their punishment.

The Light 24: 2

## TREATMENT OF PARENTS

### (a) Respecting and Obeying Them

We have enjoined every man to [look after] his parents; his mother bears him with one fainting spell after another fainting spell, while his weaning takes two years. Thank Me as well as your parents; towards Me lies the Goal.

Luqman 31: 14



We have instructed man to be kind to both his parents. His mother bears him painfully, and gives birth to him painfully. Bearing him and weaning him last thirty months, until, when he attains his full growth and reaches forty years [of age], he says:

“My Lord, train me  
to be grateful for Your favour  
which You have shown to me  
and to both my parents,  
and let me act honourably  
so that You may approve of it.  
Be good to me with respect to my offspring:  
I have turned toward You  
and am one of those  
committed to [live in] peace  
[with God and society].”<sup>16</sup>

Those are the ones from whom We will accept the best out of what they do, while We will overlook their evil deeds. They are the owners of the Garden, a truthful promise which has been made to them.

**The Dunes 46: 15–16\***

Your Lord has decreed that you should worship nothing except Him, and [show] kindness to your parents; whether either or both of them attain old age [while they are] still with you, never say to them: “Ough!” nor scold either of them. Speak to them in a generous fashion. Serve them with tenderness and humility, and SAY: “My Lord, show them mercy, just as they cared for me as a little child.”

Your Lord is well Aware of what is on your minds; if you behave honourably, then He will be Forgiving towards those who are penitent.

**The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 23–25\***

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16 OR who are Muslims.

They will ask you about what they should spend [on others]. SAY:  
"Any money you contribute should be [first] spent on your  
parents, close relatives, orphans, the needy and the wayfarer."

The Cow 2: 215

(b) **Limits to Filial Obedience**

Yet if they should strive to make you associate anything with Me  
which you have no knowledge of, do not obey them!

The Spider 29: 8

Yet if either of them should strive to make you associate anything  
with Me which you have no knowledge of, do not obey them,  
although you should [still] keep company with both of them  
properly during [their life in] this world.

Luqman 31: 15

**CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

(a) **Love and Well-being**

"My Lord, make me keep up prayer,  
and have my offspring [do so too].  
Our Lord, accept my appeal.  
Our Lord, forgive me,  
both my parents and believers  
on the Day the Reckoning  
will be set up."

Abraham 14: 40-41

... and those who say: "Our Lord, bestow the comfort of our eyes  
on us, on our spouses and offspring. Make us a model<sup>17</sup> for those  
who do their duty."

The Standard 25: 74

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17 OR leader

With that Zachariah appealed to his Lord; he said: "My Lord, grant me goodly offspring from Your Bounty, for You are the Hearer of appeal."

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 38**

**(b) Protection from Evil**

You who believe, protect yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel will be men and stones . . .

**Prohibition 66: 6**

**(c) Disapproval of Abortion and Birth Control**

Do not kill your children in dread of poverty; We shall provide for both them and you. Killing them is a serious blunder.<sup>18</sup>

**The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 31**

Do not kill your children because of poverty; We shall provide for you as well as for them.

**Livestock 6: 151**

Those who have stupidly killed their own children without having any knowledge and forbidden something God has provided them with, have lost out through inventing things about God; they have gone astray and have not accepted guidance.

**Livestock 6: 140**

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18. OR a grievous sin.

## CHILDREN AS A TRIAL

Know that your possessions and children are merely a trial, while God holds a splendid reward.

**Booty 8: 28\***

Your wealth and your children are only a [means of] testing [you]. Yet God holds a splendid reward.

**Haggling 64: 15\***

## RIGHTS OF RELATIVES AND THE NEEDY

God commands justice, kindness and giving [their due] to near relatives . . .

**Bees 16: 90**

Render your close relative his due.

**The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 26**

. . . and to give one's wealth away, no matter how one loves it,<sup>19</sup> to near relatives . . .

**The Cow 2: 177**

When near relatives, orphans and paupers are present at the division [of inheritance]<sup>20</sup> provide for them out of it and speak politely to them.

**Women 4: 8**

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19 OR out of love for Him.

20 This relates to those persons who do not have any legal right to the inheritance. According to Islamic law a person is entitled to bequeath up to one third of his total wealth to such persons or for other good causes.

Let not those among you possessing resources and [other] means resolve not to give [something to] near relatives,<sup>21</sup> paupers and those who are refugees for God's sake; let them act forgivingly and show indulgence. Do you not like God to pardon you? God is Forgiving, Merciful.

**The Light 24: 22**

Show kindness to both [your] parents and to near relatives, orphans and the needy . . .

**Women 4: 36**

## RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS THE POOR

"Take him off and handcuff him. Then let Hades roast him. Then padlock him to a chain seventy yards long. He did not believe in God Almighty nor ever urge [others] to feed the needy. He has no close friend here today nor any food except for some garbage which only sinners eat."

**Reality 69: 30-37**

Have you seen someone who rejects religion?<sup>22</sup>  
That is the person who pushes the orphan aside  
and does not encourage feeding the needy.

**Small Kindnesses 107: 1-3**

## RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF ORPHANS

Thus the orphan must not be oppressed . . .

**Morning Bright 93: 9\***

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21. That is, they should not withhold their resources from their relatives and the needy nor fail to share God's blessings with them.

22. OR his own accountability for past actions, (the necessity of) eventual repayment.

Let anyone act cautiously just as they themselves would fear to leave helpless offspring behind; let them heed God and speak in a proper manner.

**Women 4: 9**

Do not approach an orphan's estate before he comes of age except to improve it.

**Livestock 6: 152**

Those who live on orphans' property without having any right to do so will only suck up fire into their bellies, and they will (eventually) roast in a Blaze.

**Women 4: 10**

Give orphans their property and do not substitute something bad for something good.

**Women 4: 2**

## Chapter 19

# *ECONOMIC LIFE*

### ECONOMICS AND RELIGION

You who believe, when [the call to prayer] is announced on the day of Congregation,<sup>1</sup> hasten to remember God and stop trading. That will be better for you if you only realized it.

**Congregation 62: 9**

Do not tell a lie about something your tongues describe: "This is lawful, while this is forbidden," so that you fabricate a lie about God.<sup>2</sup>

**Bees 16: 116**

They said: "Shu'ayb, does your prayer command you that we must abandon what our forefathers worshipped, or that we should [not] do what we wish to with our property?"

**Hud [the Messenger] 11: 87**

... men whom neither business nor trading distract from remembering God.

**The Light 24: 37**

We have established you on Earth and granted you means by which to live on it.

**The Heights 7: 10**

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1 That is, Friday

2. This lays down the principle that the right to declare things lawful and unlawful rests with God Alone.

## ECONOMIC ACTIVITY WITHIN AN ISLAMIC FRAMEWORK

### (a) **Affirmation of Life, and the Pursuit of What is Good in it**

SAY: "Who has forbidden God's finery which He has produced for His servants, and the wholesome things from [His] provision?"

**The Heights 7: 32**

Do you not see how God has harnessed whatever is in Heaven and whatever is on Earth for you? He has lavished His favours on you both publicly and privately.

**Luqman 31: 20**

Seek a home in the Hereafter through whatever God has given you. Do not neglect your share in this world . . .

**The Story 28: 77**

He is the One Who has made the Earth to be managed by you, so walk along its byways and eat some of what He provides you with, for with Him lies reviving it again.

**Control 67: 15**

SAY: "I do not find anything forbidden in what has been revealed to me for anyone needing to eat, unless it is something that has died [by itself] or it is blood which has been shed, or pork — that is so filthy! — or a sinful offering that has been consecrated to something besides God. Concerning anyone who is obliged to do so, without either meaning to disobey or exceeding his [barest] needs, your Lord is Forgiving, Merciful."

**Livestock 6: 145**



So eat any lawful, wholesome thing God has provided you with, and be thankful for God's favour if you have been worshipping Him. He has forbidden you only carrion,<sup>3</sup> blood and pork, as well as anything that has been consecrated to something besides God. Yet anyone who is obliged to do so, without desiring it<sup>4</sup> nor going to excess, [will find] God is Forgiving, Merciful.

**Bees 16:** 114–115

**(b) The Happy Medium**

Eat and drink, and do not be extravagant; He does not love the extravagant.

**The Heights 7:** 31

Eat any lawful, wholesome thing which God has provided you with. Heed God in Whom you are believers.

**The Table 5:** 88

Mankind, eat anything lawful, wholesome that exists on Earth, and do not follow in Satan's footsteps; he is an open enemy of yours.

**The Cow 2:** 168

And monkhood they initiated; We did not prescribe it for them.

**Iron 57:** 27

Yet do not be extravagant, for He does not love extravagant people.

**Livestock 6:** 141

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3. Meat of an animal which has died of itself or been killed by beasts of prey.

4. OR intending disobedience.

Do not squander [your money] extravagantly; spendthrifts are the devils' brethren, and Satan has always been ungrateful towards his Lord.

**The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 26–27**

... who, when they spend, neither give too lavishly nor yet hold back, and keep a happy medium ...

**The Standard 25: 67**

Let not those who act niggardly with any of His bounty that God has given them consider it is better for them; rather it will be worse for them: they will be charged on Resurrection Day with anything they were niggardly about.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 180**

**(c) The Spirit behind Economic Effort**

You who believe, do not use up one another's wealth to no good purpose, unless it is for some business based on mutual consent among you. Do not kill one another; God has been Merciful towards you.

**Women 4: 29**

Competition<sup>5</sup> has distracted you  
until you visit graveyards.  
Nevertheless you soon will know;  
once more, you soon shall know!

**Competition 102: 1–3**

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<sup>5</sup> This refers to the obsession to amass wealth, crass materialism

How many towns have We wiped out who were reckless in their way of living.<sup>6</sup> Those dwellings of theirs have been inhabited only occasionally since then. We have been [their] heirs.

**The Story 28: 58**

We have sent no town a warner unless its high-livers<sup>7</sup> said: "We are disbelievers in what you have been sent with." They say: "We have more wealth and children; we will not be tormented."

**Sheba 34: 34–35**

#### PRIVATE PROPERTY: ITS LIMITATIONS AND PURPOSES

Men shall have a portion of whatever parents and near relatives leave . . .

**Women 4: 7**

Have they not considered that We have created livestock for them out of what Our own Hands have made, and that they are masters over them?

**Yâ-Sîn 36: 71**

. . . and strive in God's way with your property and persons . . .

**Battle Ranks 61: 11**

You who believe, do not enter any houses except your own homes unless you are sure of their occupants' consent, and greet them politely.

**The Light 24: 27\***

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6. That is, in the organization of their economic life.

7. That is, the rich *élite*.

The beggar and the destitute have a right to their<sup>8</sup> wealth.

**Winnowing (Winds) 51: 19**

A thief, whether a man or a woman, shall have his or her hands cut off as a penalty . . .

**The Table 5: 38**

## PROTECTION OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Do not give the feeble-minded your property which God has granted you for [their] support; provide for them out of it, and clothe them and address them decently.<sup>9</sup> Test orphans as soon as they reach a marriageable age. If you are sure of their maturity [of mind], then turn their property over to them; do not use it up extravagantly, over-anxious lest they should grow up. Anyone who is rich should restrain himself; while anyone who is poor may live off it in decency.<sup>10</sup> When you hand their property over to them, have it witnessed for them. God suffices as a Reckoner.

**Women 4: 5-6**

## PUBLIC RIGHTS WITH STATE PROPERTY

Anything from townfolk which God has assigned to His Messenger belongs to God and the Messenger, as well as near relatives, orphans, the needy and the wayfarer, so that it will not circulate merely among the rich men you have.

Accept anything the Messenger may give you, and keep away from anything he forbids you. Heed God [Alone]; God is Stern in punishment.

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8 That is, of the rich.  
9. This refers to giving them a good education.  
10. i.e. within reason.

[It is also for] those poor refugees who have been expelled from their homes and property, [because they were] seeking bounty and approval from God and supporting God and His Messenger; those are quite sincere. [It is also for] the ones who entered the House<sup>11</sup> and the faith before them; they are the ones who love anyone who has migrated to them; they do not find any need in their breasts for what has been given them and prefer them ahead of themselves, even though some privation exists among them. Those who are shielded from their own avarice will be prosperous. [And it is also for] those who came after them and say: "Our Lord, forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and do not place any rancour in our hearts concerning those who believe. Our Lord, You are Compassionate, Merciful!"

**Banishment 59:** 7-10

## ECONOMIC DISTINCTIONS

He is the One Who has placed you as overlords on Earth and raised some of you higher than others in rank so that He may test you by means of what He has given you.

**Livestock 6:** 165

God has favoured some of you over others in providing [for them]. Yet those who have been made to excel are not going to hand over their provision to those whom their right hands control, so that they become equal [partners] in it. Would they thus disclaim God's favour?

**Bees 16:** 71

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11. That is, the House of Islam. The historical reference is to the people of Madina who established the first *Dār-al-Islām* (The House of Islam) by accepting Islam and establishing the Islamic order.

He holds the keys of Heaven and Earth;  
He extends sustenance and measures it out  
to anyone He wishes  
He is Aware of everything.

Consultation 42: 12

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Men shall have a portion of whatever parents and near relatives leave, while women shall have a portion of what parents and near relatives leave; no matter how small or how large it is, a portion is stipulated. When near relatives, orphans and paupers are present at the division [of inheritance], provide for them from it and speak politely to them.

Women 4: 7-8

Show kindness<sup>12</sup> to both [your] parents and to near relatives, orphans, the needy, the neighbour who is related [to you] as well as the neighbour who is a stranger, and your companion by your side and the wayfarer, and anyone under your control.

Women 4: 36

## THE WELFARE DUE (*Zakāt*)<sup>13</sup>

They have merely been ordered to worship God sincerely, making religion exclusively His, as righteous seekers [after Truth], and to keep up prayer and pay the welfare due. That is the religion for the upright [community].

Evidence 98: 5\*

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12 This command is very broad, covering all aspects of moral and material benevolence.

13 For *zakāt*, see Glossary.

Believers are merely those whose hearts feel wary whenever God is mentioned and whose faith increases when His verses are recited to them. On their Lord do they rely. Those who keep up prayer and spend some of what We have provided them with are truly believers.

**Booby 8:** 2-4

Your Patron is God [Alone], as well as His messenger and those who believe — who keep up prayer, pay the welfare due and bow their heads [in worship].

**The Table 5:** 55

Accept charity<sup>14</sup> from their wealth; you will cleanse and purify them by means of it.

**Repentance 9:** 103

. . . And in their wealth is an acknowledged right for the beggar and the destitute.

**Stairways Upward 70:** 24-25\*

They offer food to the needy, the orphan and the captive out of love for Him: "We are only feeding you for God's sake. We want no reward from you nor any thanks."

**(Every)man (OR This [Day and] Age) 76:** 8-9

Who is there to offer God a handsome loan, so that He may compound it many times over for Him?

**The Cow 2:** 245

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14: *Sadaqat* in the Qur'an, which literally means charity. But in this context, it refers to *zakat*, which we have called the welfare due. For *zakat*, see Glossary.

... and keep up prayer and pay the welfare due, and advance God a handsome loan. Anything good you send ahead for yourselves, you will find [later on] with God; it is better and more important as earnings.

**Wrapped Up 73: 20**

## RECIPIENTS OF WELFARE DUE

Charity [is meant] only for the poor, the needy, those working at [collecting and distributing] it, those [possible converts] whose hearts are being reconciled [to yours], for [freeing] captives and debtors, and [in fighting] in God's way, and for the wayfarer, as a duty imposed by God. God is Aware, Wise.

**Repentance 9: 60**

## LAWS OF INHERITANCE

God instructs you concerning your children: the son has a share equivalent to that of two daughters. If the women [left behind] are more than two, then two-thirds of what he leaves belongs to them; but if there is only one, then she has half. His parents shall each receive a sixth of what he may leave, if he had a son. If he had no son, and both his parents inherit from him, then his mother receives a third. If he has brothers [and sisters], his mother will have a sixth, once the will or any outstanding debt have been settled. You do not know whether your parents or your children are closer to you in usefulness. It is an obligation [laid down] by God, for God is Aware, Wise. You will have a half of anything your wives leave, provided they have no child. If they should leave a child, then you will have one fourth of whatever they leave, once the will or any outstanding debt have been settled; while [your widows] will have one fourth of anything you leave provided you have left no child. Should you have a child, then they will have one eighth of what you leave, once the will or any outstanding debt have been settled. If a man or a woman leaves anything to



more distant kin<sup>14</sup> but still has a brother or sister, then each of them will have a sixth. If there are more than that, then they should be partners in a third after settling any will or debt, yet without causing any hardship. It is an instruction from God; God is Aware, Lenient.

Women 4: 11–12

They ask you for your verdict [about someone who has no direct heir].<sup>15</sup> SAY: "God advises you (all) concerning indirect heirs." If a man should pass away and has no son while he leaves a sister, then she shall have half of anything he may leave; while he inherits from her if she has no child. If there are two women [who are sisters], they shall each have two-thirds of what he may leave. If there are brothers and sisters, then each brother shall have the same share as two sisters would have.

God explains things to you (all)  
lest you go astray.  
God is Aware of everything!

Women 4: 176

## ILLEGAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

### (a) Bribery and Deceit

Do not devour one another's wealth to no good purpose, nor try to bribe authorities with it so that you may consume a share of other people's wealth viciously while you realize [what you are doing].

The Cow 2: 188

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<sup>14</sup> *Kalbā* in the Qur'ān which means someone who has no heir in the direct line, that is neither his sons and daughters nor his parents are alive at the time of his death.

**(b) Breach of Trust**

If one of you entrusts [something to] another, the one who has been entrusted with it should hand over his security and he should heed God his Lord and not hide any testimony. Anyone who hides it has a sinful heart.

The Cow 2: 283

... anyone who defrauds will bring along whatever he has been defrauding on Resurrection Day. Then every soul will be repaid for whatever it has earned ...

The House of 'Imrān 3: 161\*

**(c) Misappropriating Orphans' Property**

Those who live on orphans' property without having any right to do so will only suck up fire into their bellies, and they will [eventually] roast in a Blaze.

Women 4: 10

**(d) Fraudulent Weights and Measures**

It will be too bad for cheats who insist on full measure when they have people measure something out for them; yet whenever they measure or weigh things for them, they give less than their due.

The Cheats 83: 1-3

**(e) Indecency, Pornography and Prostitution**

Those who love to spread shameful news around<sup>15</sup> concerning those who believe will have painful torment in this world and the Hereafter.

The Light 24: 19\*

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<sup>15</sup> *Fāhisha* in the Arabic text covers all shades of indecent talk, slander, pornography and all acts involving any of these

Do not force girls [under your control] into prostitution so that you may seek the display of worldly life, if they want to preserve their chastity.

**The Light 24:** 23

**(f) Usury and Interest**

God has permitted trading and forbidden taking interest.

**The Cow 2:** 275

You who believe, heed God and write off anything that remains outstanding from lending at interest if you are [true] believers. If you do not do so, then be prepared to face war declared by God and His Messenger. If you repent, you may retain your principal. Do no wrong and you will not be wronged. If any debtor suffers hardship, then postpone [repaying] it,<sup>16</sup> until conditions become easier [for him]; while if you treat it as an act of charity, it will be better for you, if you only knew!

**The Cow 2:** 278–280

**(g) Hoarding**

How awful [will it be] for every backbiting, slanderer  
who amasses wealth  
and keeps on counting it.  
He reckons that his wealth  
will make him immortal.  
Nevertheless he will be flung  
into the Bonecrusher.<sup>17</sup>

**The Gossipmonger 104:** 1–4\*

Announce painful torment to those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend them for God's sake.

**Repentance 9:** 34

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16. That is, the principal amount.

17. *Hutama* in the Qur'an referring to Hell.

## Chapter 20

# LAW AND THE STATE

### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD ALONE

God [Alone] holds control over Heaven and Earth.

**The Cow 2: 107**

... discretion<sup>1</sup> lies only with God.

**Livestock 6: 57**

They have no patron besides Him, nor does He let anyone else share in His discretion<sup>1</sup>.

**The Cave 18: 26**

They said: "Have we any say in the [conduct of] affairs?" SAY: "All [power to conduct] affairs lies with God [Alone]."

**The House of 'Imran 3: 154\***

Discretion<sup>1</sup> belongs only to God. He has ordered you to serve Him Alone; such is the right religion, even though most men do not realize it.

**Joseph 12: 40\***

Surely creation and authority belong to Him.

**The Heights 7: 54**

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1. *Hukm* in the Qur'ān: that is, the power to govern or make decisions.

## LEGAL SOVEREIGNTY

Follow whatever has been sent down to you by your Lord and do not follow any sponsors besides Him . . .

**The Heights 7: 3**

Such are God's limits, so do not exceed them; those who exceed God's limits are wrongdoers.

**The Cow 2: 229**

Those who do not judge by what God has sent down are disbelievers . . . wrongdoers . . . perverse!

**The Table 5: 44, 45, 47**

## THE PROPHET'S POSITION

We have not sent any messenger unless he was to be obeyed with God's permission.

**Women 4: 64**

Anyone who obeys the Messenger has obeyed God [Himself].

**Women 4: 80**

Anyone who splits off from the Messenger once guidance has been explained to him, and follows some path other than the believers', We shall turn over to what he himself has turned to, and lead him to Hell. How evil is such an end.

**Women 4: 115**

Accept anything the Messenger may give you, and keep away from anything he forbids you. Heed God [Alone]: God is Stern in punishment.

**Banishment 59: 7**

Yet, by your Lord, they will never believe until they name you to judge concerning what they are quarrelling over among themselves; then they will not find any inconvenience for themselves concerning whatever you have decided, and will accept wholeheartedly.

**Women 4: 65**

## SUPREME LAW

No believing man nor any believing woman should exercise any choice in their affair once God and His Messenger have decided upon some matter. Anyone who disobeys God and His Messenger has wandered off into manifest error.

**The Confederates 33: 36**

They will say: "We believe in God and the Messenger, and we obey." Then a group of them will turn away even after that; those are not believers. Whenever they are invited to [come to] God and His Messenger so that He may judge among them, see how a group of them turns aside.

**The Light 24: 47-48**

The only statement believers should make when they are invited to God and His Messenger, so that He may judge among them, is: "We have heard, and we are at your orders." Those persons will be successful.

**The Light 24: 51**

## MAN: HIS POSITION ON EARTH

David, We have placed you as an overlord on Earth, so judge among men correctly and do not follow any whims which will lead you away from God's path.

[The Letter] *Ṣād* 38: 26

So when your Lord told the angels: "I am placing a representative<sup>2</sup> on Earth . . ."

The Cow 2: 30\*

God has promised to appoint those of you who believe and perform honourable deeds as [His] representatives<sup>2</sup> on Earth, just as he made those before them into representatives, and to establish their religion for them which He has approved for them, and to change their fear into confidence. They serve Me and do not associate anything with Me.

The Light 24: 55\*

## LIMITS ON LOYALTY TO THE STATE

. . . co-operate with one another for virtue and heedfulness and do not co-operate with one another for the purpose of vice and aggression. Heed God [Alone]: God is Strict with punishment.

The Table 5: 2

. . . and do not obey any wicked or ungrateful person among them.

{Every}man {OR This [Day and] Age} 76: 24

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2. *Khalīfa* in the Arabic text, see Glossary

## THE PRINCIPLE OF CONSULTATION

... and whose business is [conducted] through consultation among themselves ...

Consultation 42: 38

Pardon them, seek forgiveness for them, and consult them on the matter.<sup>1</sup>

The House of 'Imrān 3: 159

## LEADERSHIP IN THE ISLAMIC SOCIETY

You who believe, obey God and obey the Messenger and those of you who hold command. If you should disagree over anything, refer it to God and the Messenger, if you believe in God and the Last Day.

Women 4: 59

You who believe, do not take up with any persons other than your own fellows as intimates. They will continually cause you turmoil, and they like anything that will distress you.

The House of 'Imrān 3: 118

When his Lord tested Abraham by means of [certain] words, and he fulfilled them, He said: "I am going to make you into a leader for mankind." He said: "What about my offspring?": He said: "My pledge does not apply to evildoers."<sup>2</sup>

The Cow 2: 124

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3. That is, in the conduct of affairs of state.



Shall We treat those who believe and perform honourable deeds the same as mischief-makers on Earth? Or should We treat those who do their duty like law-breakers?

(The Letter) **Şad** 38: 28

Do not obey anyone whose heart We allow to neglect to remember Us. He pursues his own whim, and his case results in dissipation.<sup>4</sup>

**The Cave** 18: 28

Heed God and obey me; do not obey the order of extravagant people who corrupt [things] on earth and never reform.

**Poets** 26 150 152

The noblest among you before God are those of you who best perform their duty.

**The Apartments** 49: 13

They said: "How could he hold control<sup>5</sup> over us, since we are fitter to exercise control than he is? He has not been given ample wealth."

He said: "God has singled him out for you and increased his knowledge and physique."

**The Cow** 2 247\*

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4. Another rendering might be: his case involves transgression of the limits [placed by God].

5. OR sovereignty, kingship.

If they would only refer it to the Messenger and those among them who hold command, those of them who investigate matters would have known about it.

Women 4: 83

SAY: "Are those who know [to be considered] equal to those who do not know?"

Throings 39: 9

God orders you to restore things entrusted [to you] to their [rightful] owners.<sup>6</sup>

Women 4: 58

## PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT

So judge among them according to what God has sent down, and do not follow their whims.

The Table 5: 49

... do not follow any whims which will lead you away from God's path.

[The Letter] Sād 38: 26

Whenever you judge between people, you should judge with [a sense of] justice.

Women 4: 58

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6. A general command which applies to the area of public service and authority

We have sent Our messengers with explanations, and sent the Book and the Balance down with them, so that mankind may conduct themselves with all fairness. We have sent down iron laden with grim violence as well as benefits for mankind, so that God may know who is supporting Him and His Messenger even though [He is] Unseen. God is Strong, Powerful.

Iron 57: 25

God supports anyone who supports Him — God is Strong, Powerful — those who, if We established them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the welfare due, command what is proper and forbid what is improper

Pilgrimage 22. 40-41\*

## FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

### (a) **Security of Life**

Do not kill any soul whom God has forbidden you to, except through [due process of] law.

The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 33

### (b) **The right to Private Property**

Do not devour one another's wealth to no good purpose.

The Cow 2: 188

You who believe, spend some of the wholesome things you may have acquired as well as anything We produce from the earth for you.

The Cow 2: 267

### (c) The Right to Human Dignity

You who believe, do not let one [set of] people make fun of another set: perhaps they are better than they are. Nor let any [set of] women [make fun of] other women; perhaps they are even better than they are themselves. Nor should you defame yourselves<sup>7</sup> nor insult one another by using nicknames; it is bad to use an evil name after [entering the] faith [of Islam]. Those who do not turn away from it are wrongdoers.

You who believe, refrain from conjecturing too much, for in some cases conjecture is a vice.

The Apartments 49: 11-12\*

### (d) The Right to Privacy

You who believe, do not enter any houses except your own homes unless you are sure of their occupants' consent, and greet them politely.

The Light 24: 27\*

Do not spy on one another, nor let any of you backbite others. Would one of you like to eat his dead brother's flesh? You would loathe it! Heed God, for God is Relenting, Merciful.

The Apartments 49: 12

You who believe, have those whom your right hands control<sup>8</sup> and those of you who have not reached puberty, ask permission from you [to come into your presence] on three occasions; before the daybreak prayer; when you take your clothes off at noon [for a siesta]; and after the late evening prayer. You have three times for privacy.

The Light 24: 58

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7. This implies that a man shows his own bad character by defaming others.

8. That is, servants, wards and captives

(e) **The Right to Dissent**

You who believe, obey God and obey the Messenger and those of you who hold command. If you should disagree over anything, refer it to God and the Messenger, if you believe in God and the Last Day.

**Women 4:** 59

We rescued those who had forbidden evil while We seized those who were doing wrong with dreadful torment because they had been acting so immorally.

**The Heights 7:** 165

You are the best community which has been brought forth for mankind. You command what is proper and forbid what is improper and you believe in God [Alone].

**The House of 'Imrān 3:** 110\*

(f) **Freedom of Association**

Let there be a community among you who will invite [others] to [do] good, command what is proper and forbid what is improper; those will be prosperous.

**The House of 'Imrān 3:** 104\*

(g) **Freedom of Belief and Conviction**

There should be no compulsion in religion.

**The Cow 2:** 256

So will you force mankind to become believers?

**Jonah 10:** 99

**(h) The Right to Religious Tolerance**

Do not abuse those they appeal to instead of to God, lest they abuse God out of enmity without realizing it.

Livestock 6: 108

Do not argue with the People of the Book<sup>9</sup> unless it is in the politest manner, except for those of them who do wrong.

The Spider 29: 46

**(i) The Principle of Personal Responsibility**

Each soul is responsible only for its own self, while no burdened [soul] shall bear another's burden.

Livestock 6: 164

**(j) The Right to Legal Defence**

You who believe, if some scoundrel should bring you a piece of news, clear up the facts lest you hurt some folk out of ignorance and afterwards feel regretful over what you have done.

The Apartments 49: 6

Do not pursue something you have no knowledge about: your hearing, sight and intellect will all be questioned concerning it.

The Night Journey (OR The Children of Israel) 17: 36\*

Whenever you judge between people, you should judge with [a sense of] justice.

Women 4: 58

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9 Jews, Christians and others with revealed scriptures.

**(k) The Right to Basic Necessities**

The beggar and the destitute have a right to their<sup>10</sup> wealth.

**Winnowing [Winds] 51: 19**

**(l) The Right to Equality Before the Law**

Pharaoh acted haughtily on earth and split his people into factions, seeking to weaken a group of them. He slaughtered their sons and let their women live; he was so depraved.

**The Story 28: 4**

**RIGHTS OF THE STATE OVER CITIZENS**

**(a) Loyalty**

You who believe, obey God and obey the Messenger and those of you who hold command.

**Women 4: 59**

**(b) Maintenance of Law and Order**

... do not create disorder on earth once it has been set right; that will be best for you if you are believers.

**The Heights 7: 85**

The penalty for those who wage war on God and His Messenger, and spread havoc through the land, is to be slaughtered or crucified, or to have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides, or to be banished from the land.

**The Table 5: 33**

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10. That is, of the rich.

Sedition is more serious than killing!

The Cow 2 191

**(c) Co-operation and its Limits**

... co-operate with one another for virtue and heedfulness, and do not co-operate with one another for the purpose of vice and aggression. Heed God [Alone]; God is Strict with punishment!

The Table 5 2

**(d) Participation in Defence Programmes**

You who believe, what is wrong with you when you are told: "March forth in God's cause!"? You cling to the ground [remaining unmoved]. Are you more satisfied with worldly life than with [the prospect of] the Hereafter? The comfort of worldly life will mean so little in the Hereafter. Unless you march forth [in God's cause], He will punish you with painful punishment and substitute you with some other folk. You will not harm Him in any way, for God is Capable of everything.

Repentance 9: 38-39

**PRINCIPLES OF FOREIGN POLICY**

**(a) Mutual Respect for Pacts and Treaties**

Fulfil your commitments; every commitment will be enquired into.

The Night Journey [OR The Children of Israel] 17 34\*

Fulfil God's agreement once you have pledged to do so, and do not break any oaths once they have been sworn to. You have made God a Surety for yourselves; God knows whatever you do.

Bees 16 91



So long as they act straightforwardly with you, be straightforward with them. God loves the heedful.

Repentance 9: 7

[As for] those associators with whom you have already made a treaty, provided they have not failed you in any respect nor backed up anyone against you, fulfil the treaty [you have] with them until their period is up. God loves the heedful.

Repentance 9: 4

Should you fear treachery from any people, confront them with it in exactly the same manner. God does not love traitors.

Boots 8: 58

#### **(b) Honesty and Integrity in all Dealings**

Do not . . . use your oaths in order to snatch at advantages over one another . . .

Bees 16: 92

#### **(c) International Justice**

. . . and do not let ill will towards any folk incite you so that you swerve from dealing justly. Be just: that is nearest to heedfulness; and heed God [Alone].

The Table 5: 8

#### **(d) Respect for the Neutrality of Non-Combatants**

If they should ever turn against you, then seize them and kill them wherever you may find them. Do not take any friend or supporter from among them, except those who seek refuge with a people with whom you have a treaty.

Women 4: 89–90\*

(e) **The Quest for Peace**

If they should incline to peace, then incline to it too, and rely on God.

Booty 8: 61

(f) **Prohibition of Imperialistic Exploitation**

You use your oaths in order to snatch at advantages over one another, just because one nation may be more prosperous than another nation.

Bees 16: 92

That home in the Hereafter will We grant to those who want neither haughtiness nor any corruption on earth. The [final] outcome belongs to the heedful.

Tales 28: 83

(g) **Protection and Support for Muslims Abroad**

You do not owe any protection to those who believe and have not migrated,<sup>11</sup> until they migrate [to you]. If, however, they should plead for support from you concerning religious matters you must support them, except against any folk with whom you have made a treaty.

Booty 8: 72

(h) **Friendly Relations with Neutral Powers**

God does not forbid you to act considerably or to act fairly towards those who have never fought you over religion nor have

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11. That is, from a non-Muslim state to an Islamic state.

evicted you from your homes. God loves the fair-minded. God only forbids you to be friendly with those who have fought you over religion and evicted you from your homes, and who helped others in your eviction. Those who befriend them are wrongdoers.

**Examining Her 60: 8–9**

**(i) Kindness in International Relations**

Is there any reward for kindness  
except kindness itself?

**The Merciful 55: 60**

**(j) Just Retribution for Transgressors**

Attack anyone who attacks you to the same extent as he attacked you. Heed God, and know that God stands by the heedful.

**The Cow 2: 194**

If you (all) should punish them, then do your punishment to the same extent as you have been punished. Yet if you are patient, it is certainly better for the patient.

**Bees 16: 126**

The reward for an injury should be an injury proportionate to it. Yet anyone who overlooks things and becomes reconciled shall receive his payment from God; He does not love wrongdoers. Those who defend themselves after being wronged will have no way open against them; a way to blame them is open only against those who mistreat [other] people and act outrageously on earth without any right to do so. Those will have painful torment.

**Consultation 42: 40–42**

## Chapter 21

# THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY: ITS MISSION

We have despatched a messenger to every nation [who said]:  
"Serve God [Alone] and turn aside from the arrogant<sup>1</sup> ones."  
Some of them God has guided, while others there are in whom  
error has been confirmed.

Bees 16: 36

God showed favour to believers when He sent them a Messenger  
from among themselves, to recite His verses to them and purify  
them, and teach them the Book and wisdom.

The House of 'Imrān 3: 164\*

Religion with God [means] Islam.<sup>2</sup>

The House of 'Imrān 3: 19

### A PROPHET'S RESPONSIBILITY

O Messenger, communicate whatever has been sent down to you  
by your Lord. If you do not do so, you will not have conveyed His  
message.

The Table 5: 67

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1. *Tāghūl* in the Arabic text, see Glossary. See also Chapter 16 (c) pp. 184–186 on this major sin of arrogation, or trying to live with no sense of responsibility towards God.
  2. OR commitment to live in peace with God — for *Islām*, see Glossary.

O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness, newsbearer and warner, and as someone who invites people to God by His permission and as a shining lamp. Proclaim to believers that they will have great bounty from God.

**The Confederates 33: 45-47\***

He is the One who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the True Religion so that He may make it prevail over all [other] religion.

**Victory 48: 28**

#### PURPOSE OF THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY

Believers are merely the ones who believe in God and His Messenger; then never doubt and strive for God's sake with their property and persons. Those are the truthful.

**The Apartments 49: 15**

We shall test you with a bit of fear and hunger, as well as loss of wealth and lives and produce. Announce [good news] to patient people, who say, whenever misfortune strikes them: "We belong to God and are returning to Him," — that they will have blessings from their Lord and mercy. Those are the guided ones.

**The Cow 2: 155-157\***

Cling firmly together by means of God's rope, and do not be divided.

**The House of 'Imrān 3: 103**

By the Time  
man is at a loss  
except for those who believe,  
perform honourable deeds,  
recommend Truth, and encourage patience.

**The Time 103 1-3 (complete)\***

Strive for God's sake the way He should be striven for.

Pilgrimage 22: 78

Thus we have set you up as a moderate nation<sup>3</sup> so that you may act as witnesses for mankind, as the Messenger is a witness for you.

The Cow 2: 143\*

You are the best community which has been brought forth for mankind. You command what is proper and forbid what is improper and you believe in God [Alone].

The House of 'Imran 3: 110\*

He has instituted the [same] religion for you [Muslims] as He recommended for Noah, and which We have inspired in you and recommended for Abraham, Moses and Jesus: "Maintain religion and do not stir up any divisions in it."

Consultation 42: 13

Therefore invite [mankind to Islam] and keep straight on just as you have been ordered to; do not follow their whims, and say [instead]: "I believe in whatever God has sent down [in the form] of a Book, and have been commanded to deal justly with you (all). God is our Lord as well as your Lord. We have our actions while you have your actions; no quarrel exists between us and you. God will bring us (all) together; towards Him is the return.

Consultation 42: 15\*

Almighty God  
has spoken  
the Truth.

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3. *Ummatan wasatan* in the Arabic text, which literally means the middle nation, a unique characteristic of the Islamic community which has been asked to maintain an equitable balance between extremes, pursue the path of moderation and establish the middle way. See also Glossary s.v. *Umma*.

# Glossary

*Af'ida* (pl. of *Fu'ād*) is generally translated as "heart", which is rather indirect and limits the meaning of the word. It may be translated as "intellect" or "vital faculties of man". Intellect should be taken in its original philosophical sense where it refers to the powers of understanding and reflection not merely at the physical but at metaphysical and spiritual levels.

*Dīn* represents a key concept of the Qur'ān. It is generally rendered as "religion" but this does not fully convey the real sense of the original. The Qur'ān uses it to convey the idea of God's sovereignty and man's and all creation's submission to Him (16: 52); to the law of the land (12: 76); to the *Sharī'a* and the way of life based on acceptance of God's sovereignty (3: 83). It also conveys the idea of the law of repayment, rewarding or punishing man in the light of his response to the Divine Guidance (51: 6). In short, it refers to a complete code of life, wherein God's sovereignty is accepted, and its demands and obligations fulfilled with a realization of complete accountability before the Lord.

*Fasād* (literally "corruption") in Qur'ānic terminology, means creating disorder and corruption on earth by following a path other than God's. Islam maintains that true peace and happiness emanate only through the observance of God's commands and through making a conscious effort to see that His laws alone are implemented in every sphere of life. *Fasād* occurs when man violates God's laws and disobeys Him.

*Fasād* may therefore be partial as well as total: partial when one disregards God's law in one aspect of life while acknowledging His sovereignty in other spheres. If a society is based on the denial of God, that society is bound to be a corrupt and exploitative society — hence full of *fasād*.

*Hanīf* (literally "one who is inclined") is used in the Qur'ān in ten places, six with reference to the Prophet Abraham and the rest for one who is sincere and sound in his faith. The term as such connotes sincerity, uprightness and singlemindedness in one's inclination, dedication and commitment to God or to His faith.

*Hukm*, literally judgment, decision, (6: 57) sometimes gives the meaning of wisdom, discretion, knowledge and the power to see things in their true perspective (26: 83).

*Islām* is the way of life for mankind granted by God. It consists in totally committing oneself to God and bringing one's will into complete harmony with God's will. Literally the word means both peace and submission — submission not in any passive sense but as a positive act of committing oneself to live in peace with God and bringing one's likes and dislikes and attitudes and behaviour into harmony with the Divine Will.

*I'tikāf* is one of the recommended acts of worship of high merit and consists of retiring to the mosque during the last ten days of Ramaḍān, devoting oneself exclusively to remembering God and not leaving the mosque except for one's essential needs. The minimum period for *i'tikāf* is twenty-four hours. *I'tikāf* is not valid if one is not keeping the fast or if it is done outside the month of Ramaḍān.

*Jāhiliyya*, literally "Ignorance", is a concise expression for the pagan practice of the days before the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). *Jāhiliyya* therefore refers to all practices that stand in contrast to the Islamic ideal of life. *Ayyām al-Jāhiliyya*, or "The Days of Ignorance" in the books of history, indicates the period before the Prophethood of Muḥammad when



the people in Arabia forgot the teachings of their Prophets and indulged in stupid practices.

According to Mawlānā Mawdūdī the term *Jāhiliyya* is the anti-thesis of Islam. It may be applied to all world views and systems of thought, belief and action which deny God's sovereignty and the authority of Divine guidance. There can be, and indeed there have been many combinations and permutations of *Jahiliyya*. There is, first of all, the pure *Jāhiliyya*, consisting of a total denial of the realm of the super-sensory or super-natural. Then there is a wide variety of partial or mixed *Jāhiliyyas*. In these, recognition of the existence of the Creator is mixed with other false beliefs, thereby adulterating certain elements of Divine guidance with other false elements. These partial or mixed *Jāhiliyyas* are at times inclined to an exaggerated spirituality which generates attitudes of world-renunciation. On other occasions, *Jāhiliyya* assumes an exaggerated mystical form which carries man's inherent devotion to the Divine into monistic and pantheistic directions, to blur the distinction between the Creator and the created.

*Jihād* (from the root *J-H-D*) means to strive and struggle. This refers to any effort, mental, moral or physical, made to make God's Word supreme. It covers a wide range of activities, from fighting with one's own evil promptings to being engaged in war for the cause of Islam. *Qitāl* (fighting and waging war), a word often used in the Qur'ān, is the highest form of *jihād*.

*Junub* — a person having *janāba* — means to be in a state of ceremonial impurity or defilement. A male becomes *junub* on having sexual intercourse or simply on the emission of semen in sleep or otherwise. A female also becomes *junub* as a result of sexual intercourse as well as when she is menstruating or having post-natal bleeding. These are the general causes of *janāba*, which is also referred to in the books of jurisprudence as *hadath akbar*. A full bath is required for a *junub* to receive purification or *ṭahāra*, without which a man or woman is not allowed to touch or read the Qur'ān, enter the mosque or offer the prayers. In the absence of water, however, one is allowed to resort to *tayammum*, a kind

of symbolic wash, which is performed by touching clean and pure earth or anything which contains dust with the palms of one's hands and passing them over the face and hands. *Tayammum* substitutes for both a full bath (*ghusl*) and ablution (*wuḍū'*).

*Khalifa*, pl. *khulafā'* (literally successor) is a title that has been given to the Prophet Adam (2: 30) and, by extension, to all mankind, and signifies that God has made mankind His own representative on earth, with limited authority to fulfil the commandments of God. This means that man has been entrusted with this mission as a kind of trial, for God to judge how he uses or misuses the freedom given to him and how much he keeps himself within the limits granted by God.

At certain places in the Qur'ān, *khulafā'* also means (a) people with power to mobilize all that is on earth (27: 62); (b) successors or inheritors who will inherit the earth and succeed one after another (24: 55; 38: 26).

In the political history of Islam, *khālifā* became the title of the successors of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), notably the first four Rightly-Guided Caliphs known as *al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn* (11–35 A.H., 632–655 Christian Era). With the establishment of the Umayyad hereditary rule immediately after this, the institution of the Caliphate changed into monarchy. Yet the rulers called themselves Caliphs. Formally the institution of the Caliphate came to an end in 1924 when Kamal Atatürk of Turkey arbitrarily declared its abolition.

*Khul'*, literally "taking off", is a kind of divorce arranged on the initiative of the wife. *Khul'* is the wife's right, therefore she can invoke this right at any time and can obtain a divorce from her husband in which case she is obliged to return the marriage-portion (*mahr* [see q.v]) to the husband either in part or full as the case may be. Like *mahr*, the word *khul'* does not occur in the Qur'ān. Reference to this right of women occurs in the verse 2: 229.

*Mahr*, commonly translated as "dower", is one of the essential conditions for the validity of marriage in Islam. In Islamic law, *mahr* is the money paid by the husband to the wife, either in cash or kind or both, at the time of the marriage (*Mu'ajjal*) or later on (*Mu'ajjal*). Unlike the practice of the *Jāhiliyya* (q.v) period, *mahr* is an exclusive property of the wife and is offered to her by her husband as an essential condition of the marriage. There is no fixed amount for *mahr*: it depends on the financial position of the bridegroom and the family traditions. The word *mahr* as such does not occur in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān uses the words *Ujūr*, sg. *Ajr* literally wages, reward, (4: 24), *Ṣaduqāt*, sg. *Ṣaduqa*, literally bridal dower (4: 4) and *Farīda*, literally the compulsory (dowry) (2: 237). The word "dower" falls short of the meaning of *mahr*, hence, keeping in view of its implications, it may be translated as "marriage-portion".

*Muttaqī* is derived from its noun *taqwā*, which signifies God-consciousness, a sense of responsibility and accountability, dedication and awe — those things that prompt one to fulfil one's duty. *Taqwā*, or heedfulness, is the main criterion by which God values the deeds of a Muslim (49: 13).

*Ruḥd* from the verb *rashada* means the right way (2: 256). It also implies integrity and maturity in thought and action (21: 51).

*Ṣabr* is a comprehensive term having various shades of meaning. It implies (a) patience in the sense of being thorough, dedicated and devoted, (b) constancy, perseverance, steadfastness and firmness of purpose, (c) disciplined and planned effort with confidence and belief in the mission itself and (d) a cheerful attitude of acceptance and understanding under suffering and hardship and in times of strife and violence, and thankfulness to God in happiness, success and achievement.

*Ṣāliḥ*, from the root Ṣ-L-H meaning to reconcile, to put things in order, signifies behaviour that is righteous, just and dignified. *'Amal ṣāliḥ*, honourable or righteous action, is often combined in the Qur'ān with *īmān* and made a condition for success in this world, as well as in the Hereafter.

*Tahajjud* is a voluntary late-night prayer. Over and above the obligatory prayers, Muslims are encouraged to pray supererogatory (*nawāfil*) prayers in the small hours of the night. This is optional but full of spiritual reward. It is known as *tahajjud* or "vigil".

*Tāghūt* from the verb *tagħā* which means "he was inordinate or exhorbitant". *Al-Tāghūt*, in the Qur'ān (e.g. 2: 256–257) used both as singular and plural denotes false gods or leaders who wilfully stand between God and man and lead him to evil. It includes anything that is worshipped besides God; hence a devil or powers of evil. Pharaoh in the Qur'ān (20: 24, 43) has been mentioned as one who declared himself as the supreme god and exceeded all limits "*innahū Taghā*". *Tāghūt* may also mean presumptuous or tyrannical leaders or anyone who lives off the profits from selling divine worship or political favour.

*Takāthur* from the root *K-TH-R* means plenty and abundance. In the Qur'ān (e.g. 102: 1) the word is used to mean one's obsession with worldly possessions, with wealth, number, strength, position and the like — things that make man selfish and forgetful of his duties to God and to his fellow-beings.

*Umma*, community, or nation, is a special name given to Muslim brotherhood and unity. The Qur'ān refers to Muslims as the best *Umma* raised for the benefit of all mankind (3: 110). At another place, (2: 143), it calls them "the middle nation" (*Umma Wasat*) — a unique characteristic of the Islamic community which has been asked to maintain equitable balance between extremes, pursue the path of moderation and establish the middle way. Such a community of Muslims will be a model for the whole world to emulate.

*Zakat* (literally "growth" and "purification") is a compulsory monetary contribution paid by every Muslim possessing more than a certain amount of wealth. This results in the transfer of resources from the rich to the poor and to other welfare activities. *Zakāt* is the third pillar (*rukn*) of Islam. The term *sadaqa* (pl. *sadaqāt*) also occurs in the Qur'ān and incorporates *Zakāt*

(9: 60). *Ṣadaqa*, or charity, is of two kinds: (a) *ṣadaqa taṭawwu'* (voluntary contribution) and (b) *ṣadaqa mafrūda* (obligatory contribution). In the terminology of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), a clear distinction between *ṣadaqa* and *zakāt* is made, as *ṣadaqa* generally refers to any kind of charity which is given for the sake of God, whereas *zakāt* signifies the obligatory contribution which every "well-off" Muslim (*ṣāhib al-niṣāb*) has to pay to the Islamic state, in the absence of which individuals are required to distribute the *zakāt* among its beneficiaries.

*Zulm* literally means not putting a thing in the proper place. In Qur'ānic usage, it stands for wrong-doing or acting tyrannically. *Zulm* is of three kinds: (a) between man and God, (b) between man and man, and (c) by man towards himself.

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