

# Getting to Know Allah

Second Edition

Bernard Payeur

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**Bernard Payeur**

ISBN: 978-1-928023-34-0

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## Dedication

The buzz of the alarm clock was my signal to get up and go downstairs to make the coffee. Ten minutes later, a warm cup of coffee in each hand, I would make my way back up the stairs, leaving one cup on the desk in my home office, and the other on her bathroom vanity. Back in the bedroom I would open the curtains, then walk over to the bed to kiss her good morning.

Lucette would shower and get dressed. After a quick breakfast I would drive her to her job on Parliament Hill, a ten-minute drive. For 35 years, she was one of the fifty or so elite professionals who provide translation and simultaneous interpretation to the House of Commons, the Senate of Canada, Parliamentary and Cabinet Committees and Party Caucuses. After a hurried goodbye and have a nice day—Wellington Street, in front of Parliament, is busy first thing in the morning—I would make my way back home and begin my day's work, reading and writing about the Koran.

When she got home at the end of the day, depending on the season (and the weather), we would sit on the front porch with a glass of wine and some munchies and she would review and comment on my day's work. I always had a copy of Fakhry's interpretation of the Koran on my lap ready to answer her questions. This was when her Master's in Linguistics, specialty *Translation*, came in handy. Sipping her wine, she would patiently explain some of the nuances of Fakhry's translation that I had failed to grasp or that I might have misunderstood.

We agreed on most things when it came to Islam and the threat it posed to Western Civilization—except that it would all come to pass, that the moderates would win the day and the March of Civilization would continue; that we would not see the *Enlightenment*, which ushered in the *Age of Reason*, undone. If our discussion became too animated and we could not find common ground, we changed the subject, if only temporarily. For example, she had never watched *Let The Quran Speak*, a half-hour program hosted by Shabir Ally, President of the Islamic Information and Dawah Centre in Toronto, then broadcasted across Canada most Saturday nights on Vision TV. This Saturday's topic was the controversial Verse 4:34 that condones the

beating of a spouse who disobeys her husband, or whose husband fears she will disobey.

4:34 Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made some of them excel the others, and because they spend some of their wealth. Hence righteous women are obedient, guarding the unseen (their sex) which Allah has guarded. And those of them that you fear might rebel, admonish them and abandon them in their beds and beat them. Should they obey you, do not seek a way of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great!

When we came upon the program, Shabir Ally was being questioned by a young woman wearing the traditional headscarf (hijab) on the meaning of what is often referred to as the "wife beating verse." Ally was not put off by her questions and appeared comfortable with being interviewed by a female. He offered an explanation that I had never heard before, nor come across in my research on the Koran. He said that Revealed Truth (an unassailable fact communicated to a mortal by a god) 4:34 had to be looked at in a much wider context, and in that wider context, Allah did not sanction the beating of one's wife, but instead, instructed the community to protect and look after wives.

Lucette was impressed by Ally's restrained and positive interpretation of a revelation which, when taken at face value, gives a husband not only the right, but a God-given responsibility to physically discipline his wives for both real and illusory transgressions against him or the All Mighty. The discussion of Shabir Ally's interpretation of Verse 4:34 would lead us to the trial of Galileo charged with heresy for supporting Copernicus' theory that the Earth revolves around the sun. In the Bible, it is written that during the Israeli conquest of Palestine, God ordered the sun to stand still in the sky for a day so the Israelites could complete the extermination of the Amorites.

Then spoke Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of

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heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day  
(Joshua 10: 12-13).

God had commanded the sun to stand still, not the Earth. To accept Galileo's explanation would have meant, for Christians raised on the literal interpretation of the Bible, that the Bible was wrong. This was unacceptable to Pope Urban VIII. It was not that he did not believe in the Copernican system; he simply wanted Galileo to keep quiet while the Church guided the faithful to a new interpretation of the scriptures concerning the sun interrupting its race across the sky for twenty-four hours. My wife thought that Shabir Ally was just doing what the informed leadership in Rome had done, gradually getting the believers to abandon a simplistic, literal interpretation of the Koran.

Lucette was the optimist in our more than thirty-year marriage. I did not agree. When it comes to women's rights and religion, I argued that this was a doomed strategy; and in any event, women should not have to compromise on fundamental issues such as equality in the hope that one day, an enlightened male religious leadership will consider them equal in every way. She said I was being obstinate and unrealistic. To avoid going to bed upset, we decided to watch the Australian Open where an obstinate and determined Greek Cypriot, Marcos Baghdatis, beat the overwhelming favourite, number two seed American Andy Roddick.

If we can, believers and non-believers, have the type of discussions Lucette and I had about Islam—taking time-outs if the discussion gets too animated—then her optimism that a modern interpretation of the Koran along with mutual respect and understanding will eventually overcome fanaticism and intolerance may be validated. Nothing would make her and me happier in this world or the next. Lucette passed away on July 5, 2019.

*Bernard Payeur*

December 21, 2021

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# Revelations and Generalizations

THE PEOPLE

*114 An-Nâs*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

114:1 Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of the People,

114:2 "The King of the people,

114:3 "The God of the people,

114:5 "From the evil of the slinking whisperer [Satan],

114:6 "Who whispers in the breasts of people,

114:7 "Both jinn and men."

*Both jinn and men.* That is it, the last verse of the Koran. What a read! What a revelation! What is a jinn? It is a spirit that inhabits another dimension. There are good and evil jinns. The caricature of the genie is probably based on this creature of the Koran.

When I decided to read and study the Koran with the intention of writing about it, I was determined to get a Muslim's interpretation, one that could only be viewed as favourable to Islam. I also wanted a translation that was easy to read and understand. The edition that seemed to satisfy these requirements was a translation by Majid Fakhry, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the American University of Beirut. In the translator's own words, "We have tried to express ourselves in a simple, readable English idiom." *Publishers Weekly* wrote of Fakhry's notable accomplishment that it "succeeds in expressing the meanings of the original Arabic in simple readable English."

My goals in reading the Koran were diverse. At the top of my list was gaining an understanding of what makes this book so special; to understand what makes the religion based on its content attractive to so many; and yes, to satisfy my curiosity about what God sounds like, or more accurately, reads like. I also read the Koran in the hope of dispelling prejudices and apprehensions I had developed after reading about Islam from authors – devoted Muslims, most of them – who had nothing but praise for Allah and His "perfect religion."

In these books on the Koran, I prefer letting Allah and His Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad, speak for themselves, offering only an informed layman's opinion or expert's explanation where I feel it is warranted. When Fakhry's crisp translation is not sufficient, it is Moududi I most often turn to. Abul A'la Moududi's (also spelt Maududi's) [1903-1979] credentials as a pre-eminent Islamic scholar are impeccable: journalist, theologian, Muslim revivalist, Islamist philosopher, and first recipient of the *King Faisal International Award* for his services to Islam and Islamic studies. Of the more than 120 books he wrote, he is most famous for his magnum opus, *The Meaning of the Qur'an*.

The Koran is the book upon which the Taliban, the Islamist fundamentalist movement that ruled most of Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001, based their concept of God's government on Earth. The Taliban, like all believers, are required to at least attempt to commit to memory the entire Koran. Believers are also expected to accept Allah's Revelations in their totality without question. This has not been my approach in presenting my impressions, as a former Catholic, now an agnostic, upon first reading the Koran.

As an unbeliever, I hope I can safely express my opinions about the Koran and the Prophet Muhammad, although nothing is certain. It is an unfortunate fact of life that authors who choose to write about the Koran or the life of the Prophet must tread carefully lest believers perceive their writings as an insult to Allah or Muhammad. I hope that I have achieved that fine balance of respect and critique, if such an equilibrium is even possible when Islam is the topic.

Translations of the Koran are usually called interpretations because believers claim that only the Arabic version can convey the true meaning of God's words. If you can't read the Koran in the original, they say, you are bound to misinterpret Allah's words. Do they have a point or is this just a pre-emptive rationalisation, a ready excuse for some of the frightening revelations contained within the Muslim Holy Book, revelations that may leave unbelievers wondering if these are the words of God or those of His nemesis? The Koran is written in verses or ayats, therefore it is true that you cannot appreciate the rhythm and rhyme that only the original can convey; however, any good translator will be able to communicate the original meaning of the poet's words, and the meaning of these words is what should concern us.

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An English translation of the Koran adds up to about 77,700 words, the approximate size of a standard 300-page book. This is a book, Allah reveals, in which you can study “whatever you choose.”

68:35 Shall We consider those who submit like those who are criminals?

68:36 What is the matter with you; how do you judge?

68:37 Or do you have a Book in which you study?

68:38 Wherein there is whatever you choose.

This is a bold statement for a relatively short book where boundless repetitions occupy space that could, perhaps, be put to better use. Take away the reiterations and the restatement of the same accusation ad nauseam, such as that of worshipping or associating other gods with Allah, and the Koran would be the length of a novella at most. The Koran is made up of 114 chapters; when referring to these, I use the Arabic transliteration (conversion from one alphabet to another) of chapter, which is surah. Each surah is further divided into verses, a term I have chosen to retain over the Arabic transliteration of ayat.

Despite its brevity, the Koran is somewhat disorganized: there is no timeline and the only allowance given to any kind of order is the sequencing of most of the 114 chapters from longest to shortest. Because no attention appears to have been given to arranging the chapters and verses in some kind of chronological order, readers often receive answers to questions that have yet to be asked. For example, in Chapter 9, Verse 114 we are told that Allah refused Abraham’s plea to forgive his father for not believing.

9:114 Abraham asked forgiveness for his father, only because of a promise he had made to him; but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he disowned him. Indeed Abraham was compassionate, forbearing.

The actual request made by Abraham, and the promise made, is revealed ten chapters later:

19:47 [Abraham] said: “Peace be upon you. I will seek forgiveness for you from my Lord. He has, indeed, been gracious to me.”

There are 6,346 verses in the Koran if you include the 112 unnumbered Basmalahs, the formulaic invocation “in the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful,” which appears at the beginning of every

surah except the first and the ninth. I refer to passages by the surah and verse numbers—for example, 2:282 is Chapter 2, Verse 282—or by the surah’s name and verse number: The Cow, Verse 282. A verse can be just a few words or more than 200 words long, such as the aforementioned; the longest verse in the Koran addresses the virtue of good bookkeeping practices and why, when it comes to transactions involving money or chattel, women cannot be trusted.

Just a few editorial notes before we get down to business and let God speak for Himself. All quotes from the Koran are from Majid Fakhry’s interpretation unless otherwise indicated. Text added by Fakhry within a quoted verse to improve understanding is enclosed within square “[ ]” parentheses or brackets. Other clarifications by Fakhry, including footnotes, are enclosed in round “( )” brackets.

On rare occasions, you will find italicised bracketed comments within a verse: these are the author’s, usually included to identify someone whom Allah does not explicitly name and, when it is not evident to the casual reader, whom He is informing when having Muhammad respond to questions and observations. Any underlining for emphasis is also my doing, not Fakhry’s. I hope Majid will forgive my use of the more familiar Koran instead of his preferred spelling, Qur’an.

Where warranted, verses are accompanied by the Prophet’s recorded sayings or descriptions of actions, called hadiths. (Ahadith, often used to indicate the plural form of hadith, is not used herein.) Hadiths, of which there are more than ten thousand, are hearsay evidence collected approximately 200 years after the Prophet’s passing that describe Muhammad’s words and deeds, including the silent approval of actions performed in his presence. An authentic (sahih) or good (hasan) hadith, i.e., one that can be traced to a legitimate witness, passed down via of chain of reliable transmitters, is usually considered a legal precedent so long as it does not contradict the Koran.

Sunni Islam gives credence to the hadiths collected by six men (al-Bukhari, Imam Muslim, At-Tirmidi, Ibn Majah, Abu Dawood and An-Nisa’i), with the largest, the al-Bukhari collection, considered the most authoritative of the “six canonical collections.” Imam Bukhari (d. 870) is said to have gathered over 600,000 hadiths, of which 7,275 are considered authentic. The Koran and these “hadith collections” inform every facet of a believer’s existence.

When you encounter ‘say’ followed by a colon in a revelation (with no other qualifier, e.g., “they say” or, on rare occasions, “you said”), assume this is Allah directing Muhammad. All quoted verses

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have been carefully reviewed to ensure that Fakhry's interpretation has been faithfully rendered. Many verses, such as 44:43-44, must be read together to form a complete sentence or thought; therefore, do not assume a typographical (typo) or grammatical error if a verse does not end with the expected punctuation.

44:43 The Tree of Zaqqum (the Tree of Bitterness) will certainly be

44:44 The food of the sinner.

Some of the quoted verses from Fakhry's interpretation of the Koran have no end quotations due to lesser-known rule of English grammar. If a quote is more than one paragraph long, i.e., verses, opening quotation marks (“) appear at the beginning of each verse but closing quotation marks (”) are only required at the end of the complete quotation. All translations consulted are from recognized Islamic scholars of the Koran. Reference to content in other books in this series is usually in the form: (see *Book Title: "Chapter,"* Boreal Books). Finally, expect the occasional overlap with verses in other books in this series. This is unavoidable with Allah, in the words of Justin Wintle, author of *History of Islam*, “jumping from one subject to another in a sort of unfurling stream of supra-consciousness,” i.e. a consciousness or awareness that is beyond our understanding.



# **INSIGHTS INTO OMNIPOTENCE**

# Allah's Mercy

20:5 The Compassionate has sat upon the Throne.

20:6 To Him belongs what is in the heavens, and what is in the earth, and what is in between them, as well as what is beneath the ground.

20:7 If you speak aloud, He surely knows the secret and what is even more hidden.

20:8 Allah, there is no god but He. His are the Most Beautiful Names (*Appendix: Ninety-Nine Names of Allah*).

*Compassionate* and *Merciful* are the attributes of Allah most often mentioned in the Koran, and by a wide margin. The flattering invocation "In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful" begins every chapter of the Koran except for the first surah, The Opening (also referred to as the *Chapter of Prayer* because it is repeated during every one of the five daily prayers) and the ninth, Repentance. The reader is reminded at least twice when reciting the short Chapter of Prayer (only seven verses) of Allah's merciful and compassionate nature.

## THE OPENING

### *1 Al-Fâtihah*

1:1 In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful,

1:2 Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds,

1:3 The Compassionate, the Merciful,

1:4 Master of the Day of Judgement,

1:5 Only You do we worship, and only You do we implore for help.

1:6. Lead us to the right path,

1:7 The path of those You have favoured Not those who have incurred Your wrath or have gone astray.

*In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful* does not appear at all in Repentance; the surah being mainly about making war may explain its absence. In any event, a compassionate and merciful god is not the impression that a first-time reader of the Koran is left with. Quite the opposite! This is not to say that Allah is not a compassionate and merciful god.

### **A Conditional Type of Mercy**

9:112 Those who repent, worship, praise, fast, kneel down, prostrate themselves, enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil and observe the ordinances of Allah – to [such] believers give the good tidings (that they shall be pardoned).

-----

17:80 Say: "My Lord, make my entry a truthful one and my going out a truthful one, and grant me from you a supporting power."

17:81 And say: "The truth has come and falsehood has perished. Falsehood is ever perishing."

17:82 And We reveal of the Qur'an that which is healing and merciful to the believers, and it yields nothing but perdition for the wrongdoers.

----

16:97 Whoever does a good deed, whether male or female, while a believer, We shall make him live a good life; and We will give them a better reward than what they have done.

-----

14:23 And those who believe and do good works shall be admitted to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever, by their Lord's Leave; their greeting therein shall be: "Peace."

Compassion and mercy are not qualities that most laypersons would associate with Allah as their reading takes them further into the Koran and the mindset of its Author. Only thirteen verses into Islam's holiest scriptures (6,333 revelations to go) and it begins:

2:6 Those who have disbelieved, whether you warn them or not, they will not believe.

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2:7 Allah has sealed their hearts and their hearing; their sight is dimmed and a terrible punishment awaits them.

2:8 There are some who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day;" but they are not real believers.

2:9 They seek to deceive Allah and the believers, but they deceive none other than themselves, though they are not aware of that.

2:10 In their hearts is a sickness; so Allah has increased their sickness. A painful punishment awaits them because of their lying.

More than six thousand verses later and Allah is still at it, promising a painful punishment for those whose hearts He has sealed. If *compassionate* is defined as being aware of the suffering of another and wishing to relieve it, and *merciful* as being unconditionally kind and forgiving, then these are not virtues we would associate with the author of the following verses describing roasting a man over an open fire, with his wife, tethered like an animal, supplying the firewood that fuels the flames burning her husband.

### THE FIBRE

#### *111 Al-Masad*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

111:1 Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and may he perish too;

111:2 Neither his wealth nor what he has earned will avail him anything.

111:3 He will roast in a flaming fire,

111:4. And his wife will be a carrier of fire-wood,

111:5. She shall have a rope of fibre around her neck.

Does it matter that Lahab spoke his mind when he was inconvenienced by Muhammad's preaching? This is the reason for Allah promising to roast him with the compelled assistance of his beloved spouse, who had nothing to do with her husband calling His Messenger out for wasting his time.

**Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

When the Verse: 'And warn your tribe of near kindred.' (26.214) was revealed. Allah's Apostle went out, and when he had ascended As-Safa mountain, he shouted, "O Sabahah!"

The people said, "Who is that?"

Then they gathered around him, whereupon he said, "Do you see? If I inform you that cavalymen are proceeding up the side of this mountain, will you believe me?"

They said, "We have never heard you telling a lie."

Then he said, "I am a plain warner to you of a coming severe punishment."

Abu Lahab said, "May you perish! You gathered us only for this reason?"

Then Abu Lahab went away. So the "Surat: ul-LAHAB" 'Perish the hands of Abu Lahab!' (111.1) was revealed.

*Bukhari 60.495*

If the treatment reserved for Abu Lahab and his wife was an exception to the definitions of mercy and compassion, then perhaps the phrase most associated with Allah would not, for the non-believer, have such a hollow ring. Roasting in Hell for an eternity is the fate Allah reserves for all who refuse to believe in Him and His Messengers, which God never tires of reminding the readers of the Koran. Often when you come across the many verses where Allah brags about His mercy and compassion, He has just committed—or is about to commit—a merciless, pitiless act of grandiose proportions.

Islamic tradition informs us that Allah showed only once what non-Muslims would consider compassion and mercy for unbelievers. He spared Muhammad's parents the torment of Hell after His spokesman was seen weeping over the tomb of his mother. When asked by witnesses why he was crying, he replied that he had just seen his parents burning in Hell. Allah would bring both parents, Abdullah and Amina, back to life temporarily so that they could become Muslim and enter Paradise. In another tradition, Muhammad was scolded by the angel Gabriel for being seen praying for a beloved, recently deceased uncle who had sheltered him, protected him from his enemies, and been a father figure to the Prophet whose own father died before he was born. The angel, in no uncertain terms, told him that

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Allah did not want to see him praying for an unbeliever ever again (his uncle Abu Talib died an unbeliever). He reminded the griever it was all pointless, since unbelievers automatically go to Hell.

\*\*\*

On Judgement Day, Abu Talib's nephew will intercede with God, not to ask that his uncle be allowed into Paradise—that not being an option—but that his punishment be reduced.

### **Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:**

I heard Allah's Apostles when his uncle, Abu Talib had been mentioned in his presence, saying, "Maybe my intercession will help him on the Day of Resurrection so that he may be put in a shallow place in the Fire, with fire reaching his ankles and causing his brain to boil."

Bukhari 76.569

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The further you get into the Koran, the more difficulty you may have in accepting the contradiction of a god who claims to be compassionate and merciful while revelling in the pain He will cause any who die an unbeliever. Then you remember: Islam is all about loyalty. To quote Virgil Gheorghiu: "The Christian Bible, the Old Testament portion, is mainly about hope; the New Testament is about love; the Koran is about neither! The Koran is all about loyalty, absolute, unquestioning, blind loyalty to one God." Those who intone *In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful* are reminding Allah that the price of their loyalty is the compassion and mercy He has promised to those who remain loyal and die as Muslims. Allah will handsomely reward and forgive the sins of those who believe in Him and His Messenger and are ruthless with those who don't.

48:29 Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and those who are with him are hard on the unbelievers, merciful towards each other. You will see them kneeling and prostrating themselves, seeking bounty and good pleasure from Allah; their mark is upon their faces, as a trace of their prostration. That is their likeness in the Torah and their likeness in the Gospels; just as a seed which puts forth its shoot, strengthens it and grows stout, then rises straight upon its stalks, delighting the sower, to vex thereby unbelievers. Allah has

promised those who believe and do the righteous deeds forgiveness and a great wage.

### **Terrified Into Believing**

You don't necessarily remain loyal to Allah because you love Him and He loves you, as He says He does in one of the few revelations where Allah and "love" are literally associated.

19:96 Those who believe and do what is right, the Compassionate will favour them with love (His Love and that of their fellow creatures).

You fear and respect Allah for what He will do to you if you don't. The punishment reserved for Abu Lahab and his wife one of the more graphic and cruel reminders of the price you will pay if you fail the loyalty test. When reading the Koran you must get used to the violent imagery that permeates the book, just like almost two billion Muslims around the world who must recite verses about Allah revelling in burning people alive as part of their daily prayers to the *Compassionate*.

Fire holds a mesmerizing fascination for Allah as an instrument of torture. In Fakhry's translation of the Koran, whenever Hell's fire is mentioned, it is written with a capital 'F'; this may be the translator's way of showing respect for Allah's beloved 'Fire'. When talking about sending unbelievers into the Fire, Allah's rationalisation is nearly always the same: they have it coming, and deserve to spend an eternity roasting in Hell for not believing in Me and My Messengers.

The opening surah of the Koran is not only uttered during the five daily prayers; it is also recited on occasions of any significance, and at the commencement of a Muslim's daily activities. While two of the first three verses, Revelations 1:1 and 1:3, mention Allah's compassionate and merciful nature, every time a Muslim recites the seven verses that make up the Chapter of Prayer, he is reminded by the seventh verse that unbelievers are not deserving of Allah's compassion or mercy.

1:6 Lead us to the right path,

1:7 The path of those You have favoured Not those who have incurred Your wrath or have gone astray.

Allah promises to burn with His cherished Fire, which is fuelled by men and stones, those with whom He is displeased, such as anyone whom He challenges to produce a better Koran who fails to do so, as He knew they would.

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2:23 If you are in doubt as to what We have revealed to Our Servant (the Prophet Muhammad), then produce a surah similar to it and call upon your witnesses other than Allah (that is, the gods you associate with Allah), if you are truthful.

2:24 If you do not do that, and surely you will not, then guard yourself against the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the unbelievers.

Just how much time will you spend being consumed by a fire that is fuelled by an assortment of people and stones?

2:39 And [as to] those who have disbelieved and denied Our Revelations, they are the people of Hell, wherein they will dwell forever.

Even if the topic is not unbelievers, as in the following verse—where Allah warns the faithful not to use an expression that Muhammad dislikes because the Jews frequently used it as a term of reproach—He can't resist mentioning what a painful punishment awaits the unbelievers. He does this all the time.

2:104 O believers, do not say (to our Messenger): "Ra'ina [listen to us] but Unzurna [look at us] and listen." And for the unbelievers a painful punishment is destined.

Allah, like a cat that teases the mouse it will eventually eat for lunch, likes to have fun with some unbelievers, giving them a false sense of security before tossing them into Hell's Fire. What follows is one revelation that gives a glimpse into God's duplicitous, some would say playful, nature.

17:18 He who desires the transitory life, We hasten to him and to whomsoever We desire whatever We please. Later We consign him to Hell in which he will burn despised and rejected.

It is mostly a lack of patience with unbelievers that we come to associate with Allah. The punishment can't come too soon for these wretched creatures, courtesy of a god who never tires of reminding the reader of His *compassionate and merciful* nature just after He has condemned unbelievers to an eternity in agony.

2:161 Upon those who disbelieve and die as unbelievers is the Curse of Allah, the angels, and the whole of mankind.



2:162 They abide forever in it (Hell); their punishment will not be reduced, nor will they be given any respite.

2:163 Your God is one God. There is no God but He, The Compassionate, the Merciful.

Disagree that the Koran is the ultimate truth and risk an eternity of fire.

2:175 It is those who prefer to commit error rather than seek guidance, and incur punishment in place of forgiveness. How bold they are in the face of the Fire!

2:176 That is because Allah has revealed the Book with the truth; and those who disagree about the Book are in great dissent.

Reading the Koran, you often get the impression that Allah is looking for any excuse to mix people with Fire, including putting His Fire into people.

2:174 Those who conceal anything from the Book which Allah has revealed and sell it for a small price will swallow nothing but fire in their bellies. Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them (from their sins), and their punishment is very painful.

It's only the second chapter of the Koran—one hundred and twelve to go—and the *Compassionate* is talking incessantly about roasting people. He will finally give it a rest more than six thousand verses later with the story of the hapless Abu Lahab roasting over an open fire stoked by wood that his wife is forced to provide. Wood!? Didn't Allah say in Verse 2:24 that He uses men and stones as combustibles? "Guard yourself against the Fire whose fuel is men and stones." Yes, and in the very next surah He reiterates that people, children even, are the preferred fuel for His Fire.

3:10 As to the unbelievers, neither their riches nor their children will avail them anything against Allah; in fact, they shall be the fuel of the Fire.

Abu Lahab may have been an exception to the rule. A woman in the depths of Hell may not have been up to the task of stoking the fire barbecuing her husband, or her children—depending on your interpretation of "their children will avail them anything against Allah; in fact, they shall be the fuel of the Fire"—even if Allah had piled the unbelievers she would need close by.

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8:36 Indeed, the unbelievers spend their wealth to bar [people] from Allah's Path. They will continue to spend it, but it will become a source of anguish for them; then they will be vanquished. And those who disbelieve shall be gathered in Hell.

8:37 So that Allah might separate the foul from the fair and place the foul, one upon the other, piling them up all together and casting them into Hell. Those are truly the losers.

(See *The Islamic Hereafter: "Hell,"* Boreal Books, for a comprehensive revelation-based description of the Compassionate's self-sustaining inferno.)

## **Salih and the Destruction of Thamud**

42:30 Whatever calamity might hit you is due to what your hands have earned; yet He pardons much.

42:31 You are not able to thwart Him on earth and you do not have, apart from Allah, any protector or supporter.

Thamud had an army, that, like Pharaoh's, was to no avail when confronted by Allah's Might.

85:17 Have you heard the story of the hosts (*armies*)?

85:18 Of Pharaoh and Thamud.

85:19 Yet, the unbelievers continue to denounce.

85:20 While Allah, from behind them, is All-Embracing.

Thamud in the Koran is believed to be Petra. The people of Thamud were wiped out for not heeding the warnings of the Arab prophet Salih. Their mass murder is an exception to those God committed on behalf of the Biblical prophets related in *Shared Prophets: Biblical Figures in the Koran* (Boreal Books). Except for the people of Lot, the genocides Allah committed on their behalf were for being called liars for claiming they spoke on His behalf. Allah's reason for murdering every man, woman and child of Thamud is even pettier: an injury to His she-camel (Muhammad's favourite camel was also a she-camel, a white one).

God revels in the destruction of Thamud in at least nine surahs. These nine accounts of Petra's destruction may remind you of a tourist who visits an amazing ruin—as Muhammad the merchant must have done during one of his trips north to Syria to trade—and keeps returning there during conversations to impress his friends.

*Surah 7, The Ramparts*

In The Ramparts, Thamud is destroyed by an earthquake.

7:73 And to Thamud [We sent] their brother Salih. He said:  
“O my people, worship Allah; you have no other god but He.  
A clear proof from your Lord has now come to you. This is

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Allah's she-camel, to be a sign onto you; so let it graze in Allah's Land and do not cause her any harm; for you will then be seized by a very painful punishment.

7:74 "And remember how He made you as successors after 'Ad, and established you in the land, wherein you built yourselves castles on its plains and hewed the mountains into houses. Remember then Allah's Bounties and do not corrupt the earth with mischief."

7:75 The arrogant dignitaries among his people said to some of those who had believed and were deemed to be weak: "Do you know that Salih is sent forth from his Lord?" They said: "Indeed, we believe in what he has been sent with."

7:76 The arrogant dignitaries said: "In that which you have believed, we definitely disbelieve."

7:77 So they hamstrung the she-camel and defied their Lord's Command and said: "O Salih, bring upon us what you are promising us, if you are one of the Messengers."

7:78 Whereupon the earthquake overtook them, and so they lay prostrate in their own homes.

7:79 Then he turned his back on them and said: "O my people, I have delivered to you my Lord's Message and given you advice, but you do not like the givers of advice."

### *Surah 11, Hud*

In Hud, it is "the [thundering] cry" that destroys the city and its inhabitants!

11:61 And to Thamud [We sent] their brother Salih. He said: "O my people, worship Allah; you have no other god but Him. He brought you out from the earth and made you inhabit it; so ask His forgiveness and repent onto Him. My Lord is indeed close at hand and answers [the prayer]."

11:62 They said: "O Salih, we set our hopes on you before this. Do you forbid us to worship what our fathers worshipped? We are indeed in grave doubt regarding what you are calling us to."

11:63 He said: "O my people, what if I am in possession of a clear proof from my Lord, and He has accorded me a mercy

of His Own? Who then will protect me from Allah if I disobey Him? Surely, you will only compound my perdition.

11:64 “O my people, here is the she-camel of Allah, a sign onto you. Let her graze in Allah’s land and do not do her any harm, lest a swift punishment should overtake you.”

After someone cuts the camel’s hamstring, Salih tells the people of Thamud that they only have three days to live.

11:65 However, they hamstrung her, and so he said: “[You can] stay in your houses [only] for three days. This is a promise which will not be belied.”

11:66 Then, when our Command came, We saved Salih and those who believed with him, by a mercy of Our Own, from the disgrace of that day. Your Lord is truly the Strong, and Mighty.

11:67 And the evildoers were overtaken by the [thundering] cry and they lay prostrate in their own homes,

“Away with...” is how Allah gleefully ends many of His stories about the civilizations He has destroyed and the thousands of mostly innocent bystanders—from the newborn to the elderly—slaughtered on the flimsiest of pretences.

11:68 As if they never dwelt therein. Truly, Thamud disbelieved their Lord. Away with Thamud!

### *Surah 17, The Night Journey*

The Night Journey is a reference to the night Muhammad flew to Paradise on Al Burak, a winged horse, to meet with the god for whom he spoke (a complete account of this visit can be found in Chapter “Prayers – One-on-One with Allah”). In this two-revelation account of the destruction of Thamud, Allah alludes to the short get-together during which He gave His spokesman a glimpse of Hell and “the tree cursed in the Qur’an,” the infamous tree of Zaqqum growing at the bottom of His inferno.

17:59 Nothing prevents Us from sending the signs except that the ancients denied them. We gave to Thamud the she-camel as a manifest sign, but they maltreated her. We do not send the signs except to warn.

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17:60 [Remember] when We said to you; "Your Lord encompasses mankind. We did not make the vision We showed you except as a trial to mankind, and likewise the tree cursed in the Qur'an. We warn them, but that only increased their tyranny."

#### *Surah 26, The Poets*

In The Poets, the people regret what they did to Allah's camel. Being sorry would not deter the Wrath of the Compassionate.

26:141 Thamud denounced the Messengers as liars.

26:142 When their brother Salih said to them: "Do you not fear God?"

26:143 "I am a faithful Messenger to you.

26:144 "So fear Allah and obey me.

26:145 "I do not ask you any wages for this; my wage is with the Lord of the Worlds.

26:146 "Will you be left herebelow in peace?"

26:147 "In gardens and springs;

26:148 "And plantations and palm trees, whose shoots are tender?"

26:149 "And will you hew skilfully houses in the mountains?"

26:150 "So fear Allah and obey me.

26:151 "And do not obey the orders of the extravagant;

26:152 "Who work corruption in the land and do not make amends."

26:153 They said: "You are certainly a man bewitched.

26:154 "You are only a mortal like us. Produce, then, a sign, if you are truthful."

26:155 He said: "This is a she-camel; this has a drinking day, and you have a fixed drinking day.

26:156 "Do not cause her any harm, or else the punishment of a Great Day will smite you."

26:157 However, they hamstrung her, and became full of remorse.

26:158 Then, punishment smote them. There is surely in that a sign; and most of them were not believers.

26:159 Your Lord is truly the All-Mighty, the Merciful.

*Surah 27, The Ants*

In The Ants, Allah reveals that nine wrongdoers were responsible for His genocidal wrath and He did it, in part, to prove that He is a better schemer.

27:45 And We have sent to Thamud their brother Salih, saying: "Worship Allah"; and lo and behold, they split into two groups fighting each other.

27:46 He said: "O my people, why do you hasten the evil course before the fair? If only you would seek Allah's Forgiveness, that perchance you may receive mercy!"

27:47 They said: "We augured ill of you and your companions." He said: "Your bird of omen is with Allah, but you are a people who are being tested."

27:48 And they were in the city nine individuals, who worked corruption in the land and did not set things right.

27:49 They said: "Swear one to the other by Allah: We will attack him and his family at night; then we will tell his guardian: 'We did not witness the slaying of his family, and we are indeed truthful.'"

27:50 They schemed a scheme and We schemed a scheme, while they were unaware.

27:51 See, then, what was the outcome of their scheming; We destroyed them together with all their people.

27:52 Their houses are in ruin, on account of their wrongdoing. There is in that a sign for a people who know.

27:53 And we delivered those who believed and were God-fearing.

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### *Surah 41, The Well-Expounded*

The shortest account of the obliteration of Thamud:

41:17 But as for Thamud, We extended guidance to them; yet they preferred blindness to guidance, and so the thunderbolt of humiliating punishment seized them on account of what they used to earn.

41:18 And We delivered those who believed and were God-Fearing.

### *Surah 51, The Scattering Wind*

The genocide of “the people of Noah” remembered along with the mass murder of those of Thamud.

51:43 And in Thamud, when it was said to them: “Enjoy yourselves for a while.”

51:44 Then, they disdained arrogantly the command of their Lord, and so the thunderbolt struck them, while they looked on.

51:45 They were unable to stand upright, and they were not victorious.

51:46 And We destroyed the people of Noah before that. They were indeed a sinful people.

### *Surah 54, The Moon*

In this reminiscence of the annihilation of the people of Thamud, the catalyst, Allah admits, was one man who took it upon himself to do the deed that caused Him to lose it!

54:23 Thamud denounced the warnings as lies.

54:24 So they said: “Shall we follow a lone mortal from among us? We are indeed in error and folly.

54:25 “Has the Reminder been sent down upon him alone among us? No, he is an arrogant liar.”

54:26 They will surely know tomorrow who is the arrogant liar.

54:27 We shall send the she-camel as a test for them; so watch them and be patient.



54:28 And tell them that the water is to be divided between them, each drinking in turn.

54:29 They called their companion, and so he took charge and hamstrung [her].

54:30 How then were My Punishment and My Warnings?

54:31 We released upon them a single cry and they became like the stubble of a corral-builder.

54:32 We have, indeed, made the Qur'an easy to remember. Is there, then, any one who will remember?

*Surah 91, The Sun*

In The Sun, Allah's camel's drinking time is part of the test.

91:11 Thamud have denounced, due to their arrogance.

91:12 When their most vicious citizen emerged.

91:13 Then Allah's Messenger said to them: "Beware of Allah's she-camel and her drinking time."

91:14 They called him a liar and hamstrung her; whereupon their Lord destroyed them for their sins and settled the matter;

91:15 And He does not fear its sequel.

**Al-Rass**

Allah, in bragging about His destructions of the people of Thamud, 'Ad, Lot, Noah, Pharaoh and the genocide of countless "generations in between," mentions "the companions of al-Rass" about which there is much speculation. (You will find the complete accounts of the destruction of 'Ad, Noah and Pharaoh's people and others in *Shared Prophets: Biblical Figures in the Koran*, Boreal Books.) They were destroyed, ostensibly because "they did not hope to be raised from the dead."

25:38 And 'Ad, Thamud, the companions of al-Rass and many generations in between;

25:39 To each, We proposed similes and each We ruined utterly.

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25:40 And they came upon the city (of Lot) which was drench by an evil rain. Did they not see it? No, they did not hope to be raised from the dead.

What we know with some certainty is that “the companions of al-Rass” were obliterated after “the people of Noah” and probably before the people of Thamud.

50:12 Prior to them (in the past, *Moududi*), the people of Noah, the companions of al-Rass and Thamud denounced [the Prophets].

50:13 ‘Ad, Pharaoh and the brethren of Lot, too;

Then there were “the Companions of the Thicket” and “the people of Tubba’,” assumed to be the Midianites, “a biblical people who occupied territory east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, and southward through the desert wilderness of the Arabah. They reportedly dominated this territory from roughly the twelfth through the tenth centuries B.C.E.,” according to the *New World Encyclopedia*.

50:14 And the Companions of the Thicket and the people of Tubba’, they all denounced the Messengers and so My Warning was fulfilled.

To Tubba, i.e., Midian, God sent Shu’ayb who is believed to be the biblical Jethro, the man for whom Moses shepherded while in Midian and who gave him his daughter Zipporah in marriage. His story and that of the destruction of Median is told in *Shared Prophets*: “Jethro” (Boreal Books).

## **Allah's Way of Old**

40:81 And He shows you His Signs. Which Signs of Allah will you then deny?

40:82 Have they not travelled in the land, then, to see what was the fate of those who preceded them? They were more numerous than they and had greater power and influence in the land. Yet what they used to earn availed them nothing.

40:83 Then, when their Messengers came to them with the clear proofs, they rejoiced in the knowledge they had and were afflicted with that which they used to mock at.

40:84 But when they saw Our Might, they said: "We believe in Allah alone and disbelieve in that which we used to associate with Him."

40:85 Yet, their belief, upon seeing Our Might, did not profit them. It is Allah's Way of old regarding His servants; and the unbelievers shall be lost there and then.

Moududi on "Allah's Way of old":

"The standing Law of Allah": the Law that repentance and faith are beneficial only till the time man is not seized by the torment of Allah or death. Believing or repenting after the torment has arrived or the signs of death have appeared, is not acceptable to Allah.

## Allah Days

14:5 We have, indeed, sent Moses with our Signs (sayings): “Bring your people out of the darkness and into the light and remind them of Allah Days (major events or calamities).” Surely in those are signs for every steadfast and thankful person.

17:15 He who is well-guided is well-guided for himself, and he who goes astray goes astray to his own loss. No soul shall bear the burden of another soul, and We do not punish until We have sent a Messenger.

“Allah Days,” writes Moududi, “are evil days from Allah.” These divinely ordained disasters, “the nearer punishment” in Revelation 32:21, are meant to get the survivors, if any, thinking of the greater punishment, that of “the punishment of the Fire” in Revelation 32:20, and to “repent” for not believing in Allah’s Signs.

32:18 Is he who believes, then, like he who is a sinner? No, they are not equal.

32:19 As for those who believe and do the righteous deeds, they will have gardens of refuge to receive them, for what they used to do.

32:20 But, as for the sinners, their refuge is the Fire. Every time they want to get out of it, they are brought back and it will be said to them: “Taste the punishment of the Fire which you used to deny.”

32:21 We shall surely let them taste the nearer punishment, prior to the greater punishment, that perchance they might repent.

32:22 Who is more unjust than he who is reminded of Our Signs, then he turns away from them? We will certainly wreck vengeance upon the criminals.

## **A Litany of Death and Destruction**

7:101 Those cities, We relate to you some of their tales; their Messengers came to them with clear signs; but they would not believe in what they had denied earlier. Thus Allah seals the hearts of the unbelievers.

7:102 And We have not found among most of them any who honours a covenant; but We found most of them evildoers.

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26:208 We have never destroyed a city, but it had prior warners,

26:209 As a reminder; and We have never been unjust.

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28:59 Your Lord, however, never destroys the cities, unless He first sends to their mother-city a Messenger, to recite to them Our Revelations. And We never destroy any cities, unless their inhabitants are wrongdoers.

There is the horror of a Judgement Day to come, but not before Allah has repeatedly unleashed His days of evil in the here-and-now on mostly unsuspecting populations who repudiated those He claims to have sent to warn them on His behalf.

30:42 Say: "Travel in the land and behold what was the fate of those who came before; most of them were idolaters."

30:43 So, set your face towards the true religion, before a Day from Allah comes, which cannot be turned back. On that Day they will be rent asunder.

30:44 Whoever disbelieves, upon him shall recoil his unbelief and whoever does a righteous deed, it is for themselves that they will be preparing a comfortable abode.

30:45 That He may reward those who have believed and done the righteous deeds out of His Bounty. Indeed, He does not love the unbelievers.

30:47 We have, indeed, sent Messengers to their own people before you (*Muhammad*), and they brought them clear proofs. Then We revenged upon those who sinned, and it was incumbent on Us to give the believers support.

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40:21 Have they not journeyed in the land and seen what was the ultimate fate of those who came before them? Then Allah seized them because of their sins, and against Allah they had no protectors.

40:22 That is because their Messengers used to come to them with the clear proofs, but they disbelieved. So Allah seized them; He is indeed Strong, Terrible in retribution.

After not believing in Allah exclusively and that He governs alone, the worst you can do is not believe in the Hereafter and a Judgement Day when He will bring you back to life.

23:31 Then, We brought out after them another generation. (The people of 'Ad, who were raised to power after the people of Noah. *Moududi*).

23:32 So, We sent them a Messenger of their own, saying: "Worship Allah, you have no other god than Him. Do you not fear [Allah]?"

23:33 Then the dignitaries of his people, who had disbelieved and denied the meeting of the Hereafter and whom We accorded ease in the present life, said: "This is, indeed, merely a mortal like you; he eats from what you eat and drinks from what you drink.

23:34 "If you obey a mortal like yourselves, you are surely the losers.

23:35 "Does he promise you that once you die and turn into dust and bones, you will be brought back?

23:36 "Far, far away is what you are promised!

23:37 "There is only this our earthly life; we die and we live, but we shall not be raised from the dead.

23:38 "He is only a man who fabricates lies about Allah and we will not believe in him."

The familiar, in this instance unspoken, demand from the Messenger is that Allah murder every unbelieving inhabitant of the city or town he visited, no matter their sex or age, because some called him a liar.

23:39 He said: "Lord, support me against their calling me a liar."

23:40 He (Allah) said: "In a little while they will regret."

Away with them!

23:41 Then the Cry seized them justly, and so We turned them into scum. Away then with the wrongdoing people!

23:42 Then We raised up after them other generations.

23:43 No nation hastens its term; nor will they put it back.

Away with *all* of them!

23:44 Then We sent Our Messengers one after the other. Every time a Messenger came to his nation, they denied him. So We made them succeed one another and reduced them to mere tales. Away with the people who do not believe.

It does not matter that within a population marked for annihilation are good, if poor, people; if the wealthy among them refuse to obey the Messenger, it is death to everyone.

17:16 And when We want to destroy a city, We command those of its people who are given to luxury; but as they transgress therein Our sentence against it is pronounced and We utterly destroy it.

17:17 How many generations We have destroyed since Noah! It suffices that your Lord knows and sees the sins of His Servants.

It's all about being humble.

6:42 We have indeed sent forth [Messengers] to other nations before you (*Muhammad*) and We afflicted them with misery and hardship that perchance they might humble themselves.

6:43 If only they humbled themselves when Our Punishment overtook them; but their hearts were hardened and the Devil made what they were doing seem fair to them.

Happy Days as a harbinger of Allah Days.

6:44 Then, when they forgot what they were reminded of, We opened wide for them the gates of everything [good]; so that

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as soon as they rejoiced at what they were given, We struck them down suddenly, and they were driven to despair.

6:45 Thus the remnant of the wrongdoing people were rooted out, Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!

With His indiscriminate mass killings, which include infants who have no appreciation that not believing in this 'Allah' means death and an eternity being roasted like a lamb on a spit, God's claim that He only destroys "the wrongdoing people" is specious in the extreme.

6:47 Say: "Tell me! If Allah's Punishment should seize you suddenly or openly, will any be destroyed other than the wrongdoing people?"

6:48 And We only send forth the Messengers as bearers of good tidings and warners. Those who believe and mend their ways have nothing to fear and have no cause to grieve.

6:49 But those who deny Our Revelations will be punished for having been sinful.

He destroys one generation, only to raise another which He will also, ultimately, utterly destroy.

### THE CATTLE

#### 6 Al-An'âm

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

6:1 Praise be to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness and the light; yet the unbelievers set up equals to their Lord.

6:2 It is He Who created you from clay, then decreed a term [for you] and another set term with Him, but still you doubt.

6:3 He is Allah in the heavens and on earth. He knows your secrets and public utterances, and He knows what you earn (the good and evil you do).

6:4 And there comes not to them a revelation from Allah, but they turn away from it.

6:5 So, they denied the truth when it came to them; but surely the news of what they were mocking will come to them.



6:6 Do they not see how many generations before them We destroyed, after We had established them in the earth more firmly than We had established you (*the Meccans to whom Muhammad revealed most of the Koran*), and how We let loose the sky upon them in torrents, and We made the rivers flow beneath them? Thus we destroyed them because of their sins. And after them We raised another generation.

Allah will extinguish one generation after another, but not before He has unleashed a litany of His days of evil in the hope that they will humble themselves and fear the god responsible for so much “distress and suffering.”

7:94 We did not send forth a Prophet to any city but afflicted its people with distress and suffering, that perchance they might humble themselves.

7:95 Then We changed their adversity into well-being, till they multiplied. They said: “Hardship and prosperity did visit our fathers.” Then, We seized them suddenly, while they were unaware.

Allah seems to have a desert dweller’s mistrust of “the people of the cities” – or could it be envy?

7:96 Yet had the people of the cities believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the sky and the earth (rain from the sky, plants from the earth); but they denied [the Prophets], and so We destroyed them on account of their misdeeds.

The most wretched thing about Allah’s days of evil is that they are preordained, so there is nothing anyone can do to deter them.

## THE ROCK (THAMUD)

### 15 Al-Hijr

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

15:1 Alif – Lam Ra.

These are the Verses of the Book and a manifest Qur’an.

15:2 Perhaps those who disbelieve wish they were Muslims.

15:3 Leave them to eat, enjoy themselves and let [false] hopes beguile them; for they will soon know.

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15:4 We have never destroyed a town but it had a fixed decree.

15:5 No nation can hasten its term, nor defer it.

Every one of Allah's disasters was prerecorded in a book.

57:22 Not a disaster befalls in the earth or in yourselves but is in a Book, before We create it. That for Allah is an easy matter.

57:23 So that you may not grieve for what you missed, and rejoice in what came your way. Allah does not like the conceited and the boastful;

57:24 Those who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly. He who turns away, Allah is All-Sufficient, Praiseworthy.

Evil days as a bounty from Allah.

53:50 And that He destroyed the first 'Ad;

53:51 And Thamud, as well, leaving nothing behind;

53:52 And the people of Noah before that; for they were more unjust and domineering;

53:53 And brought down the subverted city (Sodom, city of Lot);

53:54 So, He covered it with what He covered.

53:55 Which of your Lord's Bounties, then, do you doubt?

Death will not bring any relief from what God admits is "an abominable punishment" for those who had the impudence to deny His Messengers.

65:8 How many a city transgressed arrogantly the Command of its Lord and His Messengers; and so We brought it to account severely and punished it with an abominable punishment.

65:9 And so it tasted the bane of its deed and the outcome of its deed was perdition.

65:10 Allah has prepared for them a terrible punishment. So fear Allah, O people of understanding who have believed. Allah has sent down to you a reminder,

65:11 A Messenger, reciting to you the Signs of Allah fully clarified; so as to bring those who have believed and done the righteous deeds from the shadows of darkness to light. He who believes in Allah and does the righteous deed, Allah will admit him into Gardens, beneath which rivers flow, dwelling therein forever. Allah has assigned to him a fair provision.

65:12 It is Allah Who created seven heavens and of the earth like thereof. The Decree descends among them all, that you might know that Allah has power over everything and that Allah has encompassed everything in knowledge.

Allah is not above creating disasters by proxy.

6:65 Say: "It is He Who has the power to inflict upon you punishment from above you or from under your feet; or to mix you up dividing you into factions, and make you taste the might of one another." See, how We make plain our revelations, that, perchance they might understand.

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God revealed that He created nations and tribes in an effort to get people to get to know each other, after which He may have divided them into factions.

49:13 O mankind, We have created you male and female and made you nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Surely the noblest of you in Allah's Sight is the most pious. Allah indeed is All-Knowing, All-Informed.

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The audacity of a god who dares to lay claim to being the embodiment of opposites (Revelation 16:47)!

16:45 Do those who devise evil feel assured that Allah will not cause the earth to swallow them up, or that punishment will not overtake them from whence they do not expect?

16:46 Or that He will not seize them in the course of their journeys, when they will not be able to escape?

16:47 Or that He will not seize them while in dread? Surely your Lord is Clement, Merciful.

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Allah's Way is the only way, and that will never change. To even try to make God adapt to changing circumstances and a more enlightened constituency is to invite retaliation on a genocidal scale!

35:42 They (the Arabs, *Moududi*) swore their most earnest oaths that if a warner came to them they would surely be more guided than a certain nation (the Jewish or Christian nation). But when a warner came to them, that only increased their aversion.

35:43 Out of arrogance in the land and evil cunning. Yet the evil cunning will only recoil upon its perpetrators. Do they then look to anything other than the way of the ancients? For you will never find any alteration of Allah's Way, and you will never find any deflecting of Allah's Way.

35:44 Have they not travelled in the land to see what was the fate of those who came before them and were even mightier than they? Nothing in the heavens or the earth can thwart Allah; He is indeed All-Knowing, All-Powerful.

It is a testament to the human race's resilience that even after reports of massive, pitiless annihilations of people throughout the Koran—courtesy of a god who claims to be the essence of Compassion and Mercy—the Earth's population, at this writing, surpasses six billion souls, with unbelievers outnumbering believers by approximately two to one. This is not to say that The Forgiver, whose scheming is legendary, will not be in a position to redress this imbalance in a generation or two, or perhaps earlier, such that all unbelievers will have left this mortal realm to become "companions of the Fire."

### THE FORGIVER

#### 40 Ghâfir

*In the Name of Allah,  
The Compassionate, the Merciful*

40:1 Ha - Mim.

40:2 The sending down of the Book is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.

40:3 The Forgiver of sins, Receiver of repentance, Terrible in retribution, the Bountiful. There is no god but He. Unto Him is the ultimate return.

40:4 No one disputes concerning the Signs of Allah, except the unbelievers; so do not be deceived by their wandering in the lands.

40:5 Before them, the people of Noah and the Confederates<sup>1</sup> after them have denounced, and each nation sallied forth against their Messenger to seize him, and they disputed falsely to repudiate therewith the truth. Then I seized them. How, then, was my retribution?

40:6 And thus your Lord's Word against the unbelievers was fulfilled, that they are, indeed, the companions of the Fire.

Allah is not actually asking believers to forgive the unbelievers who do not hope for Allah's days of evil.

45:14 Tell the believers to forgive those who do not hope for Allah's Days, that He may reward a people for what they used to earn.

Moududi:

The commentators have given two meanings of this verse and the words of the verse admit of both: (1) "That the believers should pardon the excesses of this wicked group so that Allah may reward them for their patience and forbearance and nobility from Himself and recompense them for the persecutions they have suffered for His sake." (2) "That the believers should pardon these people so that Allah may Himself punish them for their persecutions of them." Some other commentators have regarded this verse as repealed. They say that this command was applicable only till the Muslims were permitted to fight. Then, when they were permitted to fight, this command became abrogated.<sup>2</sup>

In He Who allows disasters to devastate, we trust.

64:11 No disaster befalls but by Allah's Leave. Whoever believes in Allah, He will guide his heart rightly. Allah has

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<sup>1</sup> Tribes who joined the Meccans against the Muslims at the battle for Medina (see *Jihad in the Koran*: "Medina," Boreal Books). The reason for their inclusion here is anyone's guess.

<sup>2</sup> Scholars have identified more than two hundred revealed truths that were abrogated by subsequent communications from Allah to Muhammad. You will find these ephemeral immutable facts and their abrogator(s) listed and explained in *Let Me Rephrase That!* (Boreal Books).

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knowledge of everything.

64:12 Obey Allah and obey the Messenger. If you turn away, it is only incumbent on Our Messenger to deliver the manifest message.

64:13 Allah, there is no god but He; and in Allah let the believers put their trust.

Allah admitted that much of what He does is an abomination:

67:18 Those who preceded you have disbelieved. How then was My Abomination?

It's enough to make people despair of Allah's Mercy.

39:53 Say: "O My servants, who have been excessive against themselves: Do not despair of Allah's Mercy; Allah remits all sins. He is indeed the All-Forgiving, the All-Clement.

39:54 "Return to your Lord and submit to Him before punishment visits you then you will have no support.

39:55 "And follow the fairest of what has been sent down to you from your Lord, before punishment visits you suddenly while you are unaware.

For more death and destruction, this time unleashed at the behest of prophets from the Bible whom Allah invited to relate, in His Koran, their labours on His behalf, I invite you to read *Shared Prophets: Biblical Figures in the Koran* (Boreal Books). For still more pitiless mass murders, there are those whom Allah revealed to Muhammad in an attempt to comfort His most beloved spokesman who, like most of his predecessors, was accused of lying, I invite you to read *From Merchant to Messenger: The Prophet Muhammad's struggle for legitimacy as revealed in the Koran* (Boreal Books).

## **Allah and the Crime of No Longer Believing**

5:54 O believers, whoever of you renounces his religion, Allah will certainly bring forth (replace them) a people whom He loves and they love him, humble towards the faithful, but mighty towards the unbelievers. They fight in the Way of Allah and do not fear anybody's reproach. That is a favour from Allah which He confers on whomever He pleases. Allah is Munificent, All-Knowing.

### **The Example of Pharaoh**

You must not wait on Allah's promise to replace those who renounce His religion. If you are in a position to do so, you must kill them forthwith in a manner that will be both humiliating and painful, not unlike what Pharaoh promised to do to his magicians when they professed their devotion to Allah after witnessing Moses' superior magic. (See *Shared Prophets: "Moses and Pharaoh,"* Boreal Books for all revelations pertaining to Moses' interaction with Pharaoh.)

20:70 Then the magicians fell down prostrate. They said: "We believe [now] in the Lord of Aaron and Moses."

20:71 He (Pharaoh) said: "Do you believe in him before I give you leave? It must be your chief who has taught you magic. I shall then cut your hands and feet on alternate sides, and I will crucify you upon the trunks of palm trees, and you will certainly know whose punishment is sterner and more lasting."

Islamic law is based on the Koran and the sayings and example of Muhammad. Pharaoh promises an agonising, degrading death to those who would abandon his religion and Allah is entitled to no less. The type of crucifixion described in the Koran was not uncommon during the tenure of the Islamic State of the Levant at their capital of Raqqa for a variety of alleged crimes by non-Muslims, mostly Christians. Religious leaders in Afghanistan did not demand that Abdul Rahman—an Afghan man sentenced to death for converting to

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Catholicism—be crucified and dismembered, but still insisted that he be tortured before the death sentence was carried out, as called for by their interpretation of Islamic law. In the face of public outcry and pressure from the Vatican, Rahman was allowed to emigrate to Italy to escape both the pain and the death sentence.

### **Repentance Denied**

Can you return to the faith to save your life? The Salmon Rushdie experience would indicate that this is not always possible. Rushdie, after being declared an apostate for writing *The Satanic Verses*, offered a public apology and reaffirmed his commitment to Islam, to no avail. Khomeini's death sentence still stands, as do Allah's revelations on the subject.

3:86 How will Allah guide a people who disbelieved after they had believed and bore witness that the Messenger is true, and after the clear proofs had come to them? Allah will not guide the unjust people.

3:87 The reward of those people shall be that the curse of Allah, the angels and mankind as a whole shall be upon them.

3:88 They will abide therein forever; their punishment shall not be lightened and they shall have no respite.

He then softens his stance:

3:89 Except for those who repent afterwards and mend their ways; for Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

Then the hard line again:

3:90 Surely those who disbelieve after believing, and then grow in disbelief, their repentance shall not be accepted. Those are the ones who have gone astray!

3:91 As for those who disbelieve and die as unbelievers, the earth's fill of gold will not be accepted from any of them, even if it is offered as ransom. For those, a painful punishment is reserved and they will have no supporters!

### **"Kill them wherever you find them"**

88:17 Will they, then, not consider the camels, how they were created?



88:18 And heaven, how it was raised up?

88:19 And the mountains, how they were hoisted?

88:20 And the earth, how it was levelled.

88:21 So, exhort, you (*Muhammad*) are a mere exhorter;

88:22 You are not supposed to dominate (compel, *Moududi*) them;

88:23 Except for him who turns away and disbelieves;

88:24 Then Allah will punish him in the most terrible way.

88:25 Indeed, unto Us is their return;

88:26 Then, upon Us rests their reckoning.

What does "Except for him who turns away and disbelieves" mean in practical terms?

4:89 They wish that you disbelieve, as they have disbelieved, so that you will all be alike. Do not, then, take any companions from them, until they emigrate in the Way of Allah. Then should they turn back, seize them and kill them wherever you find them; and do not take from them any companion or supporter;

When it comes to apostates, both Allah and Muhammad are of the same mind and unequivocally so.

**Narrated Ikrima:**

Ali burnt some people and this news reached Ibn Abbas, who said, "Had I been in his place I would not have burnt them, as the Prophet said, 'Don't punish (anybody) with Allah's Punishment.' No doubt, I would have killed them, for the Prophet said, 'If a Muslim discards his religion, kill him.'"

*Bukhari: 52.260*

Apostates are in the same category as hypocrites. And what do you do to with hypocrites?

33:61 Accursed, wherever they are encountered they will be seized and slaughtered.

With the war to convert all of mankind still a work-in-progress, Allah's and Muhammad's demand that those who abandon the Faith be killed

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on the spot may have to do with not weakening the war effort as desertions tend to do. Nonetheless, God did make some exceptions to His general rule of killing them “wherever you find them.”

4:90 Except for those who seek refuge with a people with whom you are bound by a compact, or come to you because their hearts forbid them to fight you or fight their own people. Had Allah wished, He would have made them dominate you; and then they would have certainly fought you. If, however, they leave you alone and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah allows you no way against them.

4:91 You shall find others who wish to be secure from you and secure from their own people; yet, whenever they are called back to sedition they plunge into it. If these do not keep away from you, nor offer you peace, nor hold their hands back, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them. Those, we have given you clear authority over them.

Allah will, of course, forgive those who only pretended to abandon Islam because they had no other choice.

16:106 He who disbelieves in Allah after He has believed, except him who is compelled, but his heart remains firm in belief (will be forgiven); but those whose hearts rejoice in disbelief shall incur Allah's Wrath and a grievous punishment awaits them.

## Allah's Parables

18:54 We have set out in this Qur'an, for the people, every manner of example (parables, *Moududi*); but man is the most contentious being.

18:55 Nothing prevents men from believing when the guidance comes to them, or from seeking forgiveness from their Lord; but they wait for the faith of the ancients to overtake them, or to be confronted with the punishment (*on Judgement Day*).

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47:1 Those who have disbelieved and barred others from the Path of Allah, He will render their works perverse;

47:2 But those who have believed and done the righteous deeds and believed in what was sent down upon Muhammad, which is the Truth from their Lord, He will remit their sins and set their minds aright.

47:3 That is because those who have disbelieved have followed falsehood, but those who have believed have followed the truth from their Lord. Thus does Allah frame the parables for mankind.

A parable can be defined as an uncomplicated short story used to illustrate a religious, moral or philosophical idea. Allah's allegories differ from that definition in one significant way in that they can be somewhat confusing, with the correct choice or the lesson to be learned not always evident, except perhaps to the believers, as Allah readily admits.

2:26 Surely Allah does not disdain to give as a parable an insect or something bigger. Those who have believed know that it is the Truth from their Lord; but those who have disbelieved say: "What does Allah mean by this parable?" By it, He leaves many in error, and guides well many others. And by it, He leaves in error only the sinners (those who disobey Allah).

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Allah's parables are meant to make "clear to you His Revelations," assuming you understand the parable in the first place.

2:266 Does any one of you wish to have a garden of palms and vines, under which rivers flow and from which he gets all kinds of fruit; and when he gets old and has weak offspring a whirlwind with fire hits the garden and burns it down? Thus Allah makes clear to you His Revelations so that you may reflect.

Allah's parables are meant to "illustrate truth and falsehood" in an often-observed sort of way.

13:17 He sends water from the sky making riverbeds flow, each according to its measure. Then the torrent carries along swelling foam; similar to it is the scum that comes out from that which they smelt on the fire for making ornaments or tools. Thus Allah illustrates truth and falsehood. The scum is cast away, but what profits mankind remains in the earth. Thus Allah sets forth the parables.

While you may learn something from Allah's parables, don't tell Him any of your own; they have nothing to teach Him.

16:74 Do not set forth parables for Allah. Surely Allah knows and you do not know.

Allah's "every manner of parable" are signs that unbelievers dismiss as falsehoods because they have no choice; Allah has placed a seal on their hearts.

30:58 We have cited in this Qur'an every manner of parable; indeed were you to bring the unbelievers a sign, they would only say: "You are purveyors of falsehoods."

30:59 Thus Allah places a seal upon the hearts of those who do not know.

Allah's often bizarre comparisons are no hindrance for those who have "the certitude of faith" to believe and in that, His spokesman should take heart.

30:60 Be patient then, for Allah's Promise is true; and do not be disheartened by those who lack the certitude of faith.

Allah's exhaustive supply of parables (Yusuf Ali's translation identifies 26 altogether) should make the Koran easier to remember.

39:27 We have given mankind every kind of parable in this Qur'an, that perchance they might remember.

Allah's parables are also meant to make one reflect. Reflect then upon a self-aware mountain that is simultaneously prostrate and torn apart out of fear of Allah.

59:21 Had We sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it bowing down and rent asunder out of the fear of Allah. Those are the parables which We Recite to mankind, that perchance they might reflect.

*The King Who Disputed With Abraham*

In this parable, the Patriarch of Arabs and Jews explains to a king why Allah is the most powerful of beings. The king is dumbfounded by the explanation, and with good reason.

2:258 Have you not considered him who disputed with Abraham regarding his Lord, because He had given him the kingdom? When Abraham said: "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death", the other said: "I give life and cause death." Abraham [then] said: "Allah brings the sun from the East, bring it up from the West." Thereupon the unbeliever was confounded. Allah does not guide the wrongdoers.

*The Traveller Who Died for a Hundred Years*

A parable about a man whom Allah causes to die for a hundred years – during which time he kept his food from rotting, his drink from evaporating and his ass from aging – then revives using his decayed remains.

2:259 Or [consider] him who, passing by a ruined city (Jerusalem) said: "How will God bring this to life after its death?" Thereupon Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then brought him back to life. Allah asked him: "For how long have you tarried?" He said: "I tarried for a day or part of a day." Allah said: "No, you have tarried for a hundred years. Look at your food and drink; the years have not changed them. Look at your ass. With this we make of you a sign for mankind. Look also at the bones [and see] how we have restored them, then clothed them with flesh." When [all] this became clear to him, he said: "[Now] I know that Allah has power over all things."

*The Good Tree and the Foul Tree*

14:24 Do you not see how Allah sets forth as a parable that a good word is like a good tree, whose root (sic) is firm and its branches are in the sky.

14:25 It brings forth its fruit all the time, by its Lord's Leave. Allah gives parables to mankind that perchance they may be mindful.

14:26 And a foul word is like a foul tree which has been uprooted from the surface of the earth, having no stable base.

*The Secure Town*

16:112 Allah has given as a parable a town which was safe and secure, and its provision came in abundance from every side; then it denied Allah's Blessings, and so Allah made it taste the engulfing hunger and fear on account of what they used to do.

16:113 A Messenger from among them came to them, but they denounced him, and so they were smitten by our punishment for being wrongdoers.

*The Companions of the Garden*

18:32 And relate to them as a parable the case of two men. To one of them, We gave two gardens of vine, which we surrounded with palm trees and placed between them a cornfield.

18:33 Both gardens yielded their produce and did not waste any of it, and We caused a river to flow through them both.

18:34 And he had some fruit. So he said to his companion, while conversing with him: "I have greater wealth than you and a mightier following."

Upon entering his garden (no, that is not a typo; we started with two gardens and now it's one), he makes two wrong-headed assumptions. The first is presuming that his garden will never perish, and the second, that when he passes away he "will surely find a place better than this" (Revelation 18:36), an unwarranted assumption of the type that usually gets Allah's blood boiling.

18:35 Then he entered his garden, wronging himself. He said:

"I do not think this will ever perish.

18:36 "And I do not think the hour is coming. If I am returned to my Lord, I will surely find a place better than this."

18:37 His companion said to him, while conversing with him: "Do you disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust, then from a sperm, then fashioned you into a man?"

The first mention of associating others with Allah.

18:38 "But as for me, Allah is my Lord and I do not associate anyone with my Lord.

If only the gardener with the better garden had given Allah all the credit.

18:39 "If only you were to say, upon entering your garden: 'What Allah pleases [shall come to be]; there is no power save in Allah'. If you see me possessing less wealth and children than you;

18:40 "Perhaps, my Lord will give me a better garden than yours and will release upon yours a thunderbolt from the sky, so that it will turn into a barren wasteland.

18:41 "Or its water will sink into the ground, so that you will not be able to draw it."

18:42 Then, his fruit was destroyed, and so he began to wring his hands at what he had spent on it, while it had fallen down upon its trellises, and he was saying: "I wish I had not associated anyone with my Lord."

The Perpetrator did not come to his aid, as strange as that seems, because He wanted to make a point.

18:43 And he did not have a faction to help him besides Allah, nor was he able to defend himself.

18:44 There, protection is from Allah, the True God. He is Best in rewarding and Best in requiting.

*The Companions of the City*

To confirm that the following revelations were not a recollection of actual, if confounding, events, several other translations were consulted – including Yusuf Ali's, who translated the first revelation in

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the series as: "Set forth to them, by way of a parable, the (story of) the Companions of the City. Behold!, there came apostles to it."

36:13 And relate to them the case of the people of the city, when the Messengers came thereto.

36:14 When We sent them two men, but they denounced them as liars, and so We reinforced them with a third. Then they said: "We are indeed Messengers unto you."

36:15 They said: "You are only mortals like ourselves and the All-Compassionate has not sent down anything. You are only lying."

36:16 They (the Messengers) said: "Our Lord knows that we are indeed Messengers unto you,

36:17 "And it is up to us to deliver the Manifest Message."

36:18 They said: "We augur ill of you. If you will not desist, we will stone you and a very painful punishment from us will afflict you."

36:19 They (the Messengers) said: "Your bird of omen is with you, if you are reminded, but you are an extravagant people."

36:20 Then a man came from the farthest point of the city. He said: "My people, follow the Messengers.

36:21 "Follow those who do not ask you for a wage and are rightly guided.

36:22 "And why should I not worship Him who created me and unto Him you shall be returned?

36:23 "Shall I take, apart from Him, gods whose intercession, should the All-Compassionate wish me ill, will not avail me anything and they will not deliver me?

36:24 "Then, I am truly in manifest error.

36:25 "I have believed in your Lord, so listen to me."

36:26 It was said: "Enter Paradise." He said: "I wished my own people knew;

36:27 "About my Lord's forgiving me and making me one of the favoured."



36:28 After him, We sent down no troops from heaven; nor would We ever send any down.

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Allah may have had second thoughts, as He subsequently sent angels to fight with the Muslims at the Battle of Badr (8:9; 3:124-125) and at the Battle of Hunayn (9:26). He also sent invisible angel soldiers to protect Muhammad when he hid in a cave (9:40) during his flight from Mecca to Medina to avoid being captured by Meccans intent on killing him. See *Jihad in the Koran* (Boreal Books) for the referenced verses.

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36:29 It was only one cry; and behold they were silenced.

36:30 Woe betide the servants; no Messenger comes to them but they mock him.

36:31 Have they not seen how many generations before them We destroyed and unto them they will not return?

36:32 And all of them will be brought before Us?

*The Gardeners Tested*

The punishment of the Hereafter is greater than that of a lost crop.

68:17 We have tested you, just as We tested the Companions of the Garden when they swore to pluck its fruit in the morning.

68:18 Without any reservations.

68:19 Then a night-stalker from your Lord visited them while they were asleep.

68:20 And so it (the Garden) became black like a cropped off field.

68:21 Thereupon they called out to each other in the morning:

68:22 "Go forth to your tillage, if you would crop it off."

68:23 So, they set out whispering to each other:

68:24 "Let no destitute person enter it today with you around."

68:25 And they proceeded next morning angrily, fully determined.

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68:26 When they saw it, they said: "We have surely gone astray.

68:27 "Rather we are dispossessed."

68:28 The most reasonable of them said: "Did I not tell you, if you only glorify."

68:29 They said: "Glory to our Lord, we were indeed wrongdoers."

68:30 Then, they turned to one another, reproaching each other.

68:31 They said: "Woe betide us; we have indeed been domineering.

68:32 "Maybe our Lord will give a better substitute for it (the Garden). We are truly turning to our Lord."

68:33 Such is the punishment; but the punishment of the Hereafter is greater, if only they knew.

68:34 Surely, for the God-fearing there are Gardens of Bliss with their Lord.

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Allah will destroy crops even when He knows it will not persuade those who witness the wanton destruction to believe.

30:51 And were We to send forth a wind and they saw it turning yellow (a frosty wind or a heat wave which ruins their crops after they started flourishing by the shower of rain, *Moududi*), they would continue thereafter to disbelieve.

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### *The Lesser Gods and the Fly*

22:73 O People, an example has been given; so listen to it. Surely, those (gods) whom you call upon, besides Allah, will never create a fly, even if they band together. And if a fly should rob them of something, they cannot retrieve it from it. How weak is the invoker and the invoked!

22:74 They do not give Allah His True Measure. Surely, Allah is strong and mighty.

## **Revealing Parables About Slavery**

### *The Incapable Slave and the Well-Provided-For Slave*

16:75 Allah sets forth this parable. Consider an owned slave who is unable to do anything; and one for whom We have provided from Our Bounty a fair provision, and he spends from it secretly and publicly. Are they then alike? Praise be to Allah; but most of them do not know.

Dr. Victor A. Gunasekara, author of *Slavery and the Infidel in Islam*:

[This verse is] one of the clearest instances where the institution of slavery is justified in the Koran as a divine dispensation. This parable contrasts two people[:] a slave who is owned by another and is completely powerless and a freeman on whom Allah has granted 'a goodly sustenance' which he can spend openly or secretly as he pleases. Since Allah claims for himself the position of the granter of all benefits both the freeman's fortune and the slave's misfortune are ultimately determined by Allah. By his rhetorical question 'Are the two alike?' the Prophet Muhammad is actually justifying the inequality between the slave and the freeman as if it was a natural thing because it is what Allah has ordained and 'all praise is due to Allah.'

### *The Dumb Slave and the Righteous Slave*

Some choices would seem obvious, but you can never be sure, especially if you are mentally challenged.

16:76 And Allah sets forth the parable of two men. One of them is dumb, unable to do anything and is a burden on his master; wherever he directs him, he brings no good. Is he equal to him who enjoins justice and is upon a straight path?

### *The Jointly-Owned Slave*

30:28 He gave you a parable from your own selves. Do you have among what your hands own (slaves) partners in what We provided for you, so that you are equal therein? Do you fear them as you fear each other? Thus We expound the revelations to a people who understand.

Moududi:

The mushriks ('one who falsely associates (something) with

God'), even after admitting that Allah is the Creator and Master of the earth and heavens and all that they contain, held some of His creatures as associates in His attributes and powers, and prayed to them... while going round the Ka'ba. They said: "Here I am, O Allah, here I am in Thy presence! Thou hast no partner except the partner who is Thy own. Thou art his owner as well as owner of what he owns." Allah has refuted this kind of shirk (associating other gods with Allah) in this verse. The argument is to this effect: 'When you do not make your own slaves partners in your wealth, how do you think and believe that Allah will make His creatures partners in His Godhead?'

*The Jointly-Owned Slave and the Slave of Just One Man*

39:29 Allah has given as a parable a man owned by partners who are at odds and a man exclusively owned by one man. Are they equal in status? Praise be to Allah, but most of them do not know.

39:30 You are mortal and they are mortal too.

39:31 Then on the Day of Resurrection, you shall appear before your Lord defending yourself.

Moududi:

Allah in this parable has explained the difference between shirk and Tauhid (monotheism) and the impact each has on human life so clearly that it is not possible to put across such a vast theme so concisely and effectively in other words. Everyone will admit that the person who has many masters, each one pulling him to himself, and the masters also so ill-tempered that no one spares him time in his service to obey the other, and no one rests content only with threatening and cursing him if he fails to carry out his command from among the contradictory commands of the other masters, but is bent upon punishing him, his life would certainly be in great anguish. On the contrary, the person who is the slave or servant of only one master, would be living a life of ease and comfort because he will not have to serve and seek the pleasure of another master. This is such a straightforward thing which does not need deep consideration for its understanding.

## **Intriguing Comparisons and Mixed Metaphors**

### *The Screamer*

2:171 Those who disbelieve are like one who screams but is heard by one who hears only calling and shouting. They are deaf, dumb and blind, and so they do not understand.

### *Multiplication of the Grain*

2:261 Those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allah are like a grain [of wheat] which grows seven ears, each carrying one hundred grains. Allah multiplies [further] to whom He wills. Allah is Munificent, All-Knowing.

### *Charity is Like Rain*

2:264 O believers, do not render vain your charities by taunts and injuries, like him who spends his wealth for the sake of ostentation and does not believe in Allah and the Last Day. He is like a smooth rock covered by earth; when heavy rain falls on it, it leaves it completely bare. Such people get no reward for their works. Allah does not guide the unbelievers.

2:265 But those who spend their money in order to please Allah and to strengthen their souls (by having a stronger grasp of faith) are like a garden on a hill which, when heavy rain falls on it, its produce is doubled; and if no heavy rain falls on it, then a shower [suffices]. Allah is aware of what you do.

### *A Frosty Wind*

3:116 As for the unbelievers, neither their riches nor their children will avail them anything against Allah. Those are the people of Hell, abiding therein forever!

3:117 That which they spend in the present life is similar to a frosty wind which smote the harvest of a people who had wronged themselves, and so destroyed it. Allah did not wrong them, but they wronged themselves!

### *Lost in the Dark*

6:122 Is one who was dead, then We brought him back to life and gave him a light to walk among the people, like one who is in total darkness and cannot get out of it? Thus the unbeliever's evil deed is made attractive to them.

*Wasted Breath*

13:14 To Him is the Call of Truth; and those on whom they call besides Him will not answer any of their prayers. They are like one who stretches out his hand to the water so that it might reach his mouth, but it will not reach it. The call of the unbelievers is only wasted.

*The Blind Man and the Copycat Gods*

13:16 Say: "Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?" Say: "Allah." Say: "Have you then taken, besides Him, protectors who have no power to profit or harm even themselves?" Say: "Are the blind and the man who sees alike; or are the darkness and the light alike? Or have they assigned to Allah associates who created the likeness of His Creation, so that both creations seem to them alike?" Say: "Allah is the Creator of everything and He is the One, the Almighty."

*The Blind Again*

13:19 Is he who knows that what is revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, like he who is blind? Indeed, only the people of understanding take heed.

*Ashes in the Wind*

14:18 The likeness of those who disbelieve in their Lord is this: their works are like ashes scattered by the wind on a stormy day, and they have no power over anything they have earned. That is truly the great perdition.

*Straw in the Wind*

18:45 And give them the simile of the present life; it is like the water We send down from the sky; then the vegetation of the earth is mixed in with it, and so it becomes straw which the wind scatters. Allah has power over everything.

*A Rope to the Sky*

22:14 Allah shall admit those who believe and do the righteous deeds into the Gardens underneath which rivers flow. Allah surely does whatever He pleases.

22:15 He who thinks that Allah will not give him support in this world or the next, let him stretch a rope to the sky then cut it up. Let him then see if his guile will remove what angers him.

22:16 That is how We revealed it (the Qur'an) as clear revelations, and Allah guides whomever He pleases.

*Whose Work is like a Mirage in Level Ground or Dark Shadows on the Sea*

24:36 In houses Allah allowed to be raised and His Name to be mentioned therein, He is glorified therein, mornings and evenings,

24:37 By men who are not distracted, by trading or trafficking, from mentioning Allah's Name, performing the prayer and giving the alms. They fear a Day whereon the hearts and eyesight shall be turned around;

24:38 So that Allah may reward them for their fairest works and increase them from His Bounty. Allah provides for whomever He pleases without reckoning.

24:39 As to the unbelievers, their works are like a mirage in level ground, which the thirsty supposes to be water; but when he comes close to it, he finds that it is nothing. Instead, he finds Allah there and so he pays Him his account in full. Allah is quick in reckoning.

24:40 Or like dark shadows in a turbulent sea, covered by waves upon waves, above which are clouds. Dark shadows above which are dark shadows; if he brings his hand out, he will hardly see it. He to whom Allah as not granted a light will have no light.

*The House of the Spider*

29:41 The case of those who took up other protectors, apart from Allah, is like that of a spider who built a house. Truly, the most brittle of houses is the house of the spider, if only they knew.

29:42 Allah knows what they call upon, apart from Him, and He is the All-Mighty, the Wise.

29:43 Those are the parables We devise for mankind, and only the learned will grasp them.

*Say What?*

30:52 For you cannot make the dead hear and you cannot make the deaf hear the call, if they flee turning their back.

*The Blind and Deaf*

30:53 And you shall not lead the blind away from their error. You will only make those who believe in Our Signs hear. For they are submitting.

*Ranking Goodness*

41:34 The fair and evil deeds are not equal. Respond with that which is fairer, so that he against whom you have a grudge shall be like an intimate friend.

41:35 None shall be accorded this rank except those who have stood fast, and none shall be accorded it except one blessed with great good fortune.<sup>3</sup>

41:36 And if a temptation of Satan should visit you, then seek refuge with Allah. He is indeed All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

*His Brother's Flesh*

49:12 O believers, avoid much suspicion; for some suspicion is a sin. Do not spy and do not backbite one another. Does any of you wish to eat his brother's flesh dead (sic)? You would surely hate it. Fear Allah, for Allah is Truly Absolving, Merciful.

*Those Who Walk On Their Faces and Their Creator*

67:22 Is he who walks prone upon his face better guided, or he who walks a Straight Path?

67:23 Say: "It is He Who originated you and created for you hearing, sight, and hearts. How little do you give thanks?"

**The Patently Obvious**

11:24 The case of the two parties (the believers and the unbelievers) is like the blind and the deaf compared with the man who sees and hears. Are they both alike? Do you not pay heed?

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35:19 The blind and the seeing man are not alike.

35:20 Nor dark shadows or light;

35:21 Nor shade and torrid heat.

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<sup>3</sup> "Achieving the rank of someone who can ward off evil with good 'requires great will power, resolution, courage, power of endurance and full control over one's own self', and that 'is a law of nature. Only a man of very high rank is characterised by these qualities...' which is why Allah added 'persons of the greatest good fortune' to the revelation." *Moududi*



40:58 The blind and the seeing man are not equal; nor are those who believe and do the righteous deeds and the evil-doer. Little do you remember!

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59:20 The Companions of the Fire and the Companions of Paradise are not equal. The Companions of Paradise are indeed the winners.

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35:22 Nor are the living and the dead alike. Allah makes whomever He wish to hear, but you will not make those in their graves hear.

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39:9 Is he who worships devoutly in the watches of the night, prostrating himself and standing up, fears the Hereafter and hopes for the Mercy of his Lord [like unto the other]? Say: "Are those who know and those who do not know alike?" Only those possessed of understanding will remember.

### **Allah, Two Boys and a Dog**

The following story from Surah 18, The Cave, is somewhat typical of Allah's simplistic and surreal tales except in length. The story about boys asleep in a cave "while their dog is stretching its paws in the yard" is reminiscent of the "Rip Van Winkle" tale, a children's fable by Washington Irving about a man who falls asleep for twenty years. In Allah's version, He causes as many as seven boys to fall asleep in a cave, leaving their dog outside, for three hundred years or more.

18:7 We have made everything on earth an adornment, in order to test them [and see] who of them is best in work.

18:8 And We shall reduce what is on it to barren dry soil.

18:9 Or did you think that the people of the Cave and al-Raqim (the mountain where the cave was) were the wonders of Our Signs?

18:10 When the youths took refuge in the Cave saying: "Our Lord, accord us from Yourself mercy, and guide us well in our affair."

18:11 Then We sealed their hearing in the Cave for many years.

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18:12 Then We roused them to learn who of the two parties was able to calculate the time they had lingered.

A verse hints at the compass bearing of the cave's entrance and how Allah can be either a trusted or a duplicitous guide, and then it gets a little weird. In this author's opinion, the point to the story can be found in Verses 18:13-16, which are deliberately skipped here and will be revealed at the end of the chronicle.

18:17 And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, inclining from their Cave towards the right, and when it set, inclining to the left, while they were in an open space inside it (the Cave). That was one of Allah's Signs. He whom Allah guides is well-guided; and he whom Allah leads astray, you will not find a friend to direct him.

God was careful that the boys did not develop bed sores from sleeping too long in the same position.

18:18 You would think them awake, whereas they were sleeping. We turned them over to the right, then to the left, while their dog was stretching its paws in the yard. If you looked at them, you would have turned away from them in flight, and would have been filled with fear.

Allah wakes them up and asks them to guess how long they have been asleep before sending one of them to get something to eat.

18:19 Thus We roused them, that they might question each other. One of them said: "How long have you lingered?" They said: "A day or part of a day." They said: "Your Lord knows best how long you have lingered. So send someone with this silver [coin] of yours to the city, and let him see what food is purest. Then let him bring you some provision thereof, and let him be gentle and let him apprise no one about you.

A hint as to why the boys sought refuge in the cave:

18:20 "Surely, if they learn about you, they will stone you or force you back into their religion; and then you will never prosper."

Some people who came across the unknown number of sleeping lads wanted to encase them in a shrine of some type.

18:21 That is how We made them known [to people] so as to know that Allah's Promise is true and the Hour is undoubted. As they were arguing among themselves concerning their affair, they said: "Build over them an edifice; their Lord knows best their condition." Then those who prevailed over them said: "Let us build over them a mosque."

Allah is deliberately vague, for whatever reason, as to the number of boys and the identities of the "few" that know the real number.

18:22 Some say: "[The sleepers were] three; their dog was the fourth of them"; and [others] say: "Five; their dog was the sixth of them", interpreting the unseen. And they say; "Seven; their dog being the eighth of them." Say (O Mohammad<sup>4</sup>): "My Lord knows best their number; none knows them, save a few." Do not then, dispute concerning them, except with reference to that which is clear to you, and do not question, concerning them, any of them."

Where you get the ubiquitous maxim: "If Allah wills."

18:23 And do not say of anything: "I will do that tomorrow," [unless you add]:

18:24 "If Allah wills." Remember your Lord, if you forget, and say: "Perhaps, my Lord will guide me to something closer to this in rectitude?"

Back to our sleepers:

18:25 And they lingered in their Cave three hundred years, and [some] add nine.

18:26 Say: "Allah knows best how long they lingered. His is the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. How clear is His Sight and His Hearing! Apart from Him, they have no protector, and He has no associates in His Sovereignty."

So, what is the point of this story? If you have to take refuge in a cave to avoid worshipping other gods, Allah will look after you. Other gods are an obsession of Allah's to which we shall return.

18:13 We relate to you their story in truth. They were youths who believed in their Lord and We increased them in

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<sup>4</sup> One of the few occasions that the translator identifies Muhammad as Mohammad.

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guidance.

18:14 And We strengthened their hearts when they arose saying: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will not call on any god besides Him. For then we would be uttering an enormity.

18:15 "These our people have taken other gods besides Him. Why do they not bring a clear authority for them? Who is, then, more unjust than he who invents lies about Allah?"

18:16 When you withdraw from them and what they worship, apart from Allah, take refuge in the Cave, and your Lord will extend to you some of His Mercy and prepare for you a suitable course in your affair.

The Jordan Tourism Board considers Allah's story about a group of boys who slept for 300+ years to be an account of actual events.

A popular attraction outside of Amman is the Kahf Al-Raqim or the Cave of the Seven Sleepers. It is located outside the village of Al-Raqim, 10 km east of Amman. Persecuted by the despotic rule of Trajan for monotheism, a group of pious youths took refuge in this cave. To preserve them, God put them to sleep, and when they revived 309 solar years later, they thought that they were only asleep for a day or so. Christianity was widespread by then, and when they were discovered God put them to rest forever.

# **Allah's Prohibited List**

Allah's list of offences that will earn your invitation to an eternity burning in Hell is lengthy, by the standards by which such lists are measured, with the Ten Commandments at the more succinct end.

## **Grave Sins - An Introduction**

The Greater Sins (or Grave Sins) are those where the Koran, or a saying of Muhammad, explicitly states or implies that the sinner is going to Hell, or where there is a consensus among scholars that this is the case. It does not matter if the sin is committed in secret.

6:120 Avoid open and secret sins. Surely those who commit sin shall be punished for what they have perpetrated.

7:33 Say: "My Lord has only forbidden open and secret indecencies, sin, unjust aggression, and your association with Allah that for which He sent down no authority, and your saying about Allah that which you do not know."

Abstain from the major sins and flagrant indecencies and Allah will overlook your minor transgressions.

53:31 And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and on the earth, that He may reward the evildoers for what they did, and reward the righteous with the fairest reward;

53:32 Those who avoid grave sins and foul acts, except for venial ones. Your Lord's forgiveness is indeed ample. He knows you very well since He produced you from earth, and while you were still embryos in your mothers' wombs. Do not commend yourselves, He knows very well who is the God-fearing.

It is crucial to know the difference between an evil deed and a grave sin!

4:31 If you avoid the grave sins you are forbidden, We will remit your evil deeds and let you enter into an honourable place (Paradise).

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Those whose "evil deeds" will be forgiven:

4:17 Allah has taken upon Himself to accept the repentance of those who commit evil in ignorance and then repent immediately after that. Those, He will forgive and Allah is All Knowing, Wise.

Those whose "evil deeds" will not be forgiven.

4:18 But not the repentance of those who commit evil deeds, and when one of them is faced with death, he says: "Now I repent"; nor the repentance of those who die as unbelievers. For these, we have prepared a very painful punishment!

### **The Top Forty**

17:38 The evil of all this is hateful in the sight of your Lord.

Below are the forty greater sins in descending order of evilness, with "associating other gods with Allah" at the top of the list.

1. Shirk (polytheism), associating other gods with Allah.
2. Yās (despair), to doubt Allah's Mercy.
3. Qunut (despondence), losing hope in Allah.
4. Not fearing Allah's punishment.
5. Murder.
6. Parental disobedience.
7. Breaking up with relatives.
8. Usurping the property of orphans.
9. The charging of interest on borrowed money.
10. Fornication (adultery).
11. Sodomy.
12. Wrongfully accusing a chaste believer of adultery or homosexuality.
13. Drinking alcoholic beverages.
14. Gambling.
15. To neglect an obligatory religious duty.
16. Playing musical instruments or listening to music.
17. Singing.

18. Lying.
19. False oaths.
20. False testimony.
21. Concealing evidence.
22. Breaking a promise.
23. Misappropriation of property.
24. Stealing.
25. Short weighing or cheating in business.
26. Eating of what is unlawful.
27. Usurping the rights of others.
28. Avoiding Jihad.
29. Becoming A'Arāb after Hijrat, "the condition when a desert Bedouin before acquiring the necessary knowledge of religion turns back to his ignorant ways."
30. Helping the oppressors.
31. Not helping the oppressed.
32. Sorcery.
33. Extravagance, e.g., wasteful expenditures.
34. Arrogance.
35. To war against Muslims.
36. Eating of carrion, pork and blood.
37. Omitting prayer intentionally.
38. Non-payment of Zakat (obligatory charity).
39. To consider the Hajj (mandatory pilgrimage) insignificant.
40. Persistence in minor sins (committing a lesser sin repeatedly).

### **Ten Made Up Grave Sins**

Greater sins based on a consensus among scholars that the sinner is going to Hell:

41. Backbiting.
42. Telling tales.
43. Insulting a believer.

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44. Intrigue, deception and breaking covenants.
45. Hoarding and selling on the black-market.
46. Disrespect of the Qur'an.
47. Disrespect of Ka'ba.
48. Disrespect to Masajid (mosque).
49. Disrespect of the Tomb of the Prophet.
50. Disrespect to the soil of Imam Husain's Grave (Shia Islam).

### **Tips for Avoiding the Grave Sins**

#### *Be kind to your parents.*

Considering that Allah wants children to disown a mother or father who will not submit to His Will, the following revelations about being kind to your parents has to apply to believers only.

17:23 Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him and to be kind to your parents. If either of them or both reach old age with you, do not say to them "Fie", nor tell them off, but say to them kind words.

17:24 And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say: "Lord, have mercy on them, as they took care of me when I was a child."

17:25 Your Lord knows best what is in your hearts. If you are righteous, He is All-Forgiving to those who repent.

#### *Give away some of your wealth.*

17:26 And give the kinsman his due, and to the destitute and the wayfarer, and do not squander your wealth wastefully.

17:27 Surely the spindrifts are the brothers of the devils; and the Devil is ever ungrateful to his Lord.

If you have nothing to give, say something nice.

17:28 But if you turn away from them (the kinsman, the destitute and the wayfarer), seeking a mercy (because you have nothing to give and are seeking the bounty of your Lord) you expect from your Lord, then speak to them kindly.

The ever-practical Allah suggests that you don't give away so much of what you have so as to become like the recipient of your beneficence.



17:29 Do not keep your hand chained to your neck, nor spread it out fully, lest you sit around condemned and reduced to poverty.

17:30 Surely your Lord gives generously to whom He pleases, and He gives sparingly [to whom He pleases]. He knows and observes His Servants well.

***Do not kill your children for fear of poverty.***

17:31 Do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We will provide for you and for them. To kill them is a great sin.

This is not a universal declaration against killing your children! Allah expects you to kill your children if they abandon Islam or consistently question dogma (see *Shared Prophets: "Moses and Khidr,"* Boreal Books).

***Remember the orphans.***

17:34 Do not go near the orphan's property except in the fairest way until he comes of age; and honour your pledge, because the pledge involves responsibility.

This would only apply to male orphans, as female orphans are usually married off when they reach puberty or earlier and except for their dowry, they normally own nothing (see *Women and the Koran: "Orphaned Girls,"* Boreal Books).

***Be honest in your weights and measures.***

17:35 And give full measure when you measure, and weigh with a just balance. That is fair and better in the end.

***Don't be arrogant.***

17:37 And do not walk in the land haughtily; for you certainly will not pierce the earth, nor equal the mountains in height.

Allah knows much about arrogance. He even admits to it!

59:23 He is Allah. There is no god but He, the King, the Holy, the Peace-Giver, the Faith-Giver, the Overseer, the All-Mighty, the Overlord, the Haughty. May Allah be exalted above what they associate.

59:24 He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the most Beautiful Names; whatever is in the heavens and

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on the earth glorifies Him. He is the All-Mighty, the Wise.

*Don't believe those who say "let us bear your sins."*

29:11 And Allah certainly knows the believers and He knows the hypocrites.

29:12 The unbelievers said to the believers: "Follow our path and let us bear your sins"; but they will not bear any of their sins. Indeed they are liars.

29:13 They shall bear their own burdens, plus burdens upon burdens, and they will be questioned on the Day of Resurrection concerning what they used to fabricate.

## Allah and the Ptolemaic Universe

35:41 Allah holds the heavens and the earth firmly lest they become displaced; were they displaced, none will hold them together after Him. He is indeed Clement, All-Forgiving.

The Dark Ages is generally accepted to be the period in our history between 400 and 1000 A.D. Islam is a product of that period when more than 500 years of Greek astronomical observations were temporally lost to be replaced by irrational beliefs such as those found in the Koran and that endure to this day. The Greeks had identified five planets: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Their path across the sky recorded in the *Almagest* by Ptolemy of Alexandria [90-169 A.D.). In the Koran, the planets are ornaments and obstacles to guard against the jinn (see Chapter "Allah and the Jinn"). If the "d" in devil is lowercase, as it is in Revelation 37:7, it usually means the jinn.

37:6 We have adorned the lower sky with the ornament of the planets,

37:7 To guard against every rebellious devil.

The stars are lamps illuminating this Maginot Line that is the bottom layer of Paradise and are thrown at the jinn when they get too close to heaven and become the shooting stars in Revelation 37:10.

37:8 They do not listen to the Higher Assembly (the High Council of Paradise, *Moududi*) and are pelted from every side;

37:9 Expelled; and theirs is a lasting punishment.

37:10 Except for him (*the jinn*) who eavesdropped once; and so a shooting star followed him.

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67:5 We have adorned the lower heaven with lamps, and We turned them into missiles launched against the devils; and We have prepared for them the punishment of the Fire.

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Then there is that pesky Revelation 36:40, among others, about the sun never overtaking the moon.

36:37 And a sign unto them is the night, from which We strip off the day; and lo, they are in darkness.

36:38 And the sun runs into its fixed station. That is the decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.

36:39 And the moon, We have determined its phases, until it became like an old twig.

36:40 The sun ought not to overtake the moon, nor the night outstrip the day; and each in its orbit is floating.

The sun doesn't overtake the moon because the moon circles the Earth and the Earth circles the sun, although an eclipse might have given that impression to the people in Muhammad's time. As to the night never being longer than or outshining the day, tell that to an Inuit living above the Arctic Circle on December 21 when the Arctic day is one long night, and you will be laughed out of his igloo into the cold dark day.

### **The Near-Earth Constellations**

15:16 We have indeed set up constellations in the heavens and made them attractive to the beholders;<sup>5</sup>

15:17 And guarded them against every accursed devil;

15:18 Except for him (*the jinn again*) who eavesdrops stealthily and was pursued by a visible flame.

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25:61 Blessed is He Who placed in the heaven constellations and placed in it a lamp and an illuminating moon.

25:62 And it is He who made the night and the day to succeed each other, for him who wants to remember or wants to give thanks.

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<sup>5</sup> In Habib Shakir's translation, constellations are strongholds:

15:16 And certainly We have made strongholds in the heaven and We have made it fair seeming to the beholders.

This makes sense as stars in the Koran are both lamps and weapons to keep away the jinn.

# **Allah and a Flat Earth**

## **Floating On A Sea of Mud**

Allah revealed that Alexander the Great (Dhul-Qarnayn, in the Koran) walked to one end of a flat Earth and witnessed the sun set in a sea of mud.

18:83 And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnayn. Say: "I will give this account of him."

18:84 We established him firmly in the land and We gave him access to everything.

18:85 And so he followed a course;

18:86 Then, when he reached the setting-place of the sun, he found that it sets in a spring of black mud and found, by it, a people. We said: "O Dhul-Qarnayn, either you punish them or show them kindness."

18:87 He said: "As to the wrongdoer, we shall torture him; then he will be returned over to his Lord, Who will punish him a terrible punishment (sic).

18:88 "But he who believes and does good deeds, he will have the fairest reward (Paradise), and we will command him to do what is easy for him."

Alexander then walked to the other end of the Earth to witness the sun rise.

18:89 Then he followed [another] course.

18:90 But when he reached the rising-place of the sun, he found it rising on a people whom We have not provided with any screen against it.

18:91 So it was. We had full knowledge of what he had.

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The sun briefly pauses beneath Allah's Throne, perhaps giving rise to those spectacular sunsets before sinking into a sea of mud on which a flat Earth floats, re-emerging the next morning on the other side as witnessed by Alexander.

### **Narrated Abu Dhar:**

The Prophet asked me at sunset, "Do you know where the sun goes [at the time of sunset]?"

I replied, "Allah and His Apostle know better."

He said, "It goes till it prostrates itself underneath the Throne and takes the permission to rise again, and it is permitted and then [a time will come when] it will be about to prostrate itself but its prostration will not be accepted, and it will ask permission to go on its course but it will not be permitted, but it will be ordered to return whence it has come and so it will rise in the west. And that is the interpretation of the Statement of Allah: And the sun runs its fixed course for a term [decreed]. That is The Decree of [Allah] The Exalted in Might, The All-Knowing."

*Bukhari 54.421*

This hadith would also suggest that Allah's Throne can be found in the western region of heaven.

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(For more revelations pertaining to Alexander the Great, see *The Islamic Hereafter: "Gog and Magog on the Last Day,"* Boreal Books.)

### **Pointed Revelations About a Flat Earth**

Paradise, in the Koran, is just above the clouds, perhaps not high enough for Allah to make out the curvature of the Earth, but that is no excuse for not appreciating that the Earth is a sphere. Cleric Mohammed Yusuf, the deceased leader of Boko Haram, Nigeria's largest gathering of holy warriors whose designation literally means "non-Islamic education is a sin," said in a 2009 *BBC* interview that a round planet was simply an illusion created by Allah; Earth is flat, just like the Koran says it is.

43:9 If you ask them: "Who created the heavens and the earth?", they will certainly say: "The All-Mighty, the All-Knowing created them."

43:10 He who made the earth level ground for you and made for you pathways therein, that perchance you may be well-guided;

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67:15 It is He Who made the earth level for you; so stroll through its regions and eat of His provisions. Unto Him is the Resurrection.

Earth is flat with a solid flat roof.

79:27 Are you, then, stronger in constitution than the heaven He has erected?

79:28 He raised its vault then levelled it off.

79:29 He dimmed its night and lighted its day.

79:30 Then, the earth, He flattened.

79:31 From it, He brought out its water and its pasture.

79:32 And the mountains, He established firmly,

79:33 As a source of enjoyment for you and your cattle.

Earth is as flat as a couch.

2:21 O people (of Mecca), worship your Lord who has created you as well as those who came before you so that you may guard against evil;

2:22 Who has made the earth a couch for you, and the heavens a canopy, and Who sent down water from the sky, bringing forth by it a variety of fruits as a provision for you. Therefore do not knowingly set up equals to Allah.

What about the mountains?

51:48 And the earth, We have spread it out; and how excellently We smoothed it down!

Who stops the sky, i.e., Paradise, from crashing into a flat Earth below?

22:65 Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you what is on earth and the ships which sail in the sea at His Command? And He keeps the sky from falling to the ground, save by His Leave. Allah is Gracious and Merciful to mankind.

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## 80 Getting to Know Allah

Heaven is help up by invisible pillars anchored on a flat Earth.

31:10 He created the heavens without pillars that you can see and laid down in the earth immovable mountains, lest it shake with you, and scattered throughout it every variety of beast. And We have sent down water from heaven, thereby causing it to grow in it every noble [kind of plant].

Heaven and Earth are made of the same materials, which would explain the need for pillars to stop it from crashing to the ground.

21:30 Have the unbelievers not beheld that the heavens and the earth were a solid mass, then We separated them; and of water We produced every living thing. Will they not believe, then?

(For more revelations pertaining to Paradise's construction see *The Islamic Hereafter: "Paradise: The Nuts and Bolts,"* Boreal Books.)

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But is mankind grateful?

22:66 And it is He Who gives you life, then He causes you to die, then He will bring you back to life. Man, however, is truly thankless.

### **Full Circle in Seven Verses**

15:19 As for the earth, we have spread it out, laid down upon it firm mountains and caused to grow therein all sorts of fair (sic).

15:20 And We have made in it provisions for you and for those whom you do not provide for.

15:21 There is nothing for which We do not have the store-houses and sources, and We send it down only in a well-known measure.

15:22 And We send forth the winds as fertilizer; and then We send down water from the sky and give it to you to drink. But you do not store it up.

15:23 It is We Who give life and cause to die, and We are the Inheritors.

15:24 And We know those of you who came before and those who will come later.



15:25 And surely your Lord shall gather them. He is truly Wise, All-Knowing.

## Allah's Calendar

The Islamic calendar is based on a lunar cycle of twelve months of 29 or 30 days, depending on the visibility of the moon, making the *Islamic year* 354 or 355 days long. Why Allah chose the primitive ever imprecise lunar calendar over the more accurate solar calendar such as the one introduced by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C. remains a mystery? Unlike the lunar calendar, the Julian calendar neatly divides a 365-day year into 12 months and adds a leap day to February every four years.

The first solar calendar was probably developed by the Egyptians who, as a settled agrarian civilization, needed an accurate way of determining the end of one season and the beginning of another. Being able to accurately determine the best time to plant your crops would not have been an issue for the desert dwellers of the arid Arabian peninsula whose main occupation was trade and the raising of livestock; mainly sheep, goats, camels and some cattle. But what about the rest of the world who would be forced to adopt the lunar calendar as Islam spread across the globe? Allah had to know better; so why choose such an inaccurate way of measuring the passage of time and saddling humanity with it?

Tradition may have dictated Allah's choice of the traverse of the moon for measuring the passage of the months and years, as was done when the moon was a god worshipped by many of the inhabitants of the Peninsula. Remember, Islam is essentially a synthesis of Jewish beliefs and pagan traditions from which we get the pilgrimages (see Chapter "Pilgrimages - The Hajj and the Umrah").

2:189 They ask you about the crescents (the new moons), say: "They are times fixed for mankind and for the pilgrimage." It is not righteousness to enter houses from the back; but the righteous is he who fears Allah. Enter then the houses by their front doors; and fear Allah that you may prosper.

The moon's brightness is a reflection of the sun's light, not a light on its own as Allah has made it out to be in Revelation 10:5. Can His fondness for His former illustrious self in the pantheon of gods worshipped by the pre-Islamic Arabs be any more evident?

10:5 It is He Who made the sun a bright radiance and the moon a light, and determined phases for it so that you may know the number of years and the reckoning. Allah did not create that except in truth, expounding the Signs to a people who know.

10:6 Indeed, in the alternation of night and day and in what Allah has created in the heavens and the earth are real signs for people who are God-fearing.

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Revelation 17:22 would suggest that God, at one time, had no objections to the sun being used to mark the passage of the years.

17:12 We have made the night and the day two signs; then We blotted out the sign of the night and made the sign of the day luminous, that you may seek bounty from your Lord, and learn the number of years and the reckoning, and everything We have expounded clearly.

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The lunar calendar need not have needlessly complicated things by moving through the seasons if Allah had not banned the practice of adding a thirteenth month every now and then. It was the custom of some of the tribes that shared the Peninsula, before the Muslim conquest, to add a thirteenth month when it became obvious that the lunar calendar had lost all connection with the seasons and needed to be resynchronized with the solar calendar. This, Allah claimed, was an attempt by the unbelievers to interfere with his sacred months and He therefore forbade it.

9:36 The number of months, with Allah, is twelve months by Allah's Ordinance from the day He created the heavens and the earth. Four of these are Sacred. This is the right religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them; but fight the polytheists all together just as they fight you all together; and know that Allah is on the side of the righteous.

9:37 Postponing the [Sacred Month] is an added disbelief by which the unbelievers seek to mislead, allowing it one year and prohibiting it another year, so as to equal the number [of months] Allah has made sacred. Their evil deeds are made attractive to them; and Allah does not guide the unbelieving people.

## **The Names of the Months**

The names of the months of the Islamic calendar are said to predate Islam and many reflect weather conditions on the Arabian Peninsula. Allah's adoption of the lunar calendar, where each month begins eleven or ten days earlier every year (365 – 354 or 355, not taking into consideration leap years) makes for some interesting juxtapositions. Somewhere in the world, people are freezing during *The Month of Great Heat* or seeking shelter from torrential rains during *The First Dry Month* and perhaps *The Second Dry Month*.

- 1 The Sacred Month
- 2 The Month of Travelling
- 3 The First Spring
- 4 The Second Spring
- 5 The First Dry Month
- 6 The Second Dry Month
- 7 The Month of Respect
- 8 The Dividing Month
- 9 The Month of Great Heat
- 10 The Month of Hunting
- 11 The Month of Rest
- 12 The Month of Pilgrimage

## **Year Zero**

In 637, Caliph Umar decided on the year 622, the year Muhammad fled Mecca and settled with his followers in Medina, year zero of the Islamic calendar. The year of this exodus is known as the Hijra or Hegira and is represented as 1 AH or 1 al-Hijra. The Hegira marks the alleged transition from ignorance to enlightenment, the lunar calendar being one of its manifestations.

# Allah and the Beginnings of Life

## A Fluid Beginning

25:54 And it is He who created from water a human being; then he made him a kin by blood or marriage. Your Lord is All-Powerful.

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77:20 Have we not created them from base water?

77:21 That We laid in a secure place;

77:22 Until an appointed term.

77:23 We determined, and what excellent determiners were We!

77:24 Woe on that Day (Judgement Day), betide those who denounce.

From “base water” deposited in the womb, Allah creates a human being with its two senses, a heart and no brain, as the heart was understood at the time of Muhammad to do much of what we know today to be the exclusive domain of the brain: thinking.

16:78 And Allah brought you out of your mothers’ bellies knowing nothing; and gave you hearing, sight and hearts, that perchance you may give thanks.

In another revelation about creating humans from H<sub>2</sub>O, it is “flowing water” which *Islamicstudies.info* contends “means ejaculation.” Their conclusion is reinforced by Yusuf Ali’s translation of 86:6 in Surah The Night-Visitor as “He is created from a drop emitted.”

### THE NIGHT-VISITOR

#### 86 At-Tariq

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

86:1 By the heavens and the night-visitor.

## 86 Getting to Know Allah

86:2 If only you knew what is the night visitor,

86:3 The piecing star.

86:4 Every soul has a watcher;

86:5 So let man consider what he was created from.

86:6 He was created from flowing water;

The amniotic sac, which ruptures at the onset of labour, is much closer to what God describes as the source of the water than are the testes. Then again, anatomy was never Allah's strong suit.

86:7 Emanating from what lies between the loins and the breast-bones.

Perhaps it was mixture of sperm and water.

76:1 Has there come upon man a period of time when he was not a noteworthy thing?

76:2 We have indeed created man from a mixed sperm to test him; and so We made him capable of hearing and sight.

76:3 We have guided him upon the path, either as thankful or thankless.

Allah created all creatures from water.

24:45 Allah created every beast from water. Some of them crawl on their bellies, some walk on two feet and others walk on four. Allah creates whatever He pleases. Allah, indeed, has power over everything.

Revelations 75:37-39 bear a remote resemblance to what actually happens, if you ignore the role of a woman's egg and the fact that the sex of an individual is decided at conception.

75:36 Does man think that he shall be left unattended (*on Judgement Day*)?

75:37 Was he not a drop of sperm released?

75:38 Then, he was a leech; then He created and fashioned (him);

75:39 Making of him a couple, male and female.

If Allah is able to create life, is He not also able to bring the dead back to life?

75:40 Is not that One Able to quicken the dead?

### **Bones Then Flesh**

There is no such stage when bones are formed first then coated with flesh.

23:14 Then we created out of the sperm a clot; then made from the clot a lump of flesh, then made the lump of flesh into bones; and then covered the bones with flesh; then fashioned him into another creation. So Blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators.

23:15 Then after that you will surely die.

23:16 Then on the Day of Resurrection you will surely be raised from the dead.

### **Beware of the Clot**

2:28 How can you disbelieve in Allah. You were dead (being a life-germ i.e. not living yet) and He brought you back to life (as a child), then He will cause you to die and bring you back to life again; then unto Him you will return.

In Surah The Clot, Allah reveals what Islamic scholars often point to as proof that He knew more about conception than was known at the time; that God was aware that babies developed from a fertilized egg, a zygote. They interpret "clot" in Verse 96:2 to mean zygote.

#### THE CLOT

96 Al-`Alaq

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

96:1 Read, in the Name of your Lord, Who created:

96:2 He created man from a clot.

To back up their argument, they also point to Verse 22:5.

22:5 O people, if you are in doubt regarding the resurrection, We have indeed created you from dust, then from a sperm, then from a clot, then from a little lump of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order to show you. We deposit in the wombs whatever We please, for an appointed term; then we bring you out as infants; till you attain full

strength. Some of you are made to die, and some are returned to the vilest age, so that they may not know, after having acquired some knowledge, anything. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water upon it, it stirs and swells and produces vegetation of every pleasing variety.

22:6 That is because Allah is the Truth, and He brings the dead to life and He has power over everything.

Muhammad, in the following hadith, explains what Allah meant by clot, and it is not a zygote by any stretch of the imagination; it is something completely alien to what we know about the gestation process.

**Narrated 'Abdullah bin Mus'ud:**

Allah's Apostle, the true and truly inspired said, "(The matter of the Creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then Allah sends an angel who is ordered to write four things. He is ordered to write down his (i.e. the new creature's) deeds, his livelihood, his (date of) death, and whether he will be blessed or wretched (in religion). Then the soul is breathed into him. So, a man amongst you may do (good deeds till there is only a cubit between him and Paradise and then what has been written for him decides his behavior and he starts doing (evil) deeds characteristic of the people of the (Hell) Fire. And similarly a man amongst you may do (evil) deeds till there is only a cubit between him and the (Hell) Fire, and then what has been written for him decides his behavior, and he starts doing deeds characteristic of the people of Paradise."

*Bukhari 54.430*

**It's All About the Sperm**

6:98 And it is He Who created you from a single living soul; then [gave you] a resting place and a repository. Indeed, We have made plain Our signs for a people who understand.

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23:12 We have created man from an extract of clay;



23:13 Then we placed him as a sperm in a secure place;

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40:67 It is He who created you from dust<sup>6</sup>, then from a sperm, then from a clot. Then He brings you out as infants; then allows you to come of age, then become old men. Some of you will pass away before that, but you will attain a fixed term, that perchance you might understand.

40:68 It is He Who brings life and causes to die. Then, if He decrees a certain matter, He only says: "Be", and it comes to be.

A man is not the creator of the semen he emits during ejaculation.

56:57 We have created you, if only you would believe!

56:58 Have you seen the semen you emit?

56:59 Do you create it, or are We the Creators?

The semen that God has created is then deposited in the "resting place" that is the amniotic sack as "a sperm-drop" (Revelation 16:4) and from which He will fashion His "professed disputant," the woman's role being relegated to a "repository" for the sperm to grow into a male or female as directed.

16:3 He created the heavens and the earth in truth; may He be exalted above what they associate [with Him].

16:4 He created man from a sperm-drop and, behold, he is a professed disputant.

Don't be confused by the translator's use of sperm, sperm-drop and semen interchangeably; it's all semen (an actual sperm was first identified by Antonie van Leeuwenhoek in 1677 using one of the first microscopes).

35:11 Allah created you from dust, then from a sperm, then made you into couples. No female bears or gives birth, save with His knowledge, and no man advances in years or his life-span is diminished, except as ordained in the Book. That indeed is an easy matter for Allah.

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<sup>6</sup> In two revelations about the creation of Adam (see *Shared Prophets*: "Adam," Boreal Books), God reveals He created him from dust; in another twelve, it is clay. Clay it is, then.

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Another reminder from Allah about what He created from a sperm and a sperm only.

80:17 May man perish! How thankless he is!

80:18 Of what did He create him?

80:19 Of a sperm, He created him and determined him.

80:20 Then He smoothed his path;

80:21 Then He caused him to die and entombed him;

80:22 Then, if He wishes He will raise him from the dead.

80:23 No indeed; he did not fulfil what He commanded him.

### **Things That Don't Come in Pairs**

13:3 And it is He Who spread out the earth and placed therein firm mountains and rivers; and of each kind of fruit He created two pairs (males and females). He causes the night to cover the day. Surely in that are signs for people who reflect.

36:36 Glory be to Him Who created all the pairs of what the earth brings forth, of their own kinds and of what they know not.

78:8 And created you in pairs?

What about organisms such as the amoeba that reproduce asexually, i.e., without transfer of reproductive material from a male donor to a female "receptacle"? What about animals higher up the evolutionary ladder, such as the female whiptail lizard and other species, that reproduce through parthenogenesis (no males required)? Science may have to revisit this entire asexual reproduction thing. As for living organisms that don't come in pairs, it has to be a mistake. As to self-pollinating fruit trees, the less said the better.

### **Allah as Proof that Imperfection Is Pervasive**

If God had been aware of the roles a woman's eggs and menstruation play in the reproductive cycle, would He have considered her contaminated during her menses, thereby admitting that the reproduction cycle of which He is so proud and which He closely controls is flawed and that He "Who fashioned well everything He created" is responsible?

32:7 Who fashioned well everything He created, and originated the creation of man from clay.

32:8 Then He fashioned his progeny from an extract of fluid.

32:9 Then He shaped him well and breathed into him of His Spirit. He gave you hearing, sight and hearts. How little do you give thanks!

Allah admitting that what He has created has flaws that the dutiful believer can attenuate.

70:19 Man was truly created apprehensive.

70:20 When misfortune visits him, he is frightened;

70:21 But when good fortune visits him, he is avaricious.

70:22 Except for those who pray;

70:23 Those who are constantly at prayer;

70:24 And those who have set aside a fixed portion of their wealth,

70:25 For the beggar and the destitute.

70:26 And those who believe firmly in the Day of Judgement;

70:27 And those who fear the punishment of their Lord.

70:28 The punishment of their Lord cannot be averted;

70:29 And those who guard their private parts;

70:30 Except from their wives or what their right-hands possess (their slave-girls); for they are not therein blameworthy.

70:31 He who seeks [pleasure] beyond that - those are the transgressors.

70:32 And those who honour their trusts and their pledges;

70:33 And those who stand by their testimonies;

70:34 And those who observe their prayer;

70:35 All those shall be in Gardens, well-honoured.

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If God had created mankind from a combination of a man's sperm and a woman's egg, perhaps there would be fewer trouble-makers.

36:77 Does not man see that We created him from a sperm;  
and behold he is a manifest trouble-maker?

## **Allah and the Jinn**

Of all the inhabitants of the Koran, jinns (Allah refers to them collectively as *the jinn*) are the most fascinating. They are the most versatile and mischievous of creatures. They even have a chapter named after them, Surah 72: The Jinn. Pre-Islamic Arabs believed in the existence of the jinn, which may explain their significant presence in the Book. The jinn are said to be spirits that inhabit another dimension. The caricature of the genie is undoubtedly based on this creature of the Koran. God does not share power with the jinn, or humans for that matter.

6:100 They set up the jinn as Allah's partners, although He created them; and they falsely ascribe to Him sons and daughters without any knowledge. Glory be to Him, and highly exalted is He above what they ascribe to Him!

Allah created the jinn from fire before he created man who, in one version of Adam's creation (see *Shared Prophets: "Adam,"* Boreal Books for the six accounts of Adam's creation), was moulded out of clay and slime.

15:26 And We have created man from potter's clay, moulded out of slime.

15:27 And the jinn We created before that from blazing fire.

Bad jinn can be persuaded to do good if given the proper incentive. Some less than cooperative jinn, with a little prodding from Allah, helped Solomon build the first temple.

34:12 And We subjected the wind to Solomon, blowing in the morning the space of a month and in the evening the space of a month; and We smelted for him the fount of brass. Of the jinn some worked before him, by the Leave of his Lord, and whoever of them swerved from Our Command, We shall make him taste the punishment of the blazing Fire.

34:13 To fashion for him whatever he wished of palaces, statues, basins like water-troughs and immovable cooking-

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pots. "Work thankfully, O David's House; for few of My servants are truly thankful."

Some people, at one time, worshipped the jinn instead of Allah, who was under the impression that they had worshipped His angels. On Judgement Day, the angels will set Him straight.

34:40 On the Day that He will muster them, then say to the angels: "Are those the ones who used to worship you?"

34:41 They will say: "Glory be to You; You are our protector, apart from them." No, rather, they used to worship the jinn, most of them believing in them.

34:42 Today, none of them has the power to profit or harm the other, and We will say to the wrongdoer: "Taste the punishment of the Fire which you used to question."

There is no relationship between Allah and the jinn, no matter what they allege; they, too, "will be summoned" on Judgement Day.

37:158 And they alleged a kinship between Him and the jinn, whereas the jinn know very well that they will be summoned.

37:159 May Allah be exalted above their allegation.

37:160 Except for Allah's sincere servants.

37:161 Surely, neither you nor what you worship,

37:162 Against Him can ever turn anyone;

37:163 Except he who will be roasting in Hell.

Men and jinn were created by Allah to worship Him, not to feed Him. He will feed the wrongdoers; just don't rush Him.

51:56 I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.

51:57 I do not desire provision from them, and I do not want them to feed Me.

51:58 Surely, Allah is the All-Provider, the Mighty One, the Strong.

51:59 The wrongdoers will have a portion like the portions of their fellows; so let them not rush Me.

51:60 Woe unto the unbelievers on that Day which they have been promised.

### **How the Jinn Heard About the Koran etc.**

The jinn had no knowledge of the Koran, despite having eavesdropped on conversations between God and his angels for possibly eons. A group of jinn did, however, become Muslim after hearing Muhammad recite verses from the Book.

#### THE JINN

#### **72 Al-Jinn**

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

72:1 Say: "It was revealed to me that a company of jinn listened; then they said: 'We have indeed heard a wonderful Qur'an;

72:2 "'It guides to rectitude; so we believed in it, and we shall never associate anyone with our Lord;

The verses heard by these jinn, judging by their response, were probably about Allah denouncing those who would say He shares power with a partner or has a son.

72:3 "'And that He, may our Lord's majesty be exalted, has not taken a consort or a son;

The jinn who happened upon Muhammad reciting verses from the Koran now knew that jinn and men were liars who told falsehoods about Allah.

72:4 "'And that our fools used to speak impertinently of Allah;

72:5 "'And that we thought that neither mankind nor the jinn will impute to Allah any falsehood;

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From the hadiths we get additional information about this fortuitous stealth encounter.

#### **Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

The Prophet set out with the intention of going to Suq Ukaz (market of Ukaz) along with some of his companions. At the

same time, a barrier was put between the devils and the news of heaven. Fire commenced to be thrown at them.

The Devils went to their people, who asked them, "What is wrong with you?"

They said, "A barrier has been placed between us and the news of heaven. And fire has been thrown at us."

They said, "The thing which has put a barrier between you and the news of heaven must be something which has happened recently. Go eastward and westward and see what has put a barrier between you and the news of heaven."

Those who went towards Tuhama came across the Prophet at a place called Nakhla and it was on the way to Suq 'Ukaz and the Prophet was offering the Fajr prayer with his companions. When they heard the Qur'an they listened to it and said, "By Allah, this is the thing which has put a barrier between us and the news of heaven."

They went to their people and said, "O our people; verily we have heard a wonderful recital (Qur'an) which shows the true path; we believed in it and would not ascribe partners to our Lord."

Allah revealed the following verses to his Prophet (Sura Jinn 72) Say: "It has been revealed to me." And what was revealed to him was the conversation of the jinn.

*Bukhari 12.740*

A tattletale tree informed Muhammad of the jinn's presence.

**Narrated Abdur-Rahman:**

I asked Masruq, "Who informed the Prophet about the Jinns at the night when they heard the Qur'an?"

He said, "Your father Abdullah informed me that a tree informed the Prophet about them."

*Bukhari 58.199*

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Some humans sought refuge with the jinn.

72:6 ““And that some individual humans used to seek refuge with some men of the jinn, and so they increased them in perversion;

The jinn, like Muhammad, once thought that Allah could not raise the dead.

72:7 ““And that they thought, as you thought, that Allah will not raise anybody from the dead;

The jinn admitted to eavesdropping on Paradise in spite of it being heavily guarded.

72:8 ““And that we reached out to heaven, but we found it filled with mighty guards and comets;

72:9 ““And that we used to sit around it eavesdropping; but whoever listens now will find a comet in wait for him;

Just like they were clueless about the Koran after listening in on Allah’s conversations with his angels for who knows how long, the jinn confessed to also not knowing His plans for the people on Earth.

72:10 ““And that we do not know whether ill was intended for whoever is on earth, or whether their Lord intended rectitude for them;

Not all the jinn became Muslims after hearing “the Guidance” (Revelation 72:14).

72:11 ““And that some of us are righteous and some are less than that for we were of diverse persuasions;

72:12 ““And that we knew that we will not thwart Allah on earth, and that we will not thwart Him by flight;

72:13 ““And that when we heard the Guidance, we believed in it; for he who believes in his Lord need not fear to be stinted or over-burdened;

72:14 ““And that some us are submitting and some are diverging.’ Those who have submitted have surely sought rectitude.”

Just like the humans who do not submit, bad jinn are Hell’s firewood. They may have been created “from blazing fire” but that does not

mean they cannot be burnt over and over.

72:15 But those who have diverged, have been firewood for Hell;

72:16 And that had they followed the Right Path, We would have given them abundant water to drink;

72:17 So as to test them thereby. He who refrains from the mention of His Lord, He will afflict him with terrible punishment;

72:18 And that mosques are Allah's; so do not call, besides Allah, upon anyone else;

(See Chapter "Prayers" for the remaining revelations in this series.)

### **Jinn and Men Together on Judgement Day**

6:128 And on the Day when He shall gather them all together [saying]: "O, company of jinn, you have misled a great many men." Their supporters among men will say: "Lord, we have profited much from each other and we have attained the term that you assigned for us." Then He will say: "The Fire is your resting-place, abiding therein forever, except as Allah wills. Your Lord is truly Wise, All-Knowing."

6:129 And thus We cause some of the evildoers to dominate the others, because of what they used to do (the evil they committed).

Jinn had their own messengers.

6:130 O company of jinn and men, did there not come Messengers from among yourselves to you, reciting to you My Revelations and warning you of seeing this Day of yours (*Judgement Day*)? They will say: "We bear witness against ourselves." They were deluded by the earthly life and will bear witness against themselves that they were unbelievers.

6:131 That is because your Lord would not destroy cities on account of their people's wrongdoing without warning them (by sending a Messenger to them).

Orderly processing of jinn and men will be the order of the Day.

6:132 And to all are assigned ranks according to what they have done; and your Lord is not unaware of what they do.

The promise made by the “All-Sufficient, the Merciful” – that He may or may not destroy you – might only apply to humans, unless the jinn also reproduce the same way as humans, about which the Koran is silent.

6:133 Your Lord is the All-Sufficient, the Merciful. If He wishes, He will destroy you and bring out after you, as successors, whomever he wishes, as He had produced you from the seed of another people.

6:134 Indeed, whatever you are promised will surely come to pass, and you are not able to escape [it].

Considering the importance of the jinn in the Koran, it is surprising that belief in this creature is not one of the Pillars of Faith in which a Muslim must believe.

- 1) Belief in God;
- 2) Belief in the Angels;
- 3) Belief in the revealed Books of the Prophet;
- 4) Belief in God’s many prophets;
- 5) Belief in a Last Day;
- 6) Belief in the divine measurement of human affairs;
- 7) Belief in a life after death.

Not to be confused with the Five Pillars of Islam, which are not beliefs but mandatory activities:

- 1) Shahadah, declaring allegiance to God.
- 2) Salat, daily prayers.
- 3) Zakat, annual charity.
- 4) Saum, month-long fasting.
- 5) The Hajj.

## **Allah and Witches**

Allah first broaches the subject of witchcraft early on in His Koran, at the end of a wide-ranging condemnation of the Jews for allegedly breaking their covenant with Him.

2:99 Indeed, we have revealed to you clear Signs (the revelations) in which only the wicked will disbelieve.

2:100 Will it be that every time they make a covenant, a group of them will cast it aside? Indeed, most of them do not believe.

2:101 And when a Messenger came to them from Allah confirming what they had, a group of those who were given the Book (the Torah) cast the Book (Qur'an) of Allah behind their backs, as if they knew nothing;

2:102 And they believed what the devils said about Solomon's kingdom. Not that Solomon disbelieved; but the devils did, teaching the people witchcraft and that which was revealed in Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut. Yet those two angels did not teach anybody without saying [to him]: "We are a temptation. So do not disbelieve." Those [who wished] learned from them what would sow discord between man and wife, but could not harm anybody with it (what they had learned), except with Allah's Permission. They learn what harms them and does not profit them. They knew that he who bought it will have no share in the Hereafter. Evil is the price for which they sold themselves, if only they knew.

In Muhammad's time, witches were thought to blow into knots to cast spells, another superstition from the Dark Ages that made it into the Koran. In the penultimate surah, Allah again admits to being the source of evil—as He did with His Allah Days—and that includes "those who blow into knotted reads."

THE DAYBREAK

*113 Al-Falaq*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

113:1 Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak,

113:2 "From the evil of what He has created,

113:3 "And the evil of the darkness when it gathers,

113:4 "And the evil of those who blow into knotted reeds  
(witches or sorceresses),

113:5 "And from the evil of the envious when he envies."

Every year, Saudi Arabia is assumed to behead an unknown number of witches and warlocks. It is only when a well-known personality is convicted of witchcraft do we hear of such executions. Ali Hussain Sibat hosted a popular show broadcast in Arabic from Beirut. On his show, he offered advice on a variety of subjects including marital advice and made predictions about the future. In 2008, he went on pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, was arrested by the religious police on charges of sorcery, then was convicted and sentenced to be beheaded. Witchcraft or Sorcery is the 32nd gravest sin among the sins for which death is the normative sentence under the Sharia, God's Law.

## **Allah and the Unseen**

6:73 It is He who created the heavens and the earth in truth, and the Day He says: "Be",<sup>7</sup> it will come to be. His Word is the Truth, and His is the sovereignty on the Day the trumpet is blown. The Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, He is the Wise, the Well-Aware [of all things].

32:6 That is the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, the All-Mighty, the Merciful.

59:22 He is Allah; there is no god but He, the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen. He is the Compassionate, the Merciful.

There are no secrets from the Knower of "the Outer and the Inner."

### IRON

#### **57 Al-Hadîd**

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

57:1 Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah. He is the All-Mighty, the Wise.

57:2 To Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He brings to life and causes to die, and He has power over everything.

57:3 He is the First and the Last, the Outer (*the Seen*) and the Inner (*the Unseen*), and He has knowledge of everything.

57:4 It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days; then He sat upon the Throne. He knows what penetrates into the earth and what comes out of it; what comes down from heaven and ascends to it. He is with you, wherever you are: Allah perceives whatever you do.

57:5 To him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and unto Allah all matters are ultimately referred.

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<sup>7</sup> 16:40 Indeed, when We want a thing to be, We just say to it: "Be", and it comes to be.

If Allah knows the Unseen, it is because He has the keys to wherever the Unseen can be found.

6:59 With Him are the keys of the Unseen only He knows them, and He knows what is on land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knows it; and there is no grain in the dark bowels of the earth, nor anything green or dry, but is [recorded] in a Clear Book.

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6:50 Say (*O Muhammad*): "I do not tell you that I have the treasures of Allah, and I do not know do Unseen; nor do I tell you that I am an angel. I only follow what is revealed to me." Say: "Are the blind man and the one who sees alike? Do you not reflect?"

Muhammad may not have known about the Unseen, but he knew of the keys.

**Narrated Ibn Umar:**

Allah's Apostle said, "The keys of Unseen are five which none knows but Allah:

None knows what will happen tomorrow but Allah;

none knows what is in the wombs (a male child or a female) but Allah;

none knows when it will rain but Allah;

none knows at what place one will die;

none knows when the Hour will be established but Allah."  
(31:34)

*Bukhari 60.219*

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A confirmation that part of the Unseen is what is in the womb of a pregnant woman.

13:8 Allah knows what every female bears and what the wombs carry for a shorter or a longer term; and everything with Him is by measure.

13:9 [He is] the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, the Great, the Most High.

## 104 Getting to Know Allah

Who is more fitting to sit in judgement than one who knows about “the Unseen and the Seen”?

39:46 Say: “O Allah, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, you shall judge between your servants regarding that whereon they used to differ.”

To whom Allah discloses the Unseen and how He makes sure His Message reaches its destination.

72:25 Say: “I do not know whether what you are promised is near, or whether my Lord shall extend it for a period.

72:26 “Knower of the Unseen, He does not disclose His Unseen to anyone.”

72:27 Except for any Messenger He is well-pleased with. He then will dispatch watchmen before him and behind him;

72:28 So as to know that they have delivered the Messages of their Lord. And He encompasses whatever they have and numbers everything.

The “Knower of the Unseen” is a hurler of “the truth.”

34:48 Say: “My Lord hurls down the truth. He is the Knower of the Unseen.”

34:49 Say: “The Truth has come. Falsehood neither originates or brings back anything.”

The Meccans used to speculate about the Unseen.

34:53 They have already disbelieved in Him and they speculate about the Unseen from a far-off place (Mecca, *Moududi*).

34:54 And they were barred from what they desired, as was done with their ilk before. Indeed, they were in disturbing doubt.

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The length some will go to try to explain the patently obscure. *Islamicstudies.info*'s explanation of Revelation 34:54:

As a matter of fact, no one adopts shirk and atheism and denial of the Hereafter by conviction, nor can he, for conviction comes from knowledge. And no one has the knowledge that there is no God, or that many others have a



share in divine authority, or that there should be no Hereafter. Thus, whoever has adopted these beliefs in the world, has raised a structure on mere conjecture, which has no basis except doubt and suspicion, and this suspicion has led him to sheer error. Consequently, they doubted God's existence, they doubted the truth of Tauhid, they doubted the coming of the Hereafter; so much so that they made this doubt their faith and did not listen to the Prophets and expended and wasted their entire lifetime indulging in a wrong creed and wrong way of life.

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Do not presume too much, lest you suffer double the punishment!

19:77 Have you seen him who disbelieves in our Revelations and [yet] says: "I shall certainly be given wealth and children."

19:78 Does he have knowledge of the Unseen, or did he take a pledge from the Compassionate (received permission, *Moududi*)?

19:79 No, We shall write down what he says and shall add punishment to his punishment.

19:80 And We will inherit from him what he says and he will come to Us alone.

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Revelations 19:77-80 were sent in response to a sardonic comment made by one man to avoid paying what he owed to a blacksmith.

**Narrated Khabbab:**

I was a blacksmith and did some work for Al-'As bin Wail. When he owed me some money for my work, I went to him to ask for that amount. He said, "I will not pay you unless you disbelieve in Muhammad."

I said, "By Allah! I will never do that till you die and be resurrected."

He said, "Will I be dead and then resurrected after my death?"

I said, "Yes."

He said, "There I will have property and offspring and then I will pay you your due."

Then Allah revealed. 'Have you seen him who disbelieved in Our signs, and yet says: I will be given property and offspring?'

*Bukhari 36.475*

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For the "Knower of the Unseen," not even a particle of dust will escape His attention; it's in the Book.

34:3 The unbelievers say: "The Hour will not come for us."  
Say: "Yes, indeed, it will come, by my Lord, Knower of the Unseen, from Whom not the weight of a speck of dust will escape in the heavens or on earth; nor is anything smaller or bigger than that but is in a Manifest Book."

Today, much of the *Unseen* in the Koran and across the sayings of Muhammad is now the *Seen* (or the foreseeable), the most obvious being the sex of a developing embryo.

31:34 Allah surely has the knowledge of the Hour and He sends down the rain. He knows what is in the wombs, whereas no soul knows what it shall earn tomorrow; nor does any living soul know in what land it shall die. Allah is All-Knowing, Well-Informed.

You will find more revelations about the *Unseen* intermingled with other claims that only the omniscient can make.

## **Allah is Self-Sufficient and Without Scruples**

Allah is All-Sufficient; you need Him, but He does not need you.

29:5 He who expects to encounter Allah, surely Allah's Term shall come; and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

29:6 He who strives only strives for himself. Allah is All-Sufficient, in need of no being.

29:7 And those who believe and do the righteous deeds, We shall remit their sins, and We shall reward them with the best of what they used to do.

He could crush you at any time and it wouldn't bother Him one bit.

4:132 To Allah belongs what is in the heavens and on earth, and Allah suffices as Guardian!

4:133 If Allah wants, O people, He would annihilate you and replace you by others. Allah has the power to do that.

4:134 Whoever desires the reward of this world, [let him know that] with Allah is the reward of this world and the next. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing!

Should you need a reminder:

35:15 O people, it is you who have need of Allah, whereas Allah is the All-Sufficient, Praiseworthy One.

35:16 If He wishes, He will annihilate you and bring forth a new creation.

35:17 That for Allah is not a grave matter.

If He does not need you, why does He not leave you alone to live your life in peace? The fact is, He does need you; He feeds on your praise and your fear of Him. He is, in that respect, very much your typical god even though He would like you to think otherwise.

## **Allah Knows the Secrets Within the Breasts**

35:38 Surely Allah knows the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. He knows fully the secrets within the breasts.

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39:7 If you disbelieve, Allah does not need you, although He does not approve disbelief in His servants. However, if you give thanks, He will approve that in you. No sinning soul shall bear the burden of another. Then unto your Lord is your return and He will tell you what you used to do. He knows the secrets within the breasts.

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57:6 He causes the night to phase into the day and the day to phase into the night, and He knows the secrets within the breasts.

Allah knows "the secrets of the breasts" because He created them.

67:13 Conceal your words or proclaim them, He knows very well the secrets of the breasts.

67:14 Does He not know what He has created, though He is the All-Subtle, the All-Informed?

Allah knows what is in the "breasts of all of mankind."

29:10 There are some people who say: "We believe in Allah", but if one of them is injured on account of Allah, he reckons the persecution of men similar to Allah's punishment. If, however, victory comes from your Lord, they will say: "We were with you." Does not Allah know better what is in the breasts of the whole of mankind?

It is all recorded in a book in Paradise.

27:73 Your Lord, indeed, is Bountiful to mankind, but most of them do not give thanks.

27:74 And your Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they reveal.

27:75 There is no hidden secret in heaven or on earth, but is in a Manifest Book.<sup>8</sup>

Allah claiming that He “knows well the thoughts hidden in the breasts” in Revelation 64:4 may be the clearest indication yet that He was under the impression that thinking occurred somewhere in the chest cavity.

### MUTUAL EXCHANGE

#### 64 At-Taghâbun

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

64:1 Everything in the heavens and on the earth glorifies Allah. His is the sovereignty and His is the praise, and He has power over everything.

64:2 It is He Who created you. Some of you are unbelievers, and some believers; and Allah perceives what you do.

64:3 He created the heavens and the earth in truth, and He fashioned you and shaped well your forms. Unto Him is the ultimate resort.

64:4 He knows what is in the heavens and on the earth, and He knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah knows well the thoughts hidden in the breasts.

A revelation in which “the secrets within the breasts” becomes the “the secrets of the heart.”

11:5 Behold, they turn their breasts sideways so as to hide [what they harbour] from Him. Indeed, when they wrap themselves in their clothes He knows what they conceal and what they reveal. He knows the secrets of the hearts.

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#### **Narrated Muhammad bin Abbas bin Ja'far:**

That he heard Ibn Abbas reciting: "No doubt! They fold up

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<sup>8</sup> 36:12 It is We Who bring the dead back to life and write down what they have advanced and their vestiges too. Everything We have enumerated in a clear Master Register.

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their breasts." (11.5) and asked him about its explanation.

He said, "Some people used to hide themselves while answering the call of nature in an open space lest they be exposed to the sky, and also when they had sexual relation with their wives in an open space lest they be exposed to the sky, so the above revelation was sent down regarding them."

*Bukhari 60.203*

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As with revealed truths about the Unseen, you will find more revelations about Allah knowing "the secrets within the breasts" intermingled with other claims that only the omniscient can make.

## Allah's Bounties

Muhammad said that Surah 55, The All-Compassionate, was "the adornment of the Qur'an." The surah is referred to as "The Beauty of the Qur'an"; beauty, in this instance, may be in the eye of the believer.

### THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE

#### 55 *Ar-Rahmân*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

55:1 The Compassionate,

55:2 Has taught the Qur'an.

55:3 He created man;

55:4 And taught him elocution.

55:5 The sun and the moon move according to a plan.

55:6 And the shrubs (or stars) and the trees prostrate themselves.

55:7 And the sky, He raised and He set up the balance (almost all commentators have interpreted 'balance' to mean justice, *Moududi*);

55:8 That you may not transgress in the balance.

55:9 Conduct your weighing with equity and do not stint the balance.

55:10 And the earth, He set up for all mankind.

55:11 In it are fruit and palm trees in buds;

55:12 And grain in blades and fragrant plants.

Part of the attraction of Surah 55 has to be the refrain that we first encounter at Revelation 55:13.

55:13 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you, both (jinn and humans) deny?

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In The All-Compassionate, God repeatedly challenges the jinn and humans to deny His Bounties after enumerating what He has done for them.

55:14 He created man from hard clay, like bricks.

55:15 And He created the jinn from tongues of fire.

55:16 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

55:17 The Lord of the two Easts and the two Wests.<sup>9</sup>

55:18 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

Allah controls what happens when two seas merge.

55:19 He unleashed the two seas so as to merge together.

55:20 Between them is a barrier which they do not overstep.

55:21 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

55:22 From them both come out pearls and coral.

25:53 And it is He Who mixed the two sea, this one sweet and pure and that one salty and bitter; and He set up between them a barrier and a firm prohibition.

55:23 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

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The best explanation that Moududi can come up with as to what are these "two seas," one salty and one sweet, is the following—and it's a stretch by any standard.

This phenomenon has been perceived in many places in the sea and on the land that sweet water and bitter water has existed side by side. Turkish Admiral Syedi Ali Rais, in his book *Mirat-al-Mamalik*, written in the 16th century, has mentioned a place in the Persian Gulf, where springs of sweet waver exist under the bitter waters of the sea, where he could get drinking water for his fleet.

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<sup>9</sup> "The Lord of the two Easts and the two Wests." Discussions are wide-ranging as to what Allah means by this.



Moududi offers the same explanation for another verse about “the two seas.”

35:12 The two seas are not the same; one is sweet, clear and delectable to drink and the other is salty and bitter. Yet from both you eat tender flesh and extract ornaments which you wear, and you see ships cruising therein, that you may seek His bounty, and that perchance you may be thankful.

After informing us that “He unleashed the two seas so as to merge together,” Allah emphasises, in Revelation 25:53, that He has set up between the two seas a “barrier” which the two seas are prohibited from breaching and allowing their waters to mix. It may not so much be a barrier as to what is flowing into what.

For example, the fresh water Nile flows into the salty Mediterranean. The fresh water flowing into the Mediterranean is not enough to noticeably change its salinity. The large Nile delta could also have been mistaken for a sea for which the Koran provides no definition. The Mediterranean has very low amplitude tides (a few centimetres on average), which means salt water never makes its way up river, therefore a Dark Ages observer – the period during which the Koran was revealed – could have mistaken what was happening as God having placed the type of barrier mentioned in the Koran. And yes, there is such a thing as fresh water coral and fresh water pearls.

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Allah was obviously impressed by large seaworthy crafts over which to claim ownership.

55:24 To Him belong the seagoing ships towering upon the sea like mountains.

55:25 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

Allah will maintain His composure, even in the midst of chaos and death of which He is the author and which He considers a bounty.

55:26 Everyone upon it (the earth) is perishing;

55:27 But the Face of Your Lord, full of majesty and nobility, shall abide.

55:28 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

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Allah is a busy god. Makes you wonder why, when everything is preordained, He has such a hectic schedule.

55:29 Whatever is in the heavens or on the earth petitions Him, and every day He is attending to some new matter.

55:30 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and human) deny?

Race, in the Koran, is based on the material used in the creation of the first progenitors: clay for men and fire for the jinn.

55:31 We shall attend to you, O two races (jinn and humans)?

55:32 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

It will definitely be easier for the jinn to take up Allah's challenge in Verse 55:33, as they are able to fly above the clouds all the way to the first level of Paradise. Any attempt, however, will be met with fire and melted brass. A bounty, that is not (as Yoda might say).

55:33 O jinn and human folk, if you can pass through the bounds of the heavens and the earth, pass through them. You will not pass through without some authority.

55:34 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

55:35 A flame of fire and brass will be loosed (sic) upon you, so that you will not receive any support.

55:36 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

Another favourite topic of Allah's is *Judgement Day*, whatever is being revealed. Judgement Day, for many, will not be a bounty.

55:37 When the heaven shall be rent asunder and turned red like pigment.

55:38 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

55:39 On that day, none shall be questioned about his sin,<sup>10</sup> whether a man or a jinn.

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<sup>10</sup> "It means that in that great assembly where all the former and the latter generations will have gathered together, there will be no need to ask as to who are the culprits, nor

55:40 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

How can the following be considered any kind of bounty?

55:41 The criminals shall be known by their marks; then they shall be seized by their forelocks and their feet.

55:42 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

55:43 This is Hell, which the criminals deny.

55:44 They circle between it and between a hot-water caldron.

55:45 So, which of your Lord's Bounties do you both (jinn and humans) deny?

The remaining revelations (55-46:78) in Surah The All-Compassionate can be found in the book all about Allah's hedonistic utopia in the sky, *The Islamic Hereafter: "Paradise"* (Boreal Books).

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will any man or jinn need be asked whether he is a culprit or not. The dejected faces of the culprits, their terror-stricken eyes, their disturbed and alarmed countenances will themselves be enough to expose the secret that they are the culprits." *Moududi*

## **Gardener and Rainmaker**

An illiterate's fascination with books and the written word is evident in much of what Allah reveals in His Koran. Another theme is a primitive desert dweller's fascination with water, precipitation in particular, and how it makes gardens grow and oases bloom.

6:99 And it is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We bring forth all kinds of vegetation. From it We bring forth greenery, and clustered grains; and from the date-palm shoots come clusters of dates within reach. And [We bring forth] gardens of grapes, olives and pomegranates alike and unlike. Behold their fruits, when they bear fruit and their ripening, surely there are signs in that for a people who believe.

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6:141 It is He who created gardens, trellised and untrellised (sic); palms and crops of diverse produce; and olives and pomegranates, both like and unlike. Eat of their fruits when they bear fruit, and pay their due on the day of harvesting them. And do not be prodigal; [for] He does not like the prodigals.

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7:57 It is He Who sends forth the winds bearing good news of His Mercy; so that when they bear heavy clouds, We drive them towards some dead land upon which We send down water. With it We bring forth every variety of fruit. Thus We bring out the dead, so that you may take heed.

7:58 Good land produces vegetation by the Will of its Lord; but that which has gone bad will not produce vegetation except with difficulty. Thus We make plain the revelations to a people who give thanks.

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14:32 [It is Allah] Who created the heavens and the earth and sends down water from the sky, bringing forth fruits for

sustenance. He has made the ships subservient to you so as to sail in the sea at His Behest and He has subjected to you the rivers.

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16:65 It is Allah who sends down water from the sky reviving thereby the earth after its death. Surely, there is in that a sign to a people who listen.

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24:42 To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and unto Allah is the ultimate return.

24:43 Have you not seen that Allah drives the cloud, then brings them together, then piles them into a heap, from which you see rain coming. He brings mountains of hail from the sky, with which He smites whomever He pleases and diverts it from whomever He pleases. The gleam of its lightning almost blinds the eyes.

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30:48 It is Allah Who sends forth the winds, which stir up the clouds. Then He spreads them out in the sky, as He pleases, and causes them to break up into pieces; and you see the rain issuing from their midst. Then, when He allows the rain to reach whomever He wishes of His servants, behold, they rejoice.

30:49 Whereas they were, before that, despondent.

30:50 Behold, then, the marks of Allah's Mercy, how He revives the earth after it was dead. He, indeed, is the One Who revives the dead and He has power over everything.

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35:9 It is Allah Who looses (sic) the wind, so as to stir up clouds; then We drive them towards a dead land, reviving the earth therewith after it was dead. Such is the Resurrection!

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35:27 Have you not seen how Allah sends water down from the sky, and then We bring forth thereby fruits of diverse

hues. And of the mountains there are lanes, white and red, of diverse hues, and some pitch dark.

35:28 And of people, beast and cattle, some are of diverse hues also. Indeed, of His servants, only the learned fear Allah. Allah is All-Mighty, All-Forgiving.

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36:33 A sign unto them is the dead land, that We revived and brought out of it grain, from which they eat.

36:34 And We caused to grow in it gardens of palms and vines, and caused springs to gush forth therewith.

36:35 That they might eat from its fruit, although their hands brought it not out. Will they not, then, give thanks?

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39:21 Have you not seen that Allah has sent down water from heaven,<sup>11</sup> then treaded it as springs in the ground? Then He brings out vegetation of various hues through it. Then it withers, and you see it looking yellow; then He turns it into scraps. In that, there surely is a Reminder to people of understanding.

39:22 Now, what of one whose breast Allah has dilated unto Islam, so that he basks in light from his Lord? Woe betide then the hard-hearted, upon Allah's mention. Those are in manifest error.

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42:28 It is He Who sends the rain down, after they have despaired, and spreads out His Mercy. He is the Protector, the Praiseworthy.

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50:7 And the earth We have spread out and set in it immovable mountains; and We cause to grow in it every delightful variety;

50:8 As a guidance and reminder to every penitent servant.

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<sup>11</sup> When Allah mentions "water from heaven," He means it literally (see *The Islamic Hereafter*: "Paradise," Boreal Books).

50:9 And We brought down from heaven blessed water and caused thereby gardens to grow and harvest grain;

50:10 And tall palm trees with clusters well-knit,

50:11 As provision for the servants; and We have revived thereby a dead town. Thus will the Resurrection be.

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56:68 Or have you seen the water that you drink?

56:69 Have you brought it down from the clouds or did We send it down?

56:70 Had We wished, We would have made it bitter; if only you would give thanks.

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78:14 And brought down from the rain-clouds abundant water?

78:15 To bring forth thereby grain and vegetation?

78:16 And luxurious gardens?

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80:24 Let man consider his nourishment.

80:25 We have poured the water abundantly;

80:26 Then, We split the earth wide open;

80:27 Then caused the grain to grow therein,

80:28 Together with vines and green vegetation;

80:29 And olives and palm trees;

80:30 And gardens with dense trees,

80:31 And fruits and grass,

80:32 For your enjoyment and that of your cattle.

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THE MOST HIGH

**87 Al-A`la**

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

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87:1 Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High;

87:2 Who created and fashioned well;

87:3 And Who fore-ordained and guided rightly;

87:4 And Who brought out the pasture;

87:5 Then turned it into greenish-black straw.

You will find another cluster of revelations about precipitation making things grow that both humans and cattle can eat in Chapter "Allah Loves His Cattle."



## **Signs, Signs, Everywhere Signs**

Sign, sign, everywhere a sign. Do this, don't do that, can't you read the sign? If God was here, He'd tell you to your face, man, you're some kinda sinner.

*Five Man Electrical Band*

10:101 Say: "Behold what is in the heavens and the earth." But neither the signs nor the warnings will avail a people who do not believe.

Allah's Signs are, for the most part, everyday occurrences, naturally-occurring phenomena, circadian rhythms that He professes to manipulate and calamities for which He claims authorship.

2:164 In the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of night and day; in the ships which sail in the sea with what profits mankind; in the water which Allah sends down from the sky in order to bring the earth back to life after its death and disperses over it every type of beast; in the continuous changing of winds; and in clouds which are driven between heaven and earth - surely in these are signs for people who understand.

One sign is that you are able to find your way, day or night.

6:96 [He is] the Cleaver of the dawn; and He made the night a time of rest, and the sun and the moon a means of reckoning. Such is the ordering of Allah, the Mighty, the All-Knowing.

6:97 And it is He Who created the stars for you so as to be guided by them in the dark depths of the land and sea. We have made plain the signs for a people who know.

The night again as a time to rest and "the day to see" are signs of His creation.

10:67 It is He Who created the night for you to rest therein and the day to see. Surely, in this are signs for a people who listen.

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Where a revelation is intermingled with other claims, as in the following, that could have been included in *Gardener and Rainmaker*; for example, a decision is made as to which chapter would be more appropriate to showcase the revealed truth.

13:4 And in the earth are plots adjoining each other and gardens of vines, tillage and palm trees, from one or different roots, which are irrigated by the same water; yet, We prefer some of them over the others in produce (we make some more tasteful than others, *Moududi*). Surely in that are signs for a people who understand.

Wine may have been outlawed (see Chapter “You Are What You Eat”) but it is still a sign from Allah.

16:67 And from the fruits of palms and vines, you get wine and fair provision. Surely, there is in that a sign to a people who understand.

Honey from fruit-eating bees is a sign.

16:68 And your Lord revealed to the bees: “Build homes in the mountains, the trees and in what men construct for you.

16:69 “Then eat from all the fruits and follow your Lord’s smoothed paths.” From their bellies comes out a syrup of different hues, wherein is healing for mankind. Surely, in that there is a sign for a people who reflect.

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Honey is not ‘bee poop’, as could be misunderstood from Allah’s short-on-specifics revelation about where honey comes from.

Bees collect a sugary juice called nectar from the blossom by sucking it out with their tongues. They store it in what’s called their honey stomach, which is different from their food stomach. When they have a full load, they fly back to the hive. There, they pass it on through their mouths to other worker bees who chew it for about half an hour. It’s passed from bee to bee, until it gradually turns into honey. Then the bees store it in honeycomb cells, which are like tiny jars made of wax.

*The Guardian*, “Ask a grown-up: how do bees make honey?”

Honey is one of three treatments Muhammad recommended for whatever ailed you.

**Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

(The Prophet said), "Healing is in three things: A gulp of honey, cupping, and branding with fire (cauterizing). But I forbid my followers to use (cauterization) branding with fire."

*Bukhari 71.584*

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Have you considered who keeps birds aloft?

16:79 Do they not see the birds subservient in the vault of the sky, nothing holding them aloft but Allah? Surely, there is in that signs for a people who believe.

Five signs in a row:

30:21 And of His Signs is that He created for you, from yourselves, spouses to settle down with and He established friendship and mercy between you. There are in all that signs for a people who reflect.

30:22 And of His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colours. Indeed, there are in that signs for those who know.

30:23 And of His Signs is your sleeping by night and day and your seeking some of His Bounty. There are in that signs for people who hear.

30:24 And of His Signs is showing you the lightning, to fear and to hope; and He brings down from the sky water with which He revives the earth after it was dead. There are in that signs for a people who understand.

30:25 And of His Signs is that the heavens and the earth shall arise at His Command. Then, if He summons you once, behold, you shall be brought out of the earth.

30:26 And to Him belongs whoever is in the heavens or on earth. They are all submitting to Him.

30:27 It is He Who originates the creation, then brings it back again; and that is easier for Him. He is the loftiest exemplar

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in the heavens and on earth, and He is the All-Mighty, the Wise.

Another sign is that “Allah expands and restricts the provision for whomever he wishes.”

30:36 If We let people taste a certain mercy, they rejoice at it; but if misfortune befalls them, on account of what their hands have perpetrated, behold, they are in despair.

30:37 Have they not seen that Allah expands and restricts the provision for whomever he wishes?<sup>12</sup> Surely, there are in that signs for a people who believe.

30:38 So, give the kinsman his due, as well as the destitute and the wayfarer. That is better for those who desire the Face of Allah. Those are the prosperous.

The winds that make your ship’s sails billow are a sign from Allah.

30:46 And of His Signs is sending forth the wind bearing good news and to let you taste part of His Mercy, and that the ships may sail at His Command, and that you might seek part of His Bounty; that perchance you may give thanks.

Sailing ships are one of Allah’s favourite signs of His Munificence.

31:31 Have you not seen that ships cruise upon the sea by Allah’s Grace, to show you some of His Signs. There are in that signs for every steadfast, thankful one.

Only ungrateful traitors repudiate Allah’s Signs.

31:32 And if waves cover them like a canopy, they call upon Allah, professing religion sincerely to Him; but when He delivers them to the dry land, some of them are lukewarm. Yet none repudiate Our Signs except every ungrateful traitor.

Genocides as a sign:

32:23 We have, indeed, given Moses the Book; so do not be in doubt concerning his encounter, and We made it a guidance to the Children of Israel.

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<sup>12</sup> 34:39 Say: “It is my Lord Who expands the provision to whomever of His servants He wishes and restricts it. Anything you spend, He will replace it. He is the Best of Providers.”

32:24 And We appointed some of them as leaders guiding by Our Command, when they stood fast and believed firmly in Our Signs.

32:25 It is your Lord Who will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection, regarding that whereof they used to differ.

32:26 Was it not shown to them how many generations We have destroyed before them, while they were strolling in their dwellings? Surely, there are signs in that; do they not hear?

Don't go around refuting Allah's Signs!

34:4 Those who have believed and did the righteous deeds those shall receive forgiveness and a generous provision.

34:5 But those who go around striving to rebut Our Signs those shall have the punishment of a very painful scourge.

34:6 And those who were given the knowledge (Jews and Christians) which was sent down from your Lord, will see that it is the Truth and it guides unto the Path of the All-Mighty, the All-Praiseworthy.

A sign from Allah can also be a *lack* of something; for instance, *not dropping* a piece of heaven (Revelation 34:9) on the unsuspecting to prove the existence of Paradise.

34:7 The unbelievers say: "Shall we show you a man who will tell you that, once you have been torn to pieces, you shall become again a new creation?"

34:8 "Does he impute falsehood to Allah or is he possessed?" No, those who do not believe in the Hereafter will undergo the punishment and are in grave error.

34:9 Have they not looked at what is in front of them and behind them of the heavens and the earth? Had We wished, we would have caused the earth to cave in under them, or dropped fragments from heaven upon them. Surely, in that is a sign to every repenting servant.

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I can't say it often enough: don't go around challenging Allah's Signs.

34:38 But those who go around challenging Our Signs those will be summoned to the punishment.

You are not asleep; you are dead: "there are in that signs for a people who reflect."

39:42 Allah carries off the souls of men upon their death and the souls of those who are not dead in their sleep. He then holds back those whose death He has decreed and releases the others till an appointed term. Surely, there are in that signs for a people who reflect.

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6:60 And it is He Who makes you die at night and knows what you do by day. He raises you up in it, until a fixed term is fulfilled; then onto him is your ultimate return. He will declare to you what you used to do.

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Again with well-fed and starving people being signs from Allah.

39:52 Did they not know that Allah expands the provision to whomever He wishes and constricts it? Surely, there are in that signs to a people who believe.

On Judgement Day, it will be too late to acknowledge Allah's Signs. The Compassionate is not into giving second chances.

39:56 "Lest any soul should say: 'Woe betide me for what I have neglected of my duty to Allah and for having been one of the scoffers.'

39:57 "Or it should say: 'Had Allah guided me, I would have been one of the God-fearing.'

39:58 "Or it should say, when it sees the punishment: 'If only I had a second chance, then I would be one of the beneficent'."

39:59 Yes indeed! My signs came to you, but you denounced them as lies and waxed proud and were one of the unbelievers.

In addition to His signs, Allah sends down provisions, which should be an even greater incentive to call on Him even if it displeases the less credulous.

40:13 It is He who shows you His Signs and sends down from heaven provision for you; but only he who repents will remember.

40:14 So, call on Allah professing religion sincerely unto Him, even if the unbelievers should resent it.

Those who associate or worship other gods apart from Allah, as well as those who repudiate His signs, are all perverts.

40:61 It is Allah Who made the night for you, to rest in it, and the day to see your way. Allah is truly Bountiful to mankind, but most people do not give thanks.

40:62 That for you is Allah your Lord, Creator of everything. There is no god but He. How then are you perverted?

40:63 Thus as those who used to repudiate Allah's Signs were perverted too.

40:69 Have you not observed those who dispute regarding Allah's Signs, how they are perverted?

Another revelation about Allah making things grow as a sign:

41:39 And of His Signs is that you see the earth desolate but when We send down water upon it, it quivers and swells. Indeed, He who revived it shall revive the dead. Truly He has power over everything.

Allah could stop the wind from blowing and/or drowning a ship's passengers, i.e. "destroy them" (Revelation 42:34)—in that, too, is a sign.

42:32 And of His Signs are ships sailing in the sea like high mountains.

42:33 If he wishes, He will calm the wind, and then they will remain motionless upon its surface. In that are signs to every steadfast and thankful person;

42:34 Or destroy them for what they (the passengers) have earned, while pardoning many;

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42:35 That those who dispute concerning Our Signs might know that they have no escape.

Signs upon signs.

### THE KNEELING ONE

#### 45 Al-Jâthiyah

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

45:1 Ha - Mim.

45:2 This is the revelation of the Book from Allah, the All-Mighty, All-Wise.

45:3 Surely, in the heavens and the earth there are signs for the believers.

45:4 And in your creation and the beasts scattered abroad, there are signs for people who are of certain faith.

45:5 And in the alternation of the night and the day and in what Allah has sent down from heaven as provision, reviving thereby the earth after it was dead and in the disposition of the wind - there are signs for people who understand.

45:6 Those are the Signs of Allah which We recite to you in truth. In what discourse other than Allah's and His Signs, then, will they believe?

Someone who believes in Allah's Signs is not arrogant.

45:7 Woe unto every sinful liar;

45:8 He hears Allah's Signs recited to him, then perseveres in his arrogance as though he did not hear them. Announce to him, then, the good news of a painful punishment.

Again, don't make fun of Allah's Signs.

45:9 And if he learns about any of Our Signs, he takes them in jest. Such people shall have a demeaning punishment.

45:10 Behind them is Hell and what they earned will not profit them a whit, nor what they have taken, apart from Allah, as protectors; and they will have a terrible punishment.



45:11 This is true guidance, and those who have disbelieved in the Signs of their Lord will have the punishment of a painful scourge.

That Allah subjected what is the heavens and on Earth to mankind as more signs.

45:12 It is Allah who subjected the sea to you, so that ships might sail in it at His Command, and that you might seek some of His Bounty, and that perchance you might give thanks.

45:13 And He subjected to you what is in the heavens and the earth all together, [as a grace] from Him. There are in that signs for a people who reflect.

On Judgement Day, those who took Allah's Signs in jest, which will all be recorded in a book, will be in for a very hard time. Then again, you already knew that!

45:25 And when Our Signs are clearly recited to them, their only argument is to say: "Bring our fathers back, if you are truthful."

45:26 Say: "Allah gives you life, then causes you to die, then musters you unto the Day of Resurrection, which is undoubted. Yet most people do not know."

45:27 To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and when the Hour shall come, on that Day the negators (sic) shall lose.

45:28 And you will see every nation kneeling; each nation being called unto its Book: "Today, you shall be rewarded for what you used to do.

45:29 "This is Our Book which speaks against you truly. In fact, We used to record what you were doing."

45:30 As to those who believed and did the righteous deeds, their Lord will admit them into His Mercy. That is the manifest triumph.

45:31 But as for those who disbelieved [they will be asked]: "Were not My Signs recited to you, but you waxed proud and were a criminal people?"

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45:32 And when it was said: "Allah's Promise is true and the Hour is undoubted", you said: "We do not know what the Hour is. We only conjecture and are by no means certain."

45:33 Then the evil of their deeds shall appear to them and they will be smitten by that which they used to mock.

45:34 And it will be said: "Today We forget you, as you forgot the Encounter of this your day, and your abode is the Fire and you will have no supporters.

45:35 "That is because you took Allah's Signs in jest and the earthly life lured you." So today they will not be brought out of it and they will not be allowed to repent.

45:36 Praise, then, be to Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, the Lord of the Worlds.

45:37 Unto Him is the grandeur in the heavens and on the earth, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Do you now understand?

57:17 Know that Allah revives the earth after it is dead. We have expounded the Signs clearly for you, that perchance you might understand.

Should you need a reminder as to who keeps birds airborne:

67:19 Have they not considered the birds above them spreading their wings and folding them? They are only held up by the Compassionate. He is the Perceiver of everything.

## Allah the Eternal Adolescent

Allah appears to have gotten stuck on Maslow's hierarchy of needs where you find the preoccupations of adolescence, if not childhood. God's unsophisticated and often confusing parables; His unmitigated arrogance and juvenile insistence that He be praised for whatever He does (or doesn't do); His love of charades, e.g., having Zachary and Mary, the mother of Jesus, perform pantomimes as a sign that He has done them a favour (see *Shared Prophets: "Mary,"* Boreal Books); His puerile challenges and preoccupation with potential rivals; His boasting about committing the most adult of atrocities; His vivid imagination, e.g., sending an angel with a flying horse to fetch Muhammad for a one-on-one confab; His skin-deep opinion of women are all indications of an immature mind and a volatile personality. In the god-who-never-grew-up's bravado, love of violence, and revelling in the pain that He inflicts, the creativity of the eternal adolescent finds its fullest expression. Allah is a god you don't mess with! His vengeance will be merciless, never ending and often original.

54:41 The warnings also came to Pharaoh's folk.

54:42 They denounced all Our Signs as lies; so We seized them in the manner of One Who is Mighty and Strong.

54:43 Are your unbelievers [of Mecca] better than all those;<sup>13</sup> or have you been exonerated in the Scriptures?

54:44 Or do you say: "We are a band which will conquer."

54:45 The host (*they*) will certainly be routed and turn their backs in flight.

54:46 No, the Hour shall be their appointment; and the Hour is very grievous and bitter.

54:47 The criminals are indeed in error and blazes;

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<sup>13</sup> "Are your unbelievers better than all those" refers to Noah's people, the people of 'Ad and Thamud, the people of Lot, and undoubtedly many other communities whom Allah obliterated on the flimsiest of excuses and whose fate is recounted in *Shared Prophets: Biblical Figures in the Koran*, Boreal Books.

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54:48 The day they will be dragged upon their faces into the Fire: "Taste now the touch of Saqar (another name for Hell)."

Next comes the expected boast about creating everything, some of it in the wink of an eye:

54:49 Indeed, We have created everything in measure.

54:50 Our Command is like one word, like the twinkling of an eye.

A childish challenge from the most powerful of gods:

54:51 We have destroyed your likes; is there anyone who will remember?

54:52 Everything they have done is recorded in the Scriptures.

54:53 Everything, small or big, is written down.

The likes of what He has destroyed will definitely not be joining the God-fearing on a "seat of truth" in Paradise.

54:54 The God-fearing are, indeed, amid gardens and rivers.

54:55 Upon a seat of truth in the presence of an Omnipotent King.

### **Doomed Children at Play**

Allah is a Mighty Schemer, and what He schemes about is no laughing matter!

86:8 Surely, He has the power to bring him (*man*) back,

86:9 When the consciences of men shall be tested.

86:10 Then, he will have no power and no supporter.

86:11 And by the heavens which alternates (recurring cycle of rain, *Moududi*);

86:12 And the earth which is split up (ever bursting with verdure, *Moududi*).

86:13 It is indeed a decisive discourse;

86:14 And it is no joking matter.

86:15 They are indeed scheming mightily,

86:16 And I am scheming mightily.

86:17 So, give the unbelievers some respite. Respite them slowly.<sup>14</sup>

During a normal day, children will play while adults are busy making money, making love or making war. Yet, it is people at play that God brags about killing; and like children might say or do, He schemed to make their obliteration come about. An omnipotent, adult god does not need to scheme to get His way.

7:97 Did the people of the cities feel assured that Our punishment would not come upon them at night while they were sleeping?

7:98 Or did the people of the cities feel assured that Our punishment would not come upon them during the day while they were playing?

7:99 Or did they feel secure against Allah's Scheming? For none feels secure from Allah's Scheming save the losing people.

Those who inherit the Earth after all the current inhabitants have returned to Allah to be welcomed into Paradise or else tossed into Hell will have to play by our eternal adolescent's rules, just like their predecessors—or else!

7:100 It is not clear to those who inherit the earth after its people [are gone] that if We will, We can smite them for their sins and seal their hearts so that they cannot hear.

### **Hooked On Praise**

The Koran is not so much a philosophy of life as a set of rules. The rule-maker exhibits the same juvenile certainty of having absolute knowledge of the world around him and childlike intolerance of those who won't play by his rules. Where Allah's inner child shines through

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<sup>14</sup> "A word of consolation to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and a tacit warning to the disbelievers, saying: "Have patience for a while: let the disbelievers do their worst. Before long they will themselves realize whether they have been able to defeat the Quran by their scheming or the Quran has dominated them in the very place where they are exerting their utmost to defeat it." *Moududi*

See *From Merchant to Messenger: The Prophet Muhammad's struggle for legitimacy as revealed in the Koran* (Boreal Books) for more revelations of encouragement for Allah's beloved, beleaguered spokesperson.

most is in His need to be constantly praised. It is a pathological need so ingrained that when He is not being praised, He praises himself. Muhammad nailed it when he essentially said that the god for whom he spoke was a praise addict.

**Narrated Abdullah bin Mas'ud:**

Allah's Apostle said, "None has more sense of ghaira (self-respect, also spelled ghira) than Allah, and for this He has forbidden shameful sins whether committed openly or secretly, and none loves to be praised more than Allah does, and this is why He Praises Himself."

*Bukhari 60.161*

**The Responsible Adult v. The Adolescent**

That Muhammad exhibited many of the same traits as the God in whose name He would rule the lands conquered on His behalf goes without saying. I suspect that if Allah had decided to marry, his choice of wives would have also reflected the preoccupations of adolescence just like those exhibited by his middle-aged spokesman.

**Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:**

I was with the Prophet in a Ghazwa (Military Expedition) and my camel was slow and exhausted. The Prophet came up to me and said, "O Jabir."

I replied, "Yes?"

He said, "What is the matter with you?"

I replied, "My camel is slow and tired, so I am left behind."

So, he got down and poked the camel with his stick and then ordered me to ride.

I rode the camel and it became so fast that I had to hold it from going ahead of Allah's Apostle. He then asked me, have you got married?"

I replied in the affirmative.

He asked, "A virgin or a matron?"

I replied, "I married a matron."

The Prophet said, "Why have you not married a virgin, so that you may play with her and she may play with you?"

Jabir replied, "I have sisters (young in age) so I liked to marry a matron who could collect them all and comb their hair and look after them."

*Bukhari 34.310*

## **I AM THE GREATEST! WORSHIP ME!**

Allah's quid pro quos:

2:152 Remember Me (by glorifying Me) then I will remember you (by rewarding you). Give thanks to Me (by obeying Me) and do not be ungrateful (by disobeying Me).

2:186 And when my servants ask you about Me, say: I am near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls; so they should answer My Call (by obeying me) and believe in Me, that they might be rightly guided.

Like most gods, Allah is somewhat insecure in His Omnipotence. The most visible manifestation of this insecurity is His obsession with "what they worship" apart from Himself. His pathological need for reassurance that He is better than them is reflected not only in the praise He heaps upon Himself, but in the amount of time He expects His minions to spend at worship, praise's ultimate expression:

- 1) the five daily prayer sessions that consist mainly of repeating in unison verses from the Koran;
- 2) the greater and lesser pilgrimages—the Hajj and the Umrah respectively;
- 3) and the month of Ramadan.

All are occasions for immersion into the Koran, along with its mass of unavoidable verses damning these other gods and those who worship them, almost all ending with self-praise for the one doing the damning.



## **Allah vs. Alleged Associates**

16:73 And they worship, besides Allah, what cannot provide anything for them from the heavens or the earth and can do nothing.

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17:56 Say (*Muhammad*) : "Call on those whom you claim to be His associates. They will not be able to lift adversity from you nor divert it."

17:57 Those they call upon are themselves seeking means of access to their Lord, to show who is closer to Him. They hope for His Mercy and fear His Torment. Indeed, the Torment of Your Lord should be feared.

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22:12 He calls, besides Allah, on that which neither harms nor profit him (other gods). That is the worst (the farthest from the Way) error.

22:13 He calls upon him whose harm is likelier than his profit. Wretched is the Master and wretched is the ally!

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23:116 Glory be to Allah, the True King; there is no God but He. He is indeed the Lord of the Noble Throne.

23:117 He who calls, along with Allah, upon another god of whom he has no proof, his reckoning is with His Lord. Surely, the unbelievers will never prosper.

23:118 Say: "Lord Forgive and have mercy; for You are the Best of the Merciful."

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37:1 By the rangers ranged in rows;<sup>15</sup>

37:2 By the reprovers (sic) reproving;

37:3 By the reciters of a Reminder;

37:4 Your God is surely One,

37:5 The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what lies  
between them, Lord of the Orient.

Other gods—which, on many occasions, Allah admits to creating while damning those who believe in their existence—are, as aforementioned, an obsession of the most powerful god to ever to lay claim to the title. In this chapter we concentrate on presenting some of the remaining evidence, which saturates the Koran, of this deep-seated psychosis that may be responsible for the most people murdered in the name of a deity. Shirk, or associating other gods with Allah, is the number one sin in Islam. It is an unpardonable sin in the here-and-now and in the Hereafter. Christians can pay a poll tax, the *Jizya*, to continue worshipping the Trinity. Not so for anyone else who would associate other gods with Allah.

People were murdered in the tens of millions for the sin of shirk, with the greatest number being Indus. Dr. K. S. Lal in *Growth of Muslim Population in Medieval India* (1973) estimates that between 1000 CE and 1500 CE, during the period of the Muslim conquest of much of the Indian sub-continent, the population of Hindus decreased by 80 million. This means that for much of that period, the death rate among Hindus exceeded their birthrate. Quite an accomplishment when you consider that the deliberate killing of tens of millions of Hindu polytheists was mostly by the sword.

### **Those Accursed, Pesky Other Gods**

You may love Allah as much as you love the other gods, but that will not cut you any slack with the god who brooks no equal. It's into the Fire with you!

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<sup>15</sup> “The majority of the commentators are agreed that Revelations 37:1-3 imply groups of the angels.” *Moududi*

More revelations about the rangers:

37:164 There is not one of us but has a well-known station.

37:165 And we are indeed the rangers.

37:166 And we are those who glorify.

2:165 Yet, there are people who set up equals to Allah, whom they love as they love Allah. Those who believe, however, have greater love for Allah. If only the evil-doers could understand, upon seeing the punishment, that all power is Allah's and that Allah is Stern in punishment.

2:166 Those who were followed will disown those who followed them when they will see the punishment and their relations with each other will be severed.

2:167 Those who followed will say: "If only we could go back (to life on earth) we would disown them as they disowned us." Thus Allah will show them their works as sources of deep regret. And they will never come out of the Fire.

Allah makes clear early on that He will forgive any crime except that of shirk.

4:116 Allah will not forgive associating [any other god] with Him, but will forgive anything less than that, to whomever He wills. He who associates [any other god] with Allah, has really gone very far astray!

4:117 Apart from Him, they only invoke (worship) the goddesses of Quraysh; they only invoke a rebellious devil (Satan),

(See Chapter "Allah Loves His Cattle: Slicing the Ears of Cattle" for the remaining revelations in this series.)

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Except for a small skirmish, the Quraysh, the leading tribe of Mecca – on the advice of their commander Abu Sufyan who told them the situation was hopeless – surrendered the city (see *From Jihad in Koran: "Mecca Surrenders,"* Boreal Books) and agreed to become Muslim, but not before obtaining a concession from Muhammad that they may continue worshipping the goddesses al-Lat, al-Uzza and Manat: the goddesses of Revelation 4:117. The next day, after he has complete control of their city, the Prophet informed them that it was all the devil's doing; that Satan had intruded on his conversations with God the previous night, and that in the morning Allah had set him straight; the verses pertaining to al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat, the so-called Satanic Verses, were stricken from the Koran.

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22:52 We have not sent a Messenger or Prophet before you but when he recited the Devil would intrude into his recitation. Yet Allah annuls what the Devil had cast. Then Allah establishes His Revelations. Allah is All-Knowing and Wise.

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Allah considers the concept of the Christian Trinity as associating other gods with His Magnificence. Christians will deny, on Judgement Day, that they have ever been polytheists (Revelation 6:23).

6:20 Those to whom We have given the Book (*the Gospel in this instance*) know him (the Prophet) as they know their own children; but those who have lost their souls will not believe.

6:21 And who is more unjust than he who imputes falsehood to Allah or denies His Revelations? Indeed the unjust shall not prosper.

6:22 And on the Day that We shall gather them all together, then say to those who associated other gods [with Allah]. "Where are those whom you allege to have been your associate-gods?"

6:23 Then their only excuse will be simply to say: "By Allah, our Lord, we have not been polytheists."

6:24 Look [O Muhammad], how they will lie to themselves and how that which they fabricated will fail them.

Allah taketh away and Allah giveth back. What other god would do that?

6:46 Say: "Tell me! If Allah were to take away your hearing and sight and seal your hearts, what god other than Allah would give them back to you?" Behold, how We make plain Our Revelations, but they turn away.

Allah delivers people from the depths of both land and sea. In spite of that, they still give other gods some of the credit.

6:63 Say: "Who will deliver you from the dark depths of the land and the sea? You call upon Him humbly and secretly saying: 'If He delivers us from this we will certainly be thankful.'"

6:64 Say: "Allah delivers you from this and from every distress; yet you associate [other gods with Him]."

Why would you believe in gods that are not only bad for business but who also cannot punish?

6:71 Say: "Shall we call, besides Allah, on what neither profits nor harms us, and turn on our heels after Allah has guided us?" [We shall then be] like one who, being tempted by the devils in the land, is bewildered though he has friends who call him to guidance [saying]: "Come to us." Say: "Guidance from Allah is the true guidance. And we are commanded to submit to the Lord of the Words;

6:72 "And perform the prayers and fear Him; for He is the One unto Whom you shall be gathered."

A warning for Muhammad that these other gods may be a figment of someone's imagination, but you can't be too careful.

6:108 Do not curse those [deities] whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they wrongfully curse Allah without knowledge. Thus We have made the deeds of every nation seem fair to them; then unto their Lord is their return, and He will tell them what they were doing.

An offering to Allah, made along with an offering to alleged associates, never reaches Him but reaches His purported partners.

6:136 They assigned to Allah a share of the tith (crop) and cattle He created, saying: "This is for Allah," - as they declare - "and this is for our associate-gods." And while that which is assigned to their associate-gods does not reach Allah, that which is set aside for Allah would reach their associate-gods. How evil is what they judge!

Allah is a big and powerful god who could have stopped these other gods from causing their worshippers to murder their children, but didn't.

6:137 And likewise, their associate-gods have insinuated to them the killing of their children, so as to destroy them and confound them in their religion. Had Allah pleased they would not have done it. So leave them (*Meccans to whom Muhammad preached*) to their fabrications.

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These other gods would tell you what you can and cannot eat (for Allah's full menu, see Chapter "You Are What You Eat").

6:138 And they (other gods) say: "These cattle and tilth (crops) are taboo, and none shall eat them except those we wish," as they claim. And there are cattle whose backs are forbidden, and others over which they do not mention the Name of Allah. Such is their fabrication about Him. [But] He will punish them for their lies.

6:139 And they say: "What is in the bellies of these cattle is lawful to our males, but forbidden to our wives. If it is still-born both can share it." [Allah] will punish them for what they attribute [to Him]. He is surely Wise, All-Knowing.

These other gods, which Allah admits creating—or is it those who associated them with Allah? Moududi offers no comments—lack "hands to smite with," along with other organs and appendages.

7:191 Do they associate with Allah those who can create nothing, while they, themselves, are created?

7:192 And they can neither help them nor help themselves.

7:193 And if you call them to guidance, they do not follow you. It is the same, for you, whether you call them or you remain silent.

7:194 Indeed those you call, apart from Allah, are servants like you; so call them and let them answer you, if you are truthful.

7:195 Do they have feet to walk with; do they have hands to smite with; do they have eyes to see with; or do they have ears to hear with? Say (O Muhammad): "Call your associate-gods, then plot against me and give me no respite."

7:196 My protector is Allah who sent down the Book and He protects the righteous.

It is more or less clear, in the following revelations, that Allah is referring to physical representations of these other gods in carvings and paintings.

7:197 And those you call, apart from Him, are not able to help you or even to help themselves.

7:198 If you call them to the guidance they do not hear; and you see them look at you, but they do not see.

Followers of “conjecture” and liars!

10:66 Indeed, to Allah belongs whoever is in the heavens or on the earth. Those who call upon others, apart from Allah, do not follow any associate. They only follow conjecture and they are only lying.

That Muhammad only worshipped Allah, and not the gods of those whom he hoped to convince to do the same, goes without saying.

10:104 Say: “O people, if you are in doubt regarding my religion, [know that] I worship not those you worship, apart from Allah; but I worship Allah who causes you to die, and I have been commanded to be one of the believers.”

10:105 And [it was said to me]: “Set your face towards religion, in an upright way, and do not be one of the polytheists.”

10:106 “And do not call, apart from Allah, on anything which neither profits nor harms you. If you do, you are then one of the wrongdoers.”

10:107 And If Allah afflicts you with adversity, none can lift it other than He; and if He wills any good for you, none can bar His Bounty. He will accord it to whomever He pleases of His servants and He is the All-Forgiving, the Merciful.

Allah challenged unbelievers to name those “they set up as associates.” Some must have done so in order for Muhammad, on Allah’s behalf, to ask whether they are informing God “about what He does not know on earth.”

13:33 Is he, then, Who watches every soul, noting what it earns [like one who does not]? Yet they set up associates with Allah. Say: “Name them. Are you informing Him about what He does not know on earth, or is it an outward speech only.” Rather the cunning of the unbelievers is embellished to them and they are kept away from the Path. Those whom Allah leads astray will have no one to guide them.

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13:34 There is punishment in the present life, but the punishment of the Hereafter is much harder; and they will have no one to protect them from Allah.

Enjoy yourselves setting up equals to Allah; the Fire will always be there.

14:30 And they set up equals to Allah in order to lead people away from His Path. Say: "Take your pleasure; for your fate is the Fire."

At the end of another unavoidable list of all He has created or caused to happen, such as the rain to fall and plants to grow, Allah again admits to creating these other gods who can't create anything.

16:9 It belongs to Allah to show the Straight Path; some, however, deviate from it. Had Allah pleased He would have guided you all.

16:10 It is He who sends down water from the sky; from it you drink, and through it grow the plants on which you feed your cattle.

16:11 From it He brings forth for you vegetation, olives, palms, vines and all kinds of fruit. In that, surely, there is a sign for a people who reflect.

16:12 And He has subjected to you the night and the day, the sun and the moon; and the stars are subjected by His Command. In that there are signs for a people who understand.

16:13 And what He created for you in the earth is of multifarious colours; in that there is, surely, a sign for people who are mindful.

16:14 And it is He Who subjected the sea, so that you may eat from it tender meat and bring out from it jewelry for you to wear; and you see the ships cruising therein. [He subjected it for you] so that you may also seek His Bounty and give thanks.

16:15 And He laid up in the earth firm mountains, lest it shake under you; as well as rivers and pathways that, perchance, you may be guided.



16:16 And He [laid] landmarks; and by the stars they are guided.

16:17 Now, is He Who creates like him who does not create? Do you not take heed?

16:18 Were you to count Allah's Blessings, you will not exhaust them. Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Merciful.

16:19 And Allah knows what you conceal and what you reveal.

16:20 Those they call upon, apart from Allah, do not create anything, but are themselves created.

Perhaps they cannot do what Allah easily does because He created them stillborn. Unless, of course, they did not share the most elementary characteristic of gods that is immortality and have since passed away.

16:21 [They are] dead, not alive, and they do not know when they will be raised from the dead.

Allah ends this series about other gods with His next favourite topic: the Hereafter.

16:22 Your God is One God; those, then, who do not believe in the Hereafter, their hearts deny and they are arrogant.

16:23 Undoubtedly, Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal. Indeed, He does not like the arrogant.

Any blessings you receive are from Allah; other gods had nothing to do with it, so don't go thanking them or sharing a blessing of food with them.

16:53 Whatever blessing you have is from Allah. Then, if adversity touches you, unto Him you turn for help.

16:54 Then, once He lifts the adversity from you, behold, some of you associate [other gods] with their Lord;

16:55 So as to deny what We gave them. Enjoy yourselves then, for soon you shall know.

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Is Allah swearing by Allah?

16:56 And they set apart, for what they know not (their idols), a portion of what We have provided for them. By Allah, you will be questioned about what you fabricated.

The Devil has authority only over those who are his friends and who associate other gods with Allah.

16:98 When you recite the Qur'an, seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Devil.

16:99 He has no authority over those who believe and have put their trust in their Lord.

16:100 His authority is only over those who befriend him and who associate others with Him (Allah).

The "despised and forsaken":

17:22 Do not set up another god with Allah, lest you be despised and forsaken.

Wisdom is not setting up rivals to Allah.

17:39 That is part of what your Lord has revealed to you of wisdom. Do not set up with Allah another god, or else you will be cast in Hell, despised and rejected.

If there were any other gods, they would surely have sought an audience with the one sitting on the Throne.

17:42 Say: "If there were other gods with Him, as they say, then surely they would have sought access to the Lord of the Throne."

Run into trouble at sea and these other gods you call upon will desert you. It is Allah who will save you; but don't forget to thank Him.

17:66 Your Lord who drives for you the ships at sea, that you may seek His Bounty. He is indeed Merciful to you.

17:67 And if you are touched by adversity at sea, those you call upon other than He will wander away; but when He delivers you to land safely, you turn away. Man is ever thankless.

17:68 Are you, then, assured that He will not cause the land to cave in under you, or release a sandstorm upon you, and then you will find no one to protect you?

17:69 Or are you assured that He will not return you to it a second time, releasing upon you a roaring wind and drowning you, on account of your disbelief. Then you will find no one to defend you against us.

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Then there are the aggressive, ungrateful people whom He saves from drowning and provides with a safe landing only to have them resort to unjustified violence.

10:22 It is He who makes your journey on land and on sea; so that when you are in the ships and they sail with them driven by a fair wind, and they rejoice in it, a stormy wind comes upon them and waves surge over them from every side, and they think that they are being overwhelmed. Then they call upon Allah, professing submission to Him sincerely: "If you save us from this, we shall be truly thankful."

10:23 But when He saves them, they resort to aggression in the land wrongfully. O people, your aggression shall recoil upon yourselves. It is what you enjoy in the present life; then unto Us shall be your return; whereupon We will inform you about what you were doing.

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No, the angels have not "taken to themselves gods out of the earth, able to raise the dead."

21:19 To Him belongs what is in the heavens and on earth; and those with Him (the angels) are not too proud to worship Him, nor do they tire;

21:20 Glorifying Him night and day without growing weary.

21:21 Or have they taken to themselves gods out of the earth, able to raise the dead?

If Allah had encountered any other gods, in heaven or on Earth, He would have ruined them.

21:22 Were there in them both (heaven and earth) other gods than Allah, they would surely have been ruined. Allah be

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exalted, the Lord of the Throne, above what they describe.

21:23 He is not questioned about what He does, but they are questioned.

The Koran and the Torah, “the Reminder of those before me,” is God’s proof that He is the one and only. Where is your evidence that He is not?

21:24 Or, have they taken, besides Him, other gods? Say (O *Muhammad*): “Bring your proof.” This is the Reminder (the Qur’an) of those with me and the Reminder of those before me. However, most of them do not know the truth, so they turn away.

God’s justification for condoning lethal merciless revenge upon another human being (see pertinent revelations in *Jihad in the Koran: “Emigrating in the Cause of Allah - Someone’s Gotta Die,”* Boreal Books) may cause a layperson to shake his or her head at the reasons why.

22:61 That is because Allah causes the night to pass into the day and the day to pass into the night, and that Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

22:62 That is because Allah is the Truth and what they call upon besides Him (*other gods*) is the falsehood; and that Allah is the Exalted, the Great One.

You need a permit from Allah (Revelation 22:71) to worship these other gods of which you are clueless.

22:68 And if they dispute with you, say: “Allah knows best what you are doing.”

22:69 Allah will judge between you on the Day of Resurrection, regarding what you disagree about.

22:70 Do you not know that Allah knows what is in the heavens and on earth. All that is in a Book; and that is an easy matter for Allah.

22:71 And they worship, besides Allah, that concerning which He did not send down any authority, and of which they have no knowledge. The wrongdoers shall have no supporter.

22:72 And when Our Clear revelations are recited to them, you will recognize in the face of the unbelievers the denial. They will almost fall upon those who recite to them Our Revelations. Say: "Shall I tell you about what is worse than that? It is the Fire which Allah has promised the unbelievers; and what a wretched fate!"

That darn child again along with acquisitive and quarrelsome other gods.

23:91 Allah did not take to Himself a child and there was never another god with Him; or else each god would have carried off what he has created, and some of them would have risen against the others. Exalted be Allah above what they describe!

23:92 Knower of the unseen and the Seen; He is exalted above what they associate.

Jesus among the "gods who do not create anything":

## THE CRITERION

### 25 Al-Furqân

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

25:1 Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion (a way to distinguish right from wrong) upon His servant (Muhammad), so as to be a warner for all mankind.

25:2 To whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and He has not taken to Himself a child, and has no associate in this dominion, and He created everything, preordaining it fully.

25:3 Yet they have taken, apart from Him, other gods who do not create anything, but are themselves created. They do not have the power to harm or profit themselves, nor the power over death, life or resurrection.

Another reminder that worshipping other gods means you are a partisan of Satan and have always been.

25:55 They worship, apart from Allah, what neither profits nor harms them; and the unbeliever have always been a partisan (of Satan) against his Lord.

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Allah is the only god who could have brought you daylight and the night to rest in.

28:71 Say: "Have you considered, what if Allah had made the night to last for you continuously until the Day of Resurrection? What other god than Allah will bring you light? Do you not hear?"

28:72 Say: "Have you considered, what if Allah had made the day to last for you continuously until the Day of Resurrection? What other god than Allah will bring the night to rest in? Do you not see?"

28:73 It was out of His Mercy that He created the day and the night, so that you may rest in it and seek some of His Bounty, that perchance you may give thanks.

Allah's Earth may be vast, but it is still not vast enough for more than one god.

29:56 O my servants who believe and do the righteous deeds, My earth is vast, so worship Me alone.

Even if they don't run into trouble at sea after invoking Allah's Name upon embarking, when disembarking they give credit to Allah and alleged associates for a safe journey.

29:65 When they embark in the ships, they will call on Allah, professing religion sincerely to Him. Yet when He delivers them safely to land, behold they associate (other gods with Him).

29:66 To disbelieve in what We have imparted to them and enjoy themselves. They will surely come to know.

29:67 Do they not see that We have set up a safe sanctuary for them while, all around them people are being snatched away? Do they, then, believe in falsehood and repudiate Allah's Bounty?

29:68 Who, then, is more unjust than one who imputes falsehood to Allah or denies the truth when it comes to him. Is there not in Hell a dwelling for the unbelievers?

29:69 And those who strive in Our Cause We shall guide in Our Ways, and Allah is with the Beneficent.

Mercy is from Allah, not from these other gods.

30:33 When people are visited by some adversity, they call upon their Lord, turning to Him; but when He lets them taste a mercy from Him, behold, a group of them associate [other gods] with their Lord;

30:34 So as to be ungrateful for what We have given them. Indulge yourselves, then. For you shall certainly know!

30:35 Or have We sent down to them an authority, and he (?) speaks about that which they were associating with Him?

Yet another revelation that Allah is the only god able to cause you to die and then bring you back to life.

30:40 It is Allah who created you, then provided for you and Who will cause you to die, then bring you back to life. Is there among your associates any one (sic) who does any of this? Glory be to Him and may He be exalted above what they associate with Him.

That there is night and day – for which He repeatedly takes credit and often uses to discredit other gods – obviously fascinates Allah.

31:29 Have you not seen how Allah causes the night to phase into the day, and the day to phase into the night; and He has subjected the sun and the moon, each of them running to an appointed term, and that Allah is Well-Aware of what you do?

31:30 That is because Allah is the Truth and what they call upon, apart from Him, is the falsehood and that Allah is the All-High, the Great.

These other gods possess no share of either Paradise or the Earth, nor are they involved in their management.

34:22 Say: "Call upon those you allege, apart from Allah. They do not possess the weight of a speck of dust in the heavens or on earth, and they have no partnership in either of them; nor is any of them a helper to him."

Don't let these other gods divert you from "the Truth."

35:2 Whatever mercy Allah accords to mankind, none of them will be able to withhold; and whatever He withholds, none

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will be able to release thereafter. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise.

35:3 O people, remember Allah's Grace upon you. Is there a creator other than Allah, providing for you from heaven and earth? There is no god but He; how then will you be diverted (deluded away from the Truth, *Yusuf Ali*)?

Still another reminder that those who "do not possess a date's crust" could not have made night and day, nor could they make the sun and moon run on time.

35:13 He causes the night to phase into the day and the day to phase into the night and He has subjected the sun and the moon, each running for an appointed term. That is Allah, your Lord to whom belongs the dominion, whereas those you call upon, from Him, do not possess a date's crust.

These other gods are not only creators of nothing, they are not "in possession" of a book containing the proof of what they advance.

35:40 Say: "Have you seen your associates upon whom you call, apart from Allah? Show me what they have created on earth? Do they have any share in the heavens, or have We given them a Book, so that they are in possession of a clear proof therein? In fact, the wrongdoers only promise each other vanity."

Allah sent down the Koran, not these other gods, and that is the truth, so worship Him.

### THE TRONGS

#### 39 Az-Zumar

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

39:1 The sending down of the Book is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the Wise.

39:2 We have, indeed, sent down the Book to you in truth; so worship Allah professing the religion sincerely to Him.

Many worshipped these lesser or associate gods for the same reason some people worship saints: that they might intercede on their behalf with the top god. Their intent might have been well-meaning, but to Allah they were thankless liars.



39:3 Sincere religion truly belongs to Allah. Those who took other protectors, apart from Him, say: "We only worship them so as to bring us closer to Allah in rank." Allah surely judges between them with respect to what they differ upon. Allah surely does not guide him who is a thankless liar.

If Allah confers some grace on you, don't assign equals to His Magnificence, for God's sake! We can't say it often enough, and neither can Allah.

39:8 If some adversity touches man, he will call upon his Lord, repenting unto Him; then, if He confers on him grace of His, he forgets what he was calling for before that and assigns equals to Allah, so as to lead others astray from His Path. Say: "Enjoy your disbelief a little; for you are truly one of the companions of the Fire."

Allah challenges these other gods, in Revelation 39:19, to deliver those "upon whom the Word of punishment has been uttered ... from the Fire."

39:17 Those who shunned the worship of idols and turned in repentance unto Allah, theirs is the good news. "Announce, then, the good news to My servants."

39:18 Those who hear the Word and follow the fairest of it; those are the ones whom Allah has guided and those are the people of understanding!

39:19 He upon whom the Word of punishment has been uttered, are you able to deliver from the Fire?

These would-be intercessors are clueless and have no power to intercede. Allah can intercede with Himself.

39:43 Or have they taken intercessors, apart from Allah? Say: "Even if they have no power whatever and no understanding."

39:44 Say: "To Allah belongs all intercession. His is the dominion of the heavens and the earth. Then unto Him you will be returned."

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If size does matter (Revelation 39:67), those other gods don't stand a chance.

39:62 Allah is the Creator of everything and He is the Guardian of everything.

39:63 His are the keys of the heavens and the earth; and those who have disbelieved in Allah's Signs are the losers.

39:64 Say: "Do you, then, command me to worship anyone other than Allah, O ignorant ones?"

39:65 He has in fact revealed to you (Muhammad) and those who preceded you: "If you associate any others with Allah, He will frustrate your work and you will certainly be one of the losers."

39:66 Instead, worship Allah and be one of the thankful.

39:67 They have not recognized Allah's true measure. The whole earth shall be in His grasp and the heavens shall be rolled up in His Right Hand on the Day of Resurrection. Glory be to Him, and may He be exalted above what they associate with Him.

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### **Narrated Abdullah:**

A (Jewish) Rabbi came to Allah's Apostle and he said, "O Muhammad! We learn that Allah will put all the heavens on one finger, and the earths on one finger, and the trees on one finger, and the water and the dust on one finger, and all the other created beings on one finger. Then He will say, 'I am the King.'"

Thereupon the Prophet smiled so that his pre-molar teeth became visible, and that was the confirmation of the Rabbi. Then Allah's Apostle recited: "No just estimate have they made of Allah such as due to Him." (39.67)

*Bukhari 60.335*

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Again, these other gods are judges of nothing!

40:20 Allah judges rightly, but those upon whom they call, apart from Him, judge of naught. Allah is the All-hearing, the All-Seeing.

No—Allah, in Revelation 43:45, is not asking Muhammad to travel back in time, but telling His illiterate spokesperson to consult what earlier messengers revealed: that there is no god other than Allah.

43:44 And it (the Qur'an) is surely a Reminder to you and to your people; and you shall be questioned.

43:45 Ask those of Our Messengers We sent before you: "Have We ever set up, apart from the All-Compassionate, any other gods to be worshipped?"

**"Is there, then, another god with Allah?"**

27:59 Say: "Praise be to Allah and peace upon those of His servants whom He has chosen. Is Allah better or those they associate with Him?"

27:60 Is He not the One Who created the heavens and the earth and sent down upon you water from the sky; and so We caused to grow thereby delightful gardens. It was not in your power to cause their trees to grow. Is there, then, another god with Allah? Yet, they are a people who assign to Him an equal.

27:61 Is He not the One Who made the earth a stable abode and created rivers flowing through it, created immovable mountains therein and created a barrier between the two seas. Is there, then, another god with Allah? Yet, most of them do not know.

27:62 It is He who answers the one in trouble when he calls upon Him and lifts the adversity and appoints you as successors on earth. Is there, then, another god with Allah? Little do you recollect.

27:63 He who guides you through the dark shadows of land and sea, and sends forth the wind as good news ahead of His Mercy. Is there, then, another god with Allah? No, He is exalted above what they associate!

27:64 He Who originates the creation, then brings it back, and Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth. Is there, then, another god with Allah? Say: "Produce your proof, if you are truthful."

These other gods, like everyone and everything else, know nothing of the Unseen and "when they shall be resuscitated."

27:65 Say: "No one in the heavens or on earth knows the Unseen, except Allah; and they will have no inkling when they shall be resuscitated.

According to *Islamicstudies.info*, at one point these other gods, like everyone else, had some knowledge of the Hereafter but then abandoned their studies and now are clueless.

27:66 Has their knowledge of the Hereafter continued? Nay, they are in doubt regarding it, or rather, they are blind to it.

### **Goddesses and the Fathers Who Worshipped Them**

43:15 They have attributed to Him part of His servants. Man is indeed manifestly thankless.

43:16 Or has He taken for Himself daughters from what He creates, and favoured you with sons?

43:17 And when one of them is given the news of what he attributes the likes thereof (that is, daughters), to the All-Compassionate, his face becomes darkened and he is filled with gloom.

43:18 What, (assigned to God) one who is brought up in luxury but in the art of disputation is not well-versed?

43:19 And they have made the angels, who are servants of the All-Compassionate, females.<sup>16</sup> What, have they witnessed their creation? Surely, their testimony will be written down and they will be questioned.

43:20 They say: "If the All-Compassionate had willed it, we would not have worshipped them." They have no knowledge of that at all; they are only lying.

43:21 Or have We given them a Book prior to this one (the Qur'an), so that they are clinging to it?

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<sup>16</sup> "Here, the folly of the polytheists of Arabia has been fully exposed. They said that the angels were the daughters of Allah. They had carved out their images as females, and these were their goddesses whom they worshipped." *Moududi*

The pagan Arabs of Mecca worshipped what their ancestors worshipped, and their ancestors displayed none of Allah's biases against worshipping the female sex.

43:22 No, they say: "We found our fathers upon this course, and we are actually following in their footsteps."

43:23 Likewise, We never sent forth a warner to any city before you (*Muhammad*), but its affluent chiefs have said: "We have found our fathers upon a certain course, and we are actually following in their footsteps."

43:24 He said: "What if I were to bring you a more certain guidance than what you found your fathers upon?" They said: "We are definitely disbelievers in what you were sent forth with."

43:25 So, We wrecked vengeance upon them. Behold, then, what was the fate then of those who deny.

Abraham's father probably had no qualms about worshipping goddesses either.

43:26 When Abraham said to his father and his people: "I am certainly quit of what you worship;

43:27 "Except for Him Who created me. He will certainly guide me well."

43:28 And he made it an enduring word in his progeny, that perchance they might repent.

### **Parents Who Worship Other Gods Are Not to Be Obeyed**

29:8 We have commanded man to be kind to his parents; but if they strive with you to associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. Unto Me is your return and I will tell you what you used to do.

29:9 Those who believe and do the righteous deeds, We shall admit them into the company of the righteous.

Luqmân is a legendary figure in Islamic lore. He is regarded as a paragon of wisdom. Luqmân had some familiar advice for his son about "a mighty evil."

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31:12 We have, indeed, imparted wisdom to Luqmân: "Give thanks to Allah." Whoever gives thanks, gives thanks only for his own good and whoever disbelieves will find Allah All-Sufficient, Praiseworthy."

31:13 And when Luqmân said to his son exhorting him: "My son, do not associate others with Allah; associating others [with Allah] is a mighty evil."

Allah would interrupt Luqmân with some advice of his own.

31:14 We have admonished man regarding his parents; as his mother bore him in weakness upon weakness, weaning him in two years: "Give thanks to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the ultimate return.

31:15 "If they strive with you so as to associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them; but keep them company in the present world honourably. Follow the path of those who turn to Me. Then unto Me is your return, whereupon I will tell you what you used to do."

Luqmân again:

31:16 "O my son, if there be the weight of a mustard seed, whether in a rock, in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Surely, Allah is Subtle, Well-Informed.

31:17 "Oh my son, perform the prayer, command the honourable and forbid the dishonourable and bear patiently what has befallen you. That is an instance of constancy in one's affairs.

31:18 "Do not turn your face away from people and do not walk in the land haughtily. Allah does not love any arrogant or boastful person.

31:19 "Be modest in your stride and lower your voice; for the most hideous voices is that of asses."

### **Judgement Day**

On Judgement Day, these ephemeral gods and goddesses will be mustered by the Compassionate, and one and all will deny they were ever worshipped by those they now consider their enemies.

## THE SAND-DUNES

### 46 Al-Ahqâf

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

46:1 Ha – Mim.

46:2 This is the revelation of the Book from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

46:3 We have not created the heavens and the earth and what is in between them except in truth and for an appointed term. Yet the unbelievers do not heed what they were warned against.

46:4 Say: "Have you considered what you call upon, apart from Allah? Show me what they have created of the earth, or whether they have a share of the heavens? Bring me a Book before this one or some vestige of knowledge, if you are truthful?"

46:5 Who is farther astray than he who calls, apart from Allah, upon him who does not answer his call till the Day of Resurrection? They are even heedless of their calling.

46:6 And when people are mustered, they will be their enemies, and even their worship they will disclaim.

### **A Transcending Obsession**

In this chapter I have presented revelations highlighting Allah's obsession with alleged competing deities, deities which some claim help God manage His affairs, the so-called "associates" of His Omnipotence. To do so would have disrupted other narratives or led to unnecessary duplications of revelations in other books in this series like *The Islamic Hereafter* in which Allah's anger and pathological obsession with these ephemeral gods, whom He will sentence, along with those who followed them, to an eternity on fire after a rigorous excoriating interrogation, finds its fullest expression. Then there is *Shared Prophets – Biblical Figures in the Koran: What They Said and Did* where revelations tell the story of how the prophets from the Torah attempted to make Allah's case that He is the one and only God, with more promise of death and destruction like that found in the Chapter "Allah Days" if those to whom they bring the Message don't stop believing in

other gods. Even Jesus makes an appearance, during which he lambasts those who claim he is the son of God.

This constant drumming into the conscious and subconscious of readers as soon as they can mouth the words (see *Children and the Koran*, Boreal Books)—that unbelievers have no place in the perfect world envisioned by the Koran where only the Author is deserving of worship and everyone lives and dies according to the Book—should not be taken lightly. It is a concern to which I will return in the last book in this series, *From Merchant to Messenger: The Prophet Muhammad's struggle for legitimacy as revealed in the Koran* (Boreal Books).

### **What about the Devil?**

Revelations about the Devil, i.e., Satan, the typical nemesis of most gods, are not as numerous as those against Allah's apparent competition and their supporters. Allah does not fear him. The Devil is mostly used to demonise those who worship other gods or who associate other gods with His Omnipotence.

2:257 Allah is the Supporter of the believers. He brings them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their supporters are the devils who bring them out of light into darkness. Those are the people of the Fire in which they shall abide forever.

The only time we can be sure that Allah is not confusing the Devil with the jinn is when He refers to the one He does not fear as Satan.

2:268 Satan induces you to expect poverty and orders you to be niggardly, and Allah promises you His Forgiveness and His Bounty. Allah is Munificent, All-Knowing.

If you are an unbeliever and a show-off, you are the Devil's companion.

4:38 And for those who spent their wealth in order to show off, and do not believe in Allah and the Last Day. He who has the Devil as a companion, an evil companion has he!

A reference to the Devil as being an object of worship by the Jews:

5:60 Say: "Shall I tell you about those who will get a worse punishment from Allah? Those whom Allah cursed and on whom He poured forth His Wrath, transformed them into



monkeys and swine, and worshippers of the Devil. They are worse off and farther astray.”

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With Medina secure from further attacks from the Meccans after the Battle of the Ditch (see *Jihad in the Koran: “Massacre of the Banu Qurayzah,”* Boreal Books), Muhammad moved against the Banu Qurayzah, a Jewish tribe whose leaders are said to have plotted with the Meccans during the Battle of the Ditch. When he neared their fortification, he called out to the defenders: “O brothers of monkeys and pigs! Fear me, fear me.” The simian reference would make its way into the Koran as a persistent reminder of the perfidy of the Jews and an incitement for future generations of the righteous.

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If you take devils for patrons you might think you are being rightly guided, but you would be wrong.

7:30 “A group of you He has guided and another group was doomed to error; for they have taken the devils for patrons, apart from Allah, and they still think that they are rightly guided.”

What you must do if the Devil tempts you—and you’d better hope your brethren don’t interfere.

7:199 Hold to forgiveness, enjoin the good and turn away from the ignorant.

7:200 And if a temptation from the Devil troubles you, seek refuge in Allah; He is truly All Hearing, All-Knowing.

7:201 Indeed, those who fear God, when a visitation from the Devil afflicts them, will remember [Allah’s Commands], and behold they will see clearly.

7:202 But their brethren will plunge them further into error, and [then] they will not desist.

Those who dispute with Allah have the Devil for a friend.

22:3 And there are some people who dispute regarding Allah without any knowledge, and follow every rebellious devil.

22:4 It has been written against him (the Devil) that whoever takes him for a friend, he will lead astray and guide him to the punishment of Hell.

# Prayers

## One-on-One With Allah

The third holiest site in Islam is a rock underneath the *Dome of the Rock*, which is part of the *Al-Aqsa* Mosque complex on *Temple Mount* in Jerusalem. Muslims believe this is the rock from which Muhammad ascended to heaven on a magical night in 621—the night of Mi'raj is celebrated on the 27th day of the month of Rajab, the seventh month of the Muslim calendar—on the back of a winged-horse named Al-Burak. The Prophet had just finished his late-night prayers when the angel Gabriel appeared holding Al-Burak's bridle. Muhammad got on the horse and flew off to Jerusalem where he met with the spirits of earlier messengers and led them in prayer before taking off for Paradise to meet with the god for whom he spoke. Revelation 17:1 is the only reference to this journey between “the Sacred Mosque,” i.e., Mecca, and “the farthest mosque,” i.e., Jerusalem.<sup>17</sup>

### THE NIGHT JOURNEY

#### 17 Al-Isrâ'

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

17:1 Glory be to Him Who caused His servant to travel by night from the Sacred Mosque to the farthest Mosque, whose precincts We have blessed, in order to show him some of Our Signs. He is indeed the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

The trip to heaven was not without its perils, with the jinn intercepting Muhammad on his way up. Allah had already informed him as to what to say so as to be allowed to pass.

72:19 And that when the Servant of Allah got up calling on Him, they almost set upon him in throngs.

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<sup>17</sup> Jerusalem surrendered to the Muslims in 638 A.D., six years after the death of Muhammad; therefore, there could not have been a mosque, as we know them, there at the time.

72:20 Say: "I only call upon my Lord, and I do not associate with Him anyone else."

72:21 Say: "I have no power to harm or guide you rightly."

72:22 Say: "No one shall protect me from Allah, and I will not find apart from Him any refuge;

72:23 "Except for a proclamation from Allah and His Messages. He who disobeys Allah and His Messenger, for him the Fire of Hell is in store. Therein they shall dwell forever."

72:24 Until, when they see what they are promised, they will then know certainly who is weaker in supporters and is fewer in numbers.

During his ascent to the seventh level of Paradise where God sits on His Throne, Muhammad encountered many figures from the Bible such as Jesus and Moses, whose appearances he describes in hadiths such as the following:

**Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

The Prophet said, "On the night of my ascent to the Heaven, I saw Moses who was a tall brown curly-haired man as if he was one of the men of Shan'awa tribe, and I saw Jesus, a man of medium height and moderate complexion inclined to the red and white colors and of lank hair..."

*Bukhari 54.462*

There were no witnesses to the departure from Mecca, the landing in Jerusalem, the takeoff for heaven or the landing in Mecca the following morning. When Muhammad described this journey to the Meccans the next day, many believed he had gone insane. It was only after he described seeing a caravan from the air (which arrived shortly thereafter in Mecca) that some of the accusations were withdrawn.

### **Negotiating the Prayers**

It was during this one-night visit with God, for whom Muhammad provides no description, that the number of daily prayers that a believer must perform every day was established. The Koran may be short on specifics, but not those who listened to Muhammad's swashbuckling account of his flight to Paradise and what took place.

In accounts of this milestone event in the history of Islam, the Bait-ul-Ma'mur is mentioned. Except for an entrance and an exit door, it is almost an exact replica of the Ka'ba in Mecca and is situated directly above it in Paradise. Like Muslims on Earth, angels are required to make a pilgrimage to this Ka'ba in the sky at least once in their lifetime as immortals, and seventy thousand angels do so every day, entering by one door and exiting by the other, as explained by Gabriel in the first of two recollections about this memorable night. The following hadith, in which the narrator remembers Muhammad mentioning his stopover in Jerusalem, is from the Sahih Muslim collection.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas b. Malik that the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: I was brought al-Buraq Who is an animal white and long, larger than a donkey but smaller than a mule, who would place his hoof a distance equal to the range of vision. I mounted it and came to the Temple (Bait Maqdis in Jerusalem), then tethered it to the ring used by the prophets.

I entered the mosque and prayed two rak'ahs in it, and then came out and Gabriel brought me a vessel of wine and a vessel of milk. I chose the milk, and Gabriel said: You have chosen the natural thing. Then he took me to heaven.

Gabriel then asked the (gate of heaven) to be opened and he was asked who he was. He replied: Gabriel.

He was again asked: Who is with you?

He (Gabriel) said: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

Gabriel replied: He has indeed been sent for. And (the door of the heaven) was opened for us and lo! we saw Adam. He welcomed me and prayed for my good.

Then we ascended to the second heaven. Gabriel (peace be upon him) (asked the door of heaven to be opened), and he was asked who he was.

He answered: Gabriel; and was again asked: Who is with you?

He replied: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. The gate was opened.

When I entered Isa b. Maryam and Yahya b. Zakariya (peace be upon both of them), cousins from the maternal side, welcomed me and prayed for my good.

Then I was taken to the third heaven and Gabriel asked for the opening (of the door).

He was asked: Who are you?

He replied: Gabriel.

He was (again) asked: Who is with you?

He replied Muhammad (may peace be upon him).

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and I saw Yusuf<sup>18</sup> (peace of Allah be upon him) who had been given half of (world) beauty. He welcomed me prayed for my well-being. Then he ascended with us to the fourth heaven.

Gabriel (peace be upon him) asked for the (gate) to be opened, and it was said: Who is he?

He replied: Gabriel.

It was (again) said: Who is with you?

He said: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for.

The (gate) was opened for us, and lo! Idris was there. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being (About him) Allah, the Exalted and the Glorious, has said: "We elevated him (Idris) to the exalted position" (Qur'an 19:57). Then he ascended with us to the fifth heaven and Gabriel asked for the (gate) to be opened.

It was said: Who is he?

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<sup>18</sup> Joseph, son of Jacob.

He replied Gabriel.

It was (again) said: Who is with thee?

He replied: Muhammad.

It was said Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and then I was with Harun (Aaron, peace of Allah be upon him). He welcomed me prayed for my well-being. Then I was taken to the sixth heaven.

Gabriel (peace be upon him) asked for the door to be opened.

It was said: Who is he?

He replied: Gabriel.

It was said: Who is with thee?

He replied: Muhammad.

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and there I was with Musa (Moses, peace be upon him). He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Then I was taken up to the seventh heaven.

Gabriel asked the (gate) to be opened.

It was said: Who is he?

He said: Gabriel

It was said. Who is with thee?

He replied: Muhammad (may peace be upon him.)

It was said: Has he been sent for?

He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and there I found Ibrahim (Abraham, peace be upon him) reclining against the Bait-ul-Ma'mur and there enter into it seventy thousand angels every day, never to visit (this place) again.

Then I was taken to Sidrat-ul-Muntaha whose leaves were like elephant ears and its fruit like big earthenware vessels. And when it was covered by the Command of Allah, it

underwent such a change that none amongst the creation has the power to praise its beauty.

Then Allah revealed to me a revelation and He made obligatory for me fifty prayers every day and night.

Then I went down to Moses (peace be upon him) and he said: What has your Lord enjoined upon your Ummah?

I said: Fifty prayers.

He said: Return to thy Lord and beg for reduction (in the number of prayers), for your community shall not be able to bear this burden, as I have put to test the children of Israel and tried them (and found them too weak to bear such a heavy burden).

He (the Holy Prophet) said: I went back to my Lord and said: My Lord, make things lighter for my Ummah.

(The Lord) reduced five prayers for me. I went down to Moses and said. (The Lord) reduced five (prayers) for me, He said: Verily thy Ummah shall not be able to bear this burden; return to thy Lord and ask Him to make things lighter.

I then kept going back and forth between my Lord Blessed and Exalted and Moses, till He said: There are five prayers every day and night. O Muhammad, each being credited as ten, so that makes fifty prayers. He who intends to do a good deed and does not do it will have a good deed recorded for him; and if he does it, it will be recorded for him as ten; whereas he who intends to do an evil deed and does not do, it will not be recorded for him; and if he does it, only one evil deed will be recorded.

I then came down and when I came to Moses and informed him, he said: Go back to thy Lord and ask Him to make things lighter.

Upon this the Messenger of Allah remarked: I returned to my Lord until I felt ashamed before Him.

*Sahih Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 309*

In a hadith from the Bukhari collection, there are more back and forth negotiations to get Allah down to five daily prayers<sup>19</sup>; the offer of milk or wine (or honey, which is not mentioned in the previous recollection) is made after arriving in the seventh heaven not prior to the beginning of the ascent. We take up this narrative at the point where Muhammad is being shown the Bait-ul-Ma'mur.

**Narrated Abbas bin Malik:**

Then Al-Bait-ul-Ma'mur (i.e. the Sacred House was shown to me and a container full of wine and another full of milk and a third full of honey were brought to me. I took the milk. Gabriel remarked, 'This is the Islamic religion which you and your followers are following.' Then the prayers were enjoined on me: They were fifty prayers a day.

When I returned, I passed by Moses who asked (me), "What have you been ordered to do?"

I replied, "I have been ordered to offer fifty prayers a day."

Moses said, "Your followers cannot bear fifty prayers a day, and by Allah, I have tested people before you, and I have tried my level best with Bani (*Children of*) Israel (in vain). Go back to your Lord and ask for reduction to lessen your followers' burden."

So I went back, and Allah reduced ten prayers for me. Then again I came to Moses, but he repeated the same as he had said before. Then again I went back to Allah and He reduced ten more prayers.

When I came back to Moses he said the same, I went back to Allah and He ordered me to observe ten prayers a day.

When I came back to Moses, he repeated the same advice, so I went back to Allah and was ordered to observe five prayers a day.

When I came back to Moses, he said, "What have you been ordered?"

I replied, "I have been ordered to observe five prayers a day."

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<sup>19</sup> Shi'ites only perform three daily prayers, combining the second and third prayer, and the fourth with the fifth.



He said, "Your followers cannot bear five prayers a day, and no doubt, I have got an experience of the people before you, and I have tried my level best with Bani Israel, so go back to your Lord and ask for reduction to lessen your follower's burden."

I said, "I have requested so much of my Lord that I feel ashamed, but I am satisfied now and surrender to Allah's Order."

When I left, I heard a voice saying, "I have passed My Order and have lessened the burden of My Worshipers."

*Bukhari 58.227*

Revelations pertaining to the five prayers are contained in six surahs with no one verse or surah mentioning all five prayers, which is unusual considering they were negotiated during this one body-and-soul visit with God. Most surahs were revealed in their entirety on special occasions such as during Friday worship.

An ambiguous reference to the afternoon prayer:

2:238 Attend regularly to the prayers including the middle prayer (probably the afternoon prayer), standing up in devotion to Allah.

In the following, there is no mention of the noon prayer.

11:114 And perform the prayer at the two ends of the day and [the first] watches of the night. Surely the good deeds will wipe out the evil deeds; that is a reminder for those who remember.

A reference to the sunset and the dawn prayer followed by a revelation about the night prayer.

17:78 Perform the prayer at the declining of the sun till darkness of the night and recite the Qur'an at dawn. Surely the recital of the Qur'an at dawn is memorable.

17:79 And during the latter part of the night, pray as an additional observance. For your Lord may raise you to a praiseworthy position.

Revelation 24:58 mentions three prayers: the Dawn Prayer, the Noon Prayer and the Sunset Prayer.

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24:58 O believers, let those your right hands possess (slaves and maid-servants) and those who have not reached the age of puberty ask your leave three times: (to attend to you or approach you) before the dawn prayer, when you put off your clothes at noon and after the evening prayer. These are three occasions of nudity for you; after which you are or they are not at fault, if you approach each other. That is how Allah makes clear His signs to you. Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.

Another reference to the sunset and sunrise prayer, followed by a revelation about the noon prayer that the denizens of Paradise, e.g., angels, also perform along with the sunset prayer.

30:17 So, glorify Allah in the evening and in the morning.

30:18 His is the praise in the heavens and on earth at sunset and at noontide.

Revelations 33:41-42, taken out of context, could lead a believer to assume that Allah is content being glorified through prayer only twice a day.

33:41 O believers, remember Allah often;

33:42 And glorify Him morning and evening.

Considering Allah's observation that people do not "tire of praying for good," He may not have considered imposing five prayers a day to be much of a hardship.

41:49 Man does not tire of praying for good, but when evil touches him he becomes downcast and despondent.

41:50 And if We let him taste a mercy from Us after some adversity that has visited him, he will say: "This is mine and I do not believe the Hour is coming. If I am returned to my Lord, I will surely have the fairest reward." We shall, then, inform the unbelievers about the things they did and will make them taste an awful punishment.

41:51 If We are gracious to man, he slinks away and turns aside; and if an evil touches him, he is given to constant prayer.

## The Call to Prayer

7:29 Say: "My Lord commands justice. Set your faces straight at every place of prayer and call on Him in true devotion. As He originated you, you shall return."

3:76 Yea, whoever fulfills his pledge and is pious - truly Allah loves the pious.

As the Muslim community grew in number, it became apparent that some way had to be devised so that everyone in town or working in the vast orchards of Medina knew when it was time for prayers – and it had to be different from other religions.

The Muslims were aware that the Christians used bells to call their people to the church and the Jews blew a horn to summon their people to religious service, a number of companions suggested that they, too, should devise a method for calling the faithful to the five daily prayers. The Prophet thought that this was a good idea, but he was keen to devise a system which would differentiate the Muslims from the Christian and Jewish practices. Some companions suggested that they should kindle a fire before every prayer, while others that they could clap two pieces of wood to signal the start of the prayer time. However, none of these suggestions appealed to the Prophet. Then, one day, a companion called Abdullah ibn Zaid appeared before the Prophet and said he saw in a dream where a person was calling all the Muslims to prayer from the roof of the mosque. Subsequently, Umar appeared and confirmed that he had had a similar dream. The Prophet and his companions liked the idea. The *adhan* (or "call to prayer") was thus instituted by the Prophet.

Muhammad Mojlum Khan, *The Muslim 100 - The Lives, Thoughts and Achievements of the Most Influential Muslims in History*.

Unlike Sunnis, Shi'ites believe that the call to prayer was Allah's idea, which he transmitted to Muhammad in the usual manner. The call to prayer is also a reminder for all within earshot as to a Muslim's core beliefs. The call to prayer Sunni version:

The God is the greatest/most great  
I testify that there is no deity except for The God

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I testify that Muhammad is a Messenger of The God  
Make haste towards the prayer  
Make haste towards success  
Prayer is better than sleep  
The God is the greatest!  
There is no deity except for The God

Shi'ites remain convinced that Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law and his progeny were his rightful successors and that is reflected in their variation of the call to prayer. Shi'ite version:

The God is greater than any description  
I testify that there is no deity except for The God  
I testify that Muhammad is a Messenger of The God  
I testify that Ali is the vicegerent of The God  
Make haste towards the prayer  
Make haste towards the worship  
The God is the greatest!  
There is no deity except for The God

You shouldn't let commerce or sport interfere with the Friday call to prayer.

62:9 O believers, when the call for prayer on the Day of Congregation (or Friday) is sounded, then hasten to the mention of Allah and leave off trading. That is far better for you, if only you knew.

62:10 Then, when prayer is over, spread out throughout the land and seek some of Allah's Bounty, and remember Allah often, that perchance you might prosper.

62:11 However, when they see trading or sport, they scramble towards it and leave you standing up. Say: "What Allah has in store is far better than sport or trading; and Allah is the Best of Providers."

The call to prayer was not always taken seriously when it was first introduced.

5:58 And when you call to prayer, they take it as a mockery and a sport; that is because they are a people who do not understand.

## Prayers During War

Islam was never a religion of peace. Islam is the religion of fighting.

*Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, in an audio message made public May 14, 2015.*

That much fighting is done in the name of Islam is reflected in Allah's pragmatism when it comes to performing the prayers during hostilities.

2:239 If you are in danger, then (perform the prayers) on foot or on horseback, when you feel secure remember Allah, just as He has taught you what you did not know.

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4:101 And when you journey in the land, you are not at fault if you shorten the prayer for fear that the unbelievers will harm you. The unbelievers are your manifest enemy.

4:102 When you (Muhammad) are among them (the faithful), conducting the prayer for them, let a group of them rise with you and let them take their weapons; but when they have prostrated themselves, let them withdraw to the rear; and let another party who had not prayed come forward and pray with you, taking their precaution and carrying their weapons. The unbelievers wish that you would neglect your arms and your equipment, so that they may swoop down on you in a united attack. You are not at fault, however, if you lay aside your weapons in case you are hampered by rain or are sick; but take heed. Allah has prepared for the unbelievers a demeaning punishment.

4:103 When you have completed the prayer, remember Allah standing, sitting and reclining. Once you feel secure, then perform the prayer; for prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed times.

Don't let the performance of the mandatory prayers weaken your resolve to defeat your enemy.

4:104 Do not be weak-hearted in pursuing the enemy. If you are suffering they are suffering too; but you hope from Allah what they cannot hope. Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.

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Allah will not accept pleas for mercy from “the treacherous.”

4:105 We have revealed the Book to you in truth, so as to judge between people in accordance with what Allah has shown you. And do not be an advocate of the treacherous.

4:106 And ask Allah’s forgiveness; Allah is indeed All-Forgiving, Merciful!

4:107 And do not plead on behalf of those who betray themselves; for Allah does not like the treacherous or sinful.

4:108 They seek to hide themselves from men, but they cannot hide themselves from Allah; for He is with them while they secretly contemplate words that do not please Him. And Allah is fully aware of what they do!

4:109 There you are, you have pleaded on their behalf in the present world; who then will plead with Allah on their behalf on the Day of Resurrection, or who will be their guardian?

The following undoubtedly applies only to believers who might have found themselves on the wrong side.

4:110 But he, who does evils or wrongs himself, then asks Allah’s forgiveness, will find Allah All-Forgiving, Merciful.

### **Prayers – Does and Don’ts**

You should not attend prayer services if you are drunk or have just relieved yourself or touched a woman without the opportunity to wipe your face and hands.

4:43 O believers, do not approach prayer while you are drunk, until you know what you say; nor when you are unclean – unless you are on a journey – until you have washed yourselves. And if you are sick or on a journey, or if anyone of you has relieved himself, or you have touched women and could not find water, you might rub yourself with clean earth, wiping you faces and hands with it. Allah indeed is Pardoning, All-Forgiving!

Don’t forget the ankles.

5:6 O believers, if you rise to pray, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows and wipe your heads and your feet up to the ankles. If you are unclean, then cleanse yourself;

and if you are sick or on a journey, and if one of you has come from the rest-room, or if you have touched women and cannot find any water, then take some clean earth and wipe your faces and hands with it. Allah does not wish to burden you, but to purify you and complete His Grace upon you, that you may be thankful.

5:7 And remember Allah's Grace upon you and His Covenant (*with Adam's progeny*) with which he bound you, when you said: "We hear and we obey." Fear Allah; Allah indeed knows well the thoughts in the hearts!

In peace, but perhaps not in war, you should wear nice clothes when performing the prayers.

7:31 O Children of Adam, put on your finery at every place of prayer. Eat and drink, but do not be prodigal, He does not like the prodigals.

Morning and evening prayers should be subdued.

7:204 When the Qur'an is recited, listen to it and pay attention, that perchance you may receive mercy.

7:205 And remember your Lord within yourself, in humility and awe and without raising your voice in the morning and evening; and do not be one of the heedless.<sup>20</sup>

Angels, attending to His Omnipotence, do what people do when in the presence of a powerful ruler.

7:206 Indeed, those (the angels) who are with your Lord are not too proud to worship Him, and they glorify Him and prostrate themselves before Him.

Another verse informing humans that when they prostrate themselves in worship, as He has commanded, they are not alone.

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<sup>20</sup> What was done to a heedless old man.

**Narrated Abdullah bin Masud:**

The Prophet recited Suratan-Najm (103) at Mecca and prostrated while reciting it and those who were with him did the same except an old man who took a handful of small stones or earth and lifted it to his forehead and said, "This is sufficient for me." Later on, I saw him killed as a non-believer.

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16:49 And before Allah all creatures in the heavens and on the earth, together with the angels, prostrate themselves, and they are not proud.

16:50 They fear their Lord, high above them, and they do what they are commanded.

Don't shout, but pray loud enough to be heard.

17:110 Say: "Call on Allah or the Compassionate. By whatever name you call [Him], His are the Most Beautiful Names." And pray neither with a loud nor with a low voice, but follow a middle course.

When Allah revealed that He has "no supporter to protect Him from humiliation," He was just being sarcastic, according to *Islamicstudies.info*.

17:111 And say: "Praise be to Allah Who has not taken a son to Himself, and Who has no partner in sovereignty and no supporter to protect Him from humiliation. And proclaim His greatness."

Praying may also be beneficial to the bottom line.

35:29 Surely, those who recite the Book of Allah, perform the prayer and spend of what we provided for them, secretly and publicly, may hope for a trade which does not slacken.

35:30 That He might pay them their wages and increase them from His Bounty; He is indeed All-Forgiving, All-Thankful.

### **An Answer to a Prayer**

3:190 There are in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day real signs for people of understanding.

3:191 Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting or lying on their sides, reflecting upon the creation of the heavens and the earth [saying]: "Our Lord You did not create this in vain. Glory be to You! Save us from the torment of the Fire.

3:192 "Our Lord, he whom you throw into the Fire will be disgraced by you." The evildoers shall have no supporters.



3:193 "Our Lord, we have heard a caller summoning to belief, saying: 'Believe in your Lord'; and so we have believed. Lord, forgive us our sins and acquit us of our evil deeds and cause us to die with the pious.

3:194 "Lord, and give us what You promised us through the Messengers, and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Surely, You will not break a Promise."

Assurances were given to the Muslims who emigrated from Mecca to Medina and "fought and were killed" on Allah's behalf that their sins would be forgiven and they would be admitted into Paradise.

3:195 And so their Lord answered them saying: "Indeed, I will not cause the loss of the work and any worker among you, whether male or female; you come one from the other." Those who have emigrated (the Meccan Muslims who, because of persecution, emigrated to Medina) and were driven out of their homes, were persecuted for My Sake, fought and were killed, I will forgive their sins and will admit them into Gardens, beneath which rivers flow, as a reward from Allah. With Allah is the best reward!

Don't be deceived by itinerant unbelievers who claim they just want to do business with you.

3:196 Do not be deceived by the wanderings (for business purposes) of those who disbelieved in the land;

3:197 A little enjoyment, and then their abode is Hell; and what a wretched resting place!

3:198 However, those who fear their Lord will have Gardens, beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever, as a Bounty from Allah. What Allah has is far better for the righteous.

### **The Night too is for Praying**

32:15 Yet those believe in Our Signs who, when reminded of them, fall down prostrate in celebrate the praise of their Lord, and they are not overbearing.

32:16 Their sides shun their couches<sup>21</sup> as they call on their

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<sup>21</sup> "They worship their Lord instead of enjoying sensuous pleasures at night." *Moududi*

Lord in fear and hope, and of what We have provided [them with, they give in charity].

32:17 No soul knows what was laid up for them secretly of joyful relief, as a reward for what they used to do.

### **The Prayer of the People of Paradise**

The prayer of the people of Paradise (Revelation 10:10) is followed by a verse about punishment. Allah is nothing if not consistent.

10:9 Surely, those who believe and do the good, their Lord shall guide them for their belief; beneath them rivers will flow in the Gardens of Bliss.

10:10 Their prayer therein shall be: "Glory be to you, O Allah"; and their greeting in it shall be: "Peace!" and they conclude their prayer by saying: "Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."

10:11 And were Allah to hasten the evil for mankind (hasten mankind's punishment) just as they would hasten the good for themselves (from God), their term would have been fulfilled. Then We would leave those who do not hope to meet Us in their arrogance wandering aimlessly.

# The Hajj

22:67 To every nation, We have given a sacred rite which they observe. So do not let them dispute with you in this matter. Call them to your Lord, for you are on a straight course.

Christianity has its *Ten Commandments*; Islam, its *Five Pillars*, four of which are about worshipping Allah. A Muslim who fails to observe even one of these pillars in the prescribed manner dramatically increases their chances of spending an eternity on fire. The fifth of the Five Pillars is the Hajj pilgrimage (the others being the Shahadah, declaring allegiance to God; Salat, daily prayers; Zakat, compulsory charity; Saum (Ramadan), month-long fasting). Every able-bodied, financially capable Muslim adult must make the trek to Mecca during the sacred month of Dhu al-Hijjahin, the closing month of the Islamic calendar, at least once during his or her lifetime.

## The Importance of Mecca

42:7 And so, We revealed to you an Arabic Qur'an in order to warn the Mother of the Cities (Mecca) and those around it and to warn of the Day of Forgathering which is undoubted, whereon a group shall be in Paradise and a group shall be in Hell.

5:97 Allah has made the Ka'ba, the Sacred House, a foundation of religion for all mankind, together with the Sacred Month and the sacrificial offerings and their garlands, so that you may know that Allah knows what is in the heavens and on the earth, and that Allah knows everything very well.

At the center of town is a cube made of bricks and covered by a thick black cloth, the Ka'ba (also spelled Ka'bah). Inside you will find a black stone, a meteorite about the size of a basketball, said to have been part of the original shrine built by Abraham.

3:96 The first House founded for mankind is truly that at Bakka (Mecca), blessed and a guidance to all the nations.

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3:97 Therein are clear signs and the sacred site of Abraham. Whoever enters it will be secure. It is the duty to Allah incumbent on those who can, to make the pilgrimage to the House. But with respect to those who disbelieve, Allah has no need of all mankind.

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Any non-believer caught within the sacred precinct of Mecca must convert on the spot or be beheaded forthwith.

"In 1979, non-Muslim gendarmes (GIGN, National Gendarmerie Intervention Group) had to convert to Islam before being allowed to assist the Saudis to liberate the Great Mosque which had been taken over by radical Islamist students who denounced the corruption of the regime." *Le Point*

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In one tradition, it is the stone that Adam grabbed just before he and Eve were literally flung out of Paradise and which he dragged to its present location (see *Shared Prophets: "Adam,"* Boreal Books), thereby confirming Mecca as the center of the Universe.

2:150 From whatever place you come out, turn your faces towards the Sacred Mosque. And wherever you all are, turn your faces towards it, lest people should have cause to argue with you, except for the evil-doers among them. Do not fear them, but fear Me so that I may complete My Grace upon you, and that you may be rightly guided.

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Before Muhammad's falling out with the Jews of Medina, Muslims were required to prostrate themselves in the direction of Jerusalem, not Mecca (see *Jihad in the Koran: "Medina - A Change of Direction,"* Boreal Books).

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The rituals of the pilgrimages are outlined in the Koran:

22:26 And [remember] when We appointed for Abraham the site of the (Sacred) House [saying]: "You shall not associate with Me anything and purify My House for those who circle around, those who stand up, those who kneel and those who prostrate themselves;"

22:27 And proclaim the pilgrimage to the people, and then they will come on foot or on every lean mount, coming from every deep ravine,

22:28 To witness benefits of theirs, and mention Allah's name, during certain numbered days, over such beast of the flocks as He has provided them with. Eat, then, from them and feed the wretched poor.<sup>22</sup>

22:29 Then, let them complete their self-cleansing and fulfill their vows and circle round the Ancient House (the Ka'bah).

22:30 All that; and whoever venerates the sacred things of Allah, it shall be well for him with His Lord. Cattle have been made lawful to you, except what is recited to you [to avoid]; so shun the abomination of idols, and shun false testimony.

22:31 Remain true to Allah, associating no gods with Him. He who associates anything with Allah is like one who has fallen from the sky and is snatched by the birds, or the wind hurls him down a very steep place.

22:32 All that; and he who venerates the sacred rites of Allah - it is the fruit of the piety of the hearts.

22:33 You have some benefit therefrom, for an appointed term; then their place of sacrifice is the Ancient House.

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Moududi on why Verse 22:33 was revealed:

This is to remove the misunderstanding about getting any benefit from the animals dedicated for sacrifice as they were also included in the "Symbols of Allah." This was necessitated because the Arabs believed that it was unlawful to get any benefit from them. One could neither ride on them nor carry any load on them nor consume their milk, after they had been dedicated for sacrifice during Hajj. In this verse that misunderstanding has been removed.

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<sup>22</sup> 36:47 And if it is said to them: "Spend freely from what Allah provided for you, the unbelievers say to the believers: 'Shall we feed him whom Allah would have fed, if He wished. You are only in manifest error?'"

22:34 And to every nation, We have appointed a holy rite, so that they might mention Allah's Name over whatever He has provided them with of the beasts of the flock. For your God is one God. Submit to Him and announce the good news to the humble;

22:35 Those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts tremble, and those who endure what befalls them, and those who perform the prayer and spend from what We have provided them with.

22:36 And the camels We have made for you as parts of the sacred rites of Allah. You have some good therein; so mention Allah's Name over them as they stand in line. When their sides fall to the ground, eat of them and feed the contented and the beggar. That is how We subjected them to you, that perchance you may be thankful.

22:37 Their flesh and blood will not reach Allah, but your piety will reach Him. Thus He subjected them to you, so that you may glorify Allah for guiding you. And announce the good news to the beneficent.

The penance for not completing the pilgrimages as prescribed can be found in Surah The Cow. The "proper pilgrimage" in the following is the Hajj while the "lesser pilgrimage" is the Umrah, which is not compulsory but highly recommended.

2:196 Perform the proper pilgrimage and the lesser pilgrimage for the sake of Allah. But if you are prevented, then make whatever offering (a sheep) is available; then do not shave your heads until the offering reaches its destination (where it can be slaughtered). Whoever of you is sick or has an injury in the head can atone for it by fasting, giving alms or sacrificing. When you are secure, whoever combines the lesser pilgrimage and the proper pilgrimage, should make whatever offering is available. But if he cannot, then let him fast for three days during the pilgrimage and seven days when he returns. That is a total of ten full days. This is incumbent on him whose family is not present at the Sacred Mosque. Fear Allah and know that His retribution is severe.

No sex please; we're on pilgrimage.

2:197 Pilgrimage is [during] the appointed months. He who determines to perform the pilgrimage during them, shall abstain from intercourse, debauchery and acrimonious quarrel. And whatever good you do, Allah knows it. Make provision (for your journey). The best provision, however, is the fear of Allah. So fear Me, O people of understanding.

### **Safa and Marwa**

Safa and Marwa are the names of the two mountains (hills, really) near Mecca. After Abraham's wife Sarah became pregnant, God instructed him to take Hagar and Isma'il (also spelled Ishmael)—Islam considers Hagar a legitimate wife of Abraham and Isma'il, not Isaac, the Patriarch's first-born son—from their home in Palestine to the desert wilderness of Arabia and leave them there. When their water ran out, Hagar ran frantically between the hills of Safa and Marwa until she collapsed next to her son, who struck his foot on the ground causing a spring to gush forth, the famous well of Zam Zam.

During the Hajj, pilgrims recreate Hagar's frantic search for water by running seven times between the two hills. This tradition started after Muhammad ordered the destruction of idols on each of Safa and Marwa. Still, some believers were apprehensive about being near the hills because of the previous presence of the idols. Allah sent a revelation to assuage their fears.

2:158 Surely Safa and Marwa are beacons of Allah (His Religion). He who performs the proper or the lesser pilgrimage commits no sin if he goes around them. And those who volunteer to do a good deed will find Allah Rewarding, All-Knowing.

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What Hagar did after Isma'il struck his foot may have done more than simply alter the course of scriptural history.

#### **Narrated Ibn Abbas:**

The Prophet said, "May Allah be merciful to the mother of Ishmael! If she had left the water of Zam-Zam (fountain) as it was, (without constructing a basin for keeping the water), (or said, "If she had not taken handfuls of its water"), it would have been a flowing stream.

Jurhum (an Arab tribe) came and asked her, 'May we settle at your dwelling?'

She said, 'Yes, but you have no right to possess the water.'

They agreed."

*Bukhari 40.556*

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## **Deaths, Molestations and Managing the Hajj**

Permission must be obtained from the Saudis beforehand to perform the Hajj. More than two million Muslims do so every year. The Hajj consists of four major rituals, the most important being the mandatory seven circles around the Ka'ba followed by the re-enactment of Hagar's frantic search for water. It also includes Abraham's stoning of the devil and ends with the slow ritual bleeding to death of more than a million head of cattle, sheep, goats and camels. One for every two pilgrims (2019 attendance: 2,489,406).

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The Saudis, by being in charge of Mecca, are literally in possession of an inexhaustible gold mine whose output increases as converts to Islam increase. To take further advantage of the pilgrimages, the Saudis have built, less than 300 meters from the Ka'ba, the Abraj Al Bait Complex and shopping mall with five stories and more than a 1,000 stores.

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The steady increase in the number of converts making the major pilgrimage has presented Saudis with major problems that are bound to get worse as the world's fastest growing religion explodes with new converts. While they have made progress in safeguarding the lives of pilgrims during the Hajj, disasters still occur. The latest, at this writing, was the death of more than a thousand pilgrims in 2015, most trampled to death during the stoning of the devil ritual. This ritual is probably the most difficult to manage because Abraham stoned the devil not once, not twice, but three times with seven stones reaching their target on each occasion, as must the stones of the pilgrims who launch their pebbles at pillars representing the Devil.

When he [Abraham] left Mina and was brought down to (the defile called) al-Aqaba, the Devil appeared to him at Stone-Heap of the Defile. Gabriel said to him: 'Pelt him!' so Abraham threw seven stones at him so that he disappeared



from him. Then he appeared to him at the Middle Stone-Heap. Gabriel said to him: 'Pelt him!' so he pelted him with seven stones so that he disappeared from him. Then he appeared to him at the Little Stone-Heap. Gabriel said to him: 'Pelt him!' so he pelted him with seven stones like the little stones for throwing with a sling. So the Devil withdrew from him."

*Al-Azraqi*

A problem that seems insolvable with only an estimated 1.9 billion believers (2021) and country quotas is the groping that women and girls must endure as more than two million pilgrims circle the Ka'ba while rhythmically bowing up and down. (Women who cannot get a close male relative or their husband to accompany them are no longer required to perform the Hajj.) It is next to impossible to segregate the sexes during the Hajj, therefore women and girls must silently submit, lest they be accused of arousing the males next to them, to the probing hands of men and boys whose religion does not allow them to get this close to the opposite sex as during the Hajj until they are married, and who seek to understand with their hands what their religion has denied their eyes until their wedding night.

A young woman described her experience of the Hajj this way: "I spent the entire time with a least one man's hand on my ass." She half got up from her chair, leaned forward mimicking the bowing motion, lowered her head and raised her hands. "As my hands went up," she said, "two hands would go down to grab my butt, but of course, you don't dare complain." For a woman's complaint not to be taken as testimony against herself that she invited the attention would have required four witnesses to testify otherwise. The young woman whose experience is recounted here was accompanied by her father. He was not aware of what happened to his daughter until after, even though he was close to her at all times, trapped like her in a swirling mass of humanity grinding its way around the shrouded cube that is the Ka'ba.

### **Safely Accommodating Millions More Pilgrims at the Hajj**

Two and half million is about the maximum number of pilgrims that can be accommodated for the Hajj because of the limitations of the finite space that is the Ka'ba and its surroundings. If every Muslim alive today wanted to do the Hajj, it would take more than 750 years to

accommodate them all; this means that 80% or so could end up in Hell for not fulfilling one of the mandatory five pillars. How could this have happened? Muhammad anticipated that the end of the world would occur during his lifetime or shortly thereafter (see *From Merchant to Messenger: "The Reckoning,"* Boreal Books) when there was plenty of room for everyone at the Hajj. This may have had something to do with it. We do not know.

The Hajj could safely welcome millions more pilgrims if the Hagar search for water re-enactment and the stoning of the devil ritual—which were perhaps added by the Prophet so that Mecca would not suffer economically from the Hajj being much shorter than the old pagan multi-faith festival it replaced—were made part of the lesser pilgrimage only. Today, with the number of pilgrims and other revenues, economics are no longer an issue. Millions more could be accommodated if the main ritual was made to mimic that of the Ka'ba in the sky with pilgrims entering by one door and exiting by another.

Except for an entrance and an exit door, Bait-ul-Ma'mur is almost an exact replica of the Ka'ba in Mecca and is situated directly above it, somewhere above the clouds. Like Muslims on earth, angels are required to make a pilgrimage to this Ka'ba in the sky at least once in their lifetime as immortals, and seventy thousand angels do so every day according to the Prophet who was shown the Bait-ul-Ma'mur by the angel Gabriel.

Anas b. Malik reported on the authority of Malik b. Sa sa', perhaps a person of his tribe, that the Prophet of Allah (may peace be upon him) said I was near the House (i. e. Ka'bah) in a state between sleep and wakefulness.

Then the bait-ul-Ma'mur was raised up to me.

I said: O Gabriel! what is this?

He replied: It is the Bait-ul-Ma'mur. Seventy thousand angels enter into it daily and, after they come out, they never return again.

*Sahih Muslim 1.0314*

Unlike Earth-bound pilgrims, angels do not circle the Ka'ba but enter by one door and exit by another. Much more efficient, which may explain why Muhammad once considered remodeling the Earth Ka'ba on the Ka'ba in the sky.

**Narrated Aswad:**

Ibn Az-Zubair said to me, "Aisha used to tell you secretly a number of things. What did she tell you about the Ka'ba?"

I replied, "She told me that once the Prophet said, 'O Aisha! Had not your people been still close to the pre-Islamic period of ignorance! I would have dismantled the Ka'ba and would have made two doors in it; one for entrance and the other for exit.'"

*Bukhari 3:128*

Perhaps it is time to revisit the concept and save perhaps a billion Muslims of our era from Hell's Fire. As to the groping of women, to my knowledge, there is no rule against having more than one Hajj, only that it be held during the Sacred Month. A separate Hajj for men and one for women would solve the molestation problem. The modifications suggested here will become even more pressing should intelligent life out there come to the same conclusion as intelligent life here: that there is only one god, and He is Allah, and that you must honour Him by making a pilgrimage to the place He designated as the center of the universe from wherever you are at least once in your lifetime, whatever that lifetime is.

**Post Pilgrimage Rituals and Early Departures**

2:198 It is no offence to seek a bounty from your Lord. So when you take off from 'Arafat, remember Allah (pray to Him) at the sacred monument (a mountain near Muzdalafa, where pilgrims stop for the night on their journey back from 'Arafat). Remember Him as He guided you, although you were, before that, among those in error.

2:199 Then take off from where people take off and ask Allah's forgiveness. Surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

2:200 Once you have performed your rites, remember Allah as you remember your fathers, or even with greater glorification. Some people say: "Our Lord, give us [a share] in this world." And yet they have no share in the Hereafter.

2:201 Other say: "Our Lord, give us a bounty in this world and a bounty in the Hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the Fire."

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2:202 Those have a share (reward) of what they have earned (the good they did). Allah is quick in retribution.

If you have to leave early:

2:203 And remember Allah during appointed days (the three days following the day of sacrifice); but he who hastens making them two (the reference here is to who departs on the second day) incurs no sin, if he fears Allah. So fear Allah and know that you will surely be gathered together before Him.

Don't be like Al-Akhnas.

2:204 [You will find] among the people a person whose discourse about life in this world pleases you, and who calls Allah to vouch for what is in his heart, although he is your worst enemy (Al-Akhnas Ibn Shurayq).

2:205 And when he departs, he roams the land sowing corruption therein and destroying crops and livestock; but Allah does not like corruption.

2:206 And if it is said to him: "Fear Allah", he is seized with pride in sin. Hell shall be sufficient for him and what a miserable resting-place!

Be like those who "sell themselves for the sake of Allah's Favour."

2:207 And some people sell themselves for the sake of Allah's Favour. Allah is kind to [His] servants.

Yusuf Ali's translation of Revelation 2:207:

2:207 And there is the type of man who gives his life to earn the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to (His) devotees.

### **The Anthropological Impact of the Hajj**

In response to criticism of the Catholic Church for such things as The Inquisition and The Crusades, a writer for *Le Figaro* defined the problem for those who would deny the cause and effect of the terrible violence done in Allah's Name. The following is my translation of pertinent parts of his article.

The Catholic Church is not without its faults. Its history is filled with dark pages it regrets. However, what differentiates Christianity from Islam is that Christians can always return

to the values in the Gospels and to the gentle person of Jesus and ignore a Church which has lost its way. Jesus is nonviolent. A return [to the teachings] of Jesus is the remedy for the excesses of religious institutions. Looking to the Prophet[/Koran] for guidance, on the other hand, only reinforces the hate and the violence. Islam is a religion which in both its sacred text (Koran and Book of Hadiths) and in banal rituals promotes hatred and violence. The ritual stoning of Satan every year at Mecca is not simply a re-enactment of a superstition. Its impact is anthropological. It is a ceremony to which every Muslim is encouraged to participate, and which sanctifies and encourages violence.

The greatest impact on the pilgrims' psyche may not be the banal rituals, however, but the slow, painful and public way Allah wants animals sacrificed to His Magnificence to be put to death in Revelation 22:36, a way His spokesman obviously approved.

The Prophet slaughtered seven Budn (camel) with his own hands while the camels were standing. He also sacrificed two horned rams (black and white in color) at Medina.

*Bukhari 26.772*

A calf slaughtered the ritual way may take up to eleven minutes to die: eleven agonizing minutes during which it is fully aware. In its March 8, 2012 edition, *Le Point*, the popular mainstream French (France) weekly, published excerpts from a confidential government report prepared by *Le conseil général de alimentation, de l'agriculture et des espaces ruraux* on *La protection animale en abattoir; la question particulière de l'abattoir rituel* (Animal protection in slaughterhouses; the question of ritual slaughter, my translation).

The excerpts reveal that in the year 2010, 2,068,439 cattle, 382,460 calves, 2,568,444 sheep and 35,713 goats were ritually slaughtered, i.e., not rendered unconscious before being bled to death. The longest time reported for an animal to die while fully conscious was six minutes for cattle, almost twice that time for calves at eleven minutes, and five minutes for sheep. No time was available for goats or camels. The report goes on to describe, in great detail, the pain and suffering of animals killed in the way Allah prefers that Muhammad demonstrated at every opportunity.

The mass slaughter of animals that occurs during the Hajj and the one-day Festival of Sacrifice, celebrated over all the Muslim world, has

to have a conditioning effect on witnesses to the slaughter, especially young men and boys, making them immune to the pain and suffering experienced by living things cruelly put to death. It may even kindle a love of killing in the cruelest way, whether it be an animal or an unbeliever, and they will have the example of what Allah did to Abraham's father to fall back on.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

The Prophet said, "On the Day of Resurrection Abraham will meet his father Azar whose face will be dark and covered with dust.

(The Prophet Abraham will say to him): 'Didn't I tell you not to disobey me?' His father will reply: 'Today I will not disobey you.'

Abraham will say: 'O Lord! You promised me not to disgrace me on the Day of Resurrection; and what will be more disgraceful to me than cursing and dishonoring my father?'

Then Allah will say (to him): 'I have forbidden Paradise for the disbelievers.'

Then he will be addressed, 'O Abraham! Look! What is underneath your feet?'

He will look and there he will see a Dhabh (an animal), blood-stained, which will be caught by the legs and thrown in the (Hell) Fire."

*Bukhari 55.569*

## Ramadan

2:183 O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may be God-fearing;

2:184 For a fixed number of days. If any of you is sick or on a journey, then [an equal] number of other days. And those who find it extremely difficult (to fast) should, as a penance, feed a poor man. He who spontaneously does more good (increases the penance), it is for his own good. To fast is better for you, if only you knew.

2:185 The month of Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed, providing guidance for mankind, with clear verses to guide and to distinguish right from wrong. He who witnesses that month should fast it. But if anyone is sick or on a journey, [he ought to fast] a number of other days. Allah desires ease and does not desire hardship for you, that you may complete the total number (of fasting days); glorify Allah for His Guidance, and that you may be thankful.

Ramadan is observed during the ninth month of the Muslim year, the Month of Great Heat (see Chapter "Allah's Calendar"), which is also the meaning of Ramadan. During this month, Muslims who are fit enough to do so are expected to fast from sunrise to sunset. Only a small portion of the Koran was actually revealed during this month. The complete book was communicated to Muhammad over a period of approximately twenty years. Verse 2:185 had been interpreted as the Month of Ramadan being the month the existence of a book in Paradise—written by God with instructions on how He should be worshipped and how we should be behaved, if we did not want to end up as combustibles for His Hell—was first made known to Muhammad, who had withdrawn to a cave above Mecca to meditate and pray. See *Shared Prophets: "How the Koran Came To Be,"* Boreal Books.

Muhammad used to wait until the feast of Id-ul-fitr (also spelled Eid al-Fitr), which marks the end of Ramadan—and Id-ul-Adha (also

spelled Eid-ul-Adha), which is celebrated on the final day of the Hajj – with his followers more convinced than ever of the need to rid the world of unbelievers, after a period of intense immersion in the Koran, to give his army its marching orders.

**Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri:**

The Prophet used to proceed to the Musalla (open space outside a mosque that is mainly used for praying) on the days of Id-ul-fitr and Id-ul-Adha; the first thing to begin with was the prayer and after that he would stand in front of the people and the people would keep sitting in their rows. Then he would preach to them, advise them and give them orders, (i.e. Khutba). And after that if he wished to send an army for an expedition, he would do so.

*Bukhari 15.76*

**Ramadan in the Land of the Midnight Sun**

What are believers who live above the Arctic circle to do when the fast of Ramadan coincides with a period in which the sun does not set? Muhammad, who may not have been aware of the sun not setting above the Arctic Circle and below the Antarctic Circle during their respective summers, has nothing to say on the matter, leaving Islamic scholars to sort it out for themselves. Some scholars have “suggested fasting by the clock instead of by the sun, using the sunrise and sunset times of the holy city of Mecca as opposed to local time.” This could contravene the Koran. Allah, in the following revelation, makes it abundantly clear that it is only after darkness has fallen that it is halal to eat, drink and fornicate during the month of Ramadan, and to stop making merry and return to fasting and abstinence when “you can discern the white thread from the black thread of dawn.”

2:187 It has been made lawful to you on the night of fasting to approach your wives; they are a raiment for you, and you are a raiment for them. Allah knows that you used to betray yourselves, but He accepted your repentance and pardoned you. So now get to them (the wives) and seek what Allah has ordained for you. Eat and drink until you can discern the white thread from the black thread of dawn. Then complete the fast till nightfall. But do not approach them (the wives) while you are in devotion at the mosque. Those are the



bounds of Allah; do not approach them. Thus Allah makes clear his revelations to mankind, that they may fear Him.

Others have suggested that "those who live close to the Arctic Circle, where they have continual night or continual day for several months, should look to the closest city to them where night and day are distinct." That last suggestion is moot in Canada where it would still make for more than twenty-three hours without food if the closest city is Inuvik, Yellowknife or Whitehorse. The issue as to when to eat and when not to eat, when to have sex and when not to have sex, when to pray, etc., becomes even more confusing when Ramadan falls in the period when the days are one long, dark night.

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Two hadiths about the circumstances surrounding the communication of Verse 2:187, which may have been sent in stages:

**Narrated Al-Bara:**

It was the custom among the companions of Muhammad that if any of them was fasting and the food was presented (for breaking his fast), but he slept before eating, he would not eat that night and the following day till sunset.

Qais bin Sirma-al-Ansari was fasting and came to his wife at the time of Iftar (breaking one's fast) and asked her whether she had anything to eat.

She replied, "No, but I would go and bring some for you."

He used to do hard work during the day, so he was overwhelmed by sleep and slept.

When his wife came and saw him, she said, "Disappointment for you."

When it was midday on the following day, he fainted and the Prophet was informed about the whole matter and the following verses were revealed: "You are permitted To go to your wives (for sexual relation) at the night of fasting."

So, they were overjoyed by it. And then Allah also revealed: "And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (of the night)." (2.187)

*Bukhari 31.139*

**Narrated Sahl bin Saud:**

When the following verses were revealed: 'Eat and drink until the white thread appears to you, distinct from the black thread' and of dawn was not revealed, some people who intended to fast, tied black and white threads to their legs and went on eating till they differentiated between the two. Allah then revealed the words, 'of dawn', and it became clear that meant night and day.

*Bukhari 31.141*

**IF TRUTH BE TOLD**

## **Allah on the Present Life**

28:60 Whatever you have been given is merely the pleasure of this life and its finery; but what Allah has in His possession is better and more lasting. Do you not understand?

If you are content with your life in the here-and-now, the Fire will be waiting.

10:7 Those who do not hope to meet Us and are content with the present life and are at ease in it, and those who pay no heed to our signs;

10:8 Their refuge is the Fire, on account of [what] they used to do.

Allah never misses an opportunity to remind people how life is better in the Hereafter – not that life in the here-and-now cannot be pleasant, if only for a short time.

13:26 Allah enlarges and restricts the provision to whom He pleases. They rejoice at this worldly life, but worldly life is nothing but a fleeting pleasure compared with the life to come.

Then there are those who not only prefer this life, but would convince others that the present life has a lot going for it.

14:2 Allah to whom belongs what is in the heavens and on the earth. And woe betide the unbelievers, for a terrible punishment!

14:3 Those who prefer the present life to the Hereafter and bar others from Allah's Path and seek to make it crooked, are far astray.

Losers!

16:107 That is because they love the present life more than the Hereafter, and because Allah does not guide the unbelievers.

16:108 They are those whose hearts, ears and eyes Allah has sealed; and those are the heedless.

16:109 There is no doubt that in the Hereafter they shall be the losers.

Your rank in in the Hereafter will better than any rank on Earth.

17:19 But as for those who desire the Hereafter and strive for it, as they should, while they are believers, their effort will be appreciated.

17:20 For them all – these and those – We shall provide from Allah’s Bounty; and the Bounty of your Lord will not be denied to anyone.

17:21 Behold how We have made some of them surpass the others, although the Hereafter is far higher in rank and more preferable.

If you don’t care for amusements or sports then Paradise is the place for you!

29:64 The present life is nothing but amusement and sport, but the Hereafter is real life, if only they knew.

Don’t be deluded by the present life.

35:5 O people, Allah’s Promise is true, so do not let the present life delude you and do not let the Deceiver (Satan) delude you concerning Allah.

35:6 Satan is an enemy of yours, so regard him as an enemy. He only calls upon his partisans that they may be companions of the Blazing Fire.

35:7 Those who disbelieve will incur a terrible punishment and those who believe and do the righteous deeds will earn forgiveness and a great wage.

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2:168 O people eat from the earth’s lawful and pleasant produce, and do not follow in Satan’s footsteps; for he is a manifest enemy of yours.

2:169 He commands you to do evil and indecency and to impute to Allah what you do not know.

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If you want more from this life, you may get it, but eternal Paradise will then be out of the question.

42:20 He who wishes the tillage of the Hereafter, We will increase his tillage, and he who wishes the tillage of the present life, We will give him thereof; but in the Hereafter, he will have no share.

42:21 Or do they have associates who enacted for them as a religion that for which Allah did not give leave? But for the Word of Decision (the final judgement), judgement would have been pronounced upon them. Surely, the wrongdoers will suffer a painful punishment.

The present life as “the enjoyment of vanity,” among other things.

57:20 Know that the present life is but sport and diversion, adornment, boasting among you and rivalry in amassing wealth and children. It is like rain whose vegetation delighted the unbelievers, then it withered and you see it turning yellow and then it becomes stubble. In the Hereafter there is a terrible punishment, forgiveness from Allah and good pleasure. The present life is but the enjoyment of vanity.

Live a passionless present life and Paradise will be waiting.

79:34 Then when the Great Calamity (*Judgement Day*) shall come;

79:35 On the Day that man will remember what he has done;

79:36 And Hell shall be exhibited to whoever can see.

79:37 Then, as to him who has transgressed,

79:38 And preferred the present life;

79:39 Hell, indeed, is the refuge.

79:40 But as to him who fears the station of his Lord, and forbids his soul from passion;

79:41 Then, Paradise is the refuge.

One last reminder that life is better in the Hereafter, and you have Abraham and Moses’ written guarantees.

87:14 He who cleanses himself shall prosper;

87:15 Remembering your Lord’s Name and praying.

87:16 No, you prefer the present life;

87:17 Whereas the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

87:18 That, indeed, is in the ancients scrolls,

87:19 The scrolls of Abraham and Moses.

## Allah's Charity Is Not All It Seems

Charity (Zakat), the third of the Five Pillars of Islam, is also about worshipping Allah in an indirect sort of way: do it “for Allah’s Sake” and, like the other four forms of worship you observe, you will be rewarded. Allah does not expect His proudest creation to do the right thing unless a reward is in the offering. Altruism, in the Koran, is never assumed, even where charity is concerned.

2:272 You (*Muhammad*) are not responsible for guiding them. Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever good you spend is for yourselves; for you do not spend except for Allah’s Sake. And whatever you spend will yield good returns (it will be fully rewarded). And you shall not be wronged.

To spend for “Allah’s Sake” is also to spend “in the Way of Allah.”

2:262 Those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allah, and then do not follow what they spend with taunts and injury, their reward is with their Lord. They shall have nothing to fear and shall not grieve.

Who gives charity and then injures the recipient?

2:263 A kind word and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury. Allah is Self-Sufficient and Forbearing.

How *not* to practice charity:

2:267 O believers, spend (as charity) of the good things you have earned and from what We bring out of the earth for you. Do not turn to the vile and spend from it. For you, yourselves, would not accept it except indulgently. Know that Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy.

Exceptionally, Pickthall is clearer on the concept:

2:267 O ye who believe! Spend of the good things which ye have earned, and of that which We bring forth from the earth for you, and seek not the bad (with intent) to spend thereof (in charity) when ye would not take it for yourselves save



with disdain; and know that Allah is Absolute, Owner of Praise.

Charity is charity: the more, the better. A rich man making a public donation usually encourages other wealthy individuals to do the same, and therefore it is considered a good thing by most people. This begs the question as to why Allah preferred that donations be kept secret.

2:270 And whatever expense you spend and whatever vow you vow are known to Allah. The evil-doers shall have no supporters.

2:271 To give alms publicly is commendable; but to keep it secret and give it to the poor is better for you, and will atone for some of your sins. Allah has knowledge of what you do.

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The war on unbelievers was generating a tremendous amount of wealth, which Muhammad controlled (see *Jihad in the Koran: "The Booty,"* Boreal Books). You could have expected the needy to descend on his abode in Medina in droves looking for a handout. God's spokesman obviously anticipated this and issued dissuading hadiths, such as the following where the poor just had to hope that the wealthy became aware of their needs and gave without their asking.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "The poor person is not the one who goes round the people and ask them for a mouthful or two (of meals) or a date or two but the poor is that who has not enough (money) to satisfy his needs and whose condition is not known to others, that others may give him something in charity, and who does not beg of people."

*Bukhari 24.557*

Allah requesting that charity be given in secret may have been His way of shielding His spokesman from having to disclose how much of his wealth he actually gave to the poor and destitute.

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Revelation 2:271 made it easier for the rich to say they have given in private when they have done no such thing. That said, Allah promises to reward both the one who gives in private *and* the one who does so in public.

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2:274 Those who spend their wealth day and night, in private and in public, will be rewarded by their Lord. They have nothing to fear and they shall not grieve.

Alms were part of the war effort, and those most entitled to your charitable donations in this regard were the poor fighting to extend Allah's Dominion.

2:273 [Alms is] for the poor who are held up [fighting] in the Way of Allah, and thus cannot travel in the land. The ignorant think they are rich because they are too proud [to beg]. But you can recognize them by their mark. They do not importune people for alms. Whatever good you spend is known to Allah.

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Allah instinctively appreciated the strategic value of helping people in need to recruit for His Cause—an understanding of the persuasive power of giving that was not lost on the Islamists who, during the catastrophic flooding in Pakistan in 2010, disrupted aid from Western countries while facilitating the distribution of inadequate contributions from Islamic regimes; or in Somalia, where Allah's militants stopped food shipments from Western nations from reaching famine-ravaged portions of the country.

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You will not be reprieved from performing charity after you are dead. The Compassionate does not grant reprieves.

63:10 Spend freely from what We have provided for you, before death overtakes each one of you. Then he will say: "Lord, if only you would reprieve me for a short period, so that I may give in charity and be one of the righteous."

63:11 Allah will not reprieve a single soul when its term comes. Allah is Fully Aware of what you do.

That the obligatory charity that is the Zakat was a form of extortion in Muhammad's time is evident in Moududi's explanation as to why the following verse was sent down.

49:6 O believers, if a sinner brings you a piece of news, make sure you do not cause some people distress unwittingly, and so regret subsequently what you have done.

Moududi:

Most of the commentators have expressed the view that this verse was sent down concerning Walid bin 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait. Its background is this: When the tribe of the Bani al-Mustaliq embraced Islam, the Holy Prophet sent Walid bin 'Uqbah to collect the zakat from them. When he arrived in their territory, he became scared due to some reason and without visiting the people of the tribe returned to Madinah and complained to the Holy Prophet that they had refused to pay the zakat and had even wanted to kill him. On hearing this the Holy Prophet became very angry and he made up his mind to dispatch a contingent to punish those people. In the meantime, the chief of the Bani al-Mustaliq, Harith bin Dirar (father of Juwairiyah, wife of the Holy Prophet), arrived at the head of a deputation, and submitted: "By God, we did not at all see Walid; therefore, there could be no question of refusing to pay the zakat and wanting to kill him ... At this, this verse was sent down.

Allah Himself admits that the Zakat was not so much a charity but an "alms-tax" – and not paying your taxes is usually not an option.

2:277 Verily, those who believe, do good works, perform the prayers and give the alms-tax, shall find their reward with their Lord. They have nothing to fear, and they shall not grieve.

Those who fail to pay "the alms-tax" on taxable goods will wish they had when they meet the Ultimate Collector.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "On the Day of Resurrection the Kanz (Treasure or wealth of which, Zakat has not been paid) of anyone of you will appear in the shape of a huge bald headed poisonous male snake and its owner will run away from it, but it will follow him and say, 'I am your Kanz.'"

The Prophet added, "By Allah, that snake will keep on following him until he stretches out his hand and let the snake swallow it."

Allah's Apostle added, "If the owner of camels does not pay their Zakat, then, on the Day of Resurrection those camels will come to him and will strike his face with their hooves..."

*Bukhari 86.89*

After the death of Muhammad, the first of three brutal civil wars, the War of the Apostates, was fought—in part, over his successor Abu Bakr's demand that the Arabs now pay him the Zakat.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Abu Bakr said, "By Allah! I will fight whoever differentiates between prayers and Zakat as Zakat is the right to be taken from property (according to Allah's Orders). By Allah! If they refused to pay me even a kid they used to pay to Allah's Apostle, I would fight with them for withholding it."

Umar said, "By Allah: It was nothing, but I noticed that Allah opened Abu Bakr's chest towards the decision to fight, therefore I realized that his decision was right."

*Bukhari 84.59*

Many believers considered the Zakat a contribution to the Prophet's successful attempt to Islamize (sic) the Peninsula by force<sup>23</sup> that would end with his passing, and for that they were slaughtered in the thousands. At the battle of Yamama, which put an end to the first civil war and led to the compilation of the first Koran (see *Shared Prophets: "The First Korans,"* Boreal Books), an estimated 7,000 people—mostly believers whom Abu Bakr considered apostates for refusing to pay him the obligatory charity—were surrounded and shown no mercy.

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<sup>23</sup> Shortly after the fall of Mecca (see *Jihad in the Koran: "Mecca Surrenders,"* Boreal Books), Muhammad called upon all inhabitants of the Peninsula to become Muslims within four months or face death or enslavement. With the Meccans on board, the Prophet quickly liquidated the remaining opposition to Islamic rule on the Peninsula.

## **Allah Does Not Care for Homosexuals**

29:44 Allah created the heavens and the earth in truth. Surely there is in that a sign for those who believe.

29:45 Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and perform the prayer. Prayer surely forbids the foul act and abomination. Allah's remembrance is greater and Allah knows what you do.

Allah will remind the believers about what He thinks of "the foul act" in five of the eight retellings of the story of Lot (see *Shared Prophets: Biblical Figures in the Koran*, "Lot," Boreal Books).

## **Allah Despises the Riba-Eaters**

**Narrated Samura bin Jundab:**

The Prophet said: "This night I dreamt that two men came and took me to a Holy land whence we proceeded on till we reached a river of blood, where a man was standing, and on its bank was standing another man with stones in his hands. The man in the middle of the river tried to come out, but the other threw a stone in his mouth and forced him to go back to his original place. So, whenever he tried to come out, the other man would throw a stone in his mouth and force him to go back to his former place."

I asked, "Who is this?"

I was told, "The person in the river was a Riba-eater (a lender who insist on charging interest on borrowed money)."

*Bukhari 34.298*

Allah is not given to *splitting hairs* on practices He considers a sin. The verses pertaining to the charging of interest are unequivocal, and the punishment they foretell for a believer who charges interest on money lent for whatever purpose, in whatever amount, is of the most brutal kind. For Allah, earning even a penny's worth of interest is a sin. Usury is normally defined as "the act of lending money at an exorbitant rate of interest." Interest may be a more accurate word than Allah's use of usury when referring to His prohibition against charging interest, whether simple or compounded, on borrowed money since any amount is a grave sin.

2:276 Allah prohibits usury and does not bless it; but He compounds alms. And Allah does not like a vicious unbeliever.

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3:130 O believers, do not devour usury, double and redoubled, and fear Allah that you may prosper!

30:39 And what you give in usury, so as to multiply people's wealth, will not multiply in Allah's Sight; but what you give in alms, desiring thereby Allah's Face. Such are the real multipliers.

Perhaps to emphasize how serious He is about His proscription against making money from money, Allah promises an all-out war, with Muhammad at His side, against those who would dare to do so.

2:278 O believers, fear Allah and forgo what is still due from usury, if you are [true] believers.

2:279 But if you fail to do that, take note of a war [waged] by Allah and His Messenger. But if you repent you will have your capital, neither wronging (sic) nor being wronged.

To be safe, make a charitable donation of moneys owing.

2:280 If he [the debtor] is in straights, then allow days of grace until he is at ease. But to remit [the debt] as alms is better for you, if only you knew.

2:281 Fear a Day when you will return to Allah; then each soul will be rewarded fully for what it has earned (the good works it has done); and none shall be wronged.

Some of the believers may have been confused as to the difference between increasing wealth through strictly monetary transactions versus by trade. Why was one type of transaction a sin, and the other was not? While Allah uncharacteristically does not go into detail in the following revelation, He informs the believers that one is not like the other, and that they had better know the difference if they don't want to burn in Hell for an eternity.

2:275 Those who take usury will not rise up (On the Day of Resurrection) except like those maddened by Satan's touch. For they claim that trading is like usury, whereas Allah has made trading lawful and prohibited usury. Hence, he who has received an admonition from his Lord and desisted can keep what he has taken (prior to the prohibition) and his fate is to be left to Allah. But those who revert [to it (taking usury)] - those are the people of the Fire in which they shall abide forever.

The prohibition against interest may be another prohibition that the Koran borrowed from the Torah, although that book does not explicitly forbid Jews from charging interest to non-Jews.

4:160 And it was on account of the wrongdoing of the Jews that We forbade them certain good things which had been lawful to them; as well as on account of their frequent debarring [of people] from Allah's path;

4:161 Their taking usury, although they had been forbidden from doing it and their devouring other people's wealth unjustly. We have prepared for the unbelievers among them a very painful punishment!

4:162 But those firmly rooted in knowledge among them and the believers do believe in what was revealed to you (*Muhammad*) and what was revealed before you. Those who perform the prayers, give the alms and believe in Allah and the Last Day – to these We shall grant a great reward!

A loan to Allah does not appear to be subjected to the same conditions as a loan to mortals.

2:244 Fight for the Cause of Allah and know that Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

2:245 Who is it that will lend Allah a generous loan (spends money in His way), so that He might multiply it for him manifold? Allah provides sparingly and generously, and to Him you shall be returned.

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57:18 Surely, the men and women who give in charity and who have lent Allah a fair loan will receive its double and they will have a generous wage.

### **Muhammad as Borrower**

Judging from Muhammad's experience as a borrower, it is not inconceivable that, if it could have been done, he would have suggested to Allah that He not only prohibit the charging of interest, but the practice of loans altogether; that loans be considered gifts from Him. Muhammad owed much of his success as a merchant to Khadijah (see *From Merchant to Messenger: "Wives of the Prophet,"* Boreal Books), a wealthy older Meccan woman who hired and later married the



allegedly illiterate young man, to accompany her caravans to and from Damascus. After discovering Islam some fifteen years later, her now forty-something husband would spend all of their wealth on the promotion of his new religion. It was not enough and he was forced to borrow money to simply survive. His main source of borrowed funds was his uncle Abbas.

According to Gheorghiu, author of *La vie de Mahomet*, Muhammad still owed his uncle the equivalent of twenty ounces of gold when he was found among the seventy Meccans captured at the famous Battle of Badr (see *Jihad in the Koran: "Battle of Badr,"* Boreal Books). After much discussion as to whether they should be burnt alive or decapitated by a close Muslim relative to avoid having to pay blood money to the family, the merchant in Muhammad decided—after seeking the angel Gabriel's advice, of course—that the prisoners or their families could pay a ransom to obtain their freedom. Abbas proposed to his nephew that his ransom be considered the substantial amount of money he still owed him. Muhammad would have none of it. He told his uncle that he would have to do better than that because, "those twenty ounces of gold, was something of yours that the mighty and powerful Allah, gave to me." The kin whose money kept his nephew's dream alive after Khadijah's ran out paid the additional ransom, and wisely forgot all about the loan.

## **Allah Loves His Cattle**

Cattle, in the Koran, are mentioned more often than any other animal, even the camel. It is obvious that God is extremely proud of, if not mesmerized by, this four-legged versatile creation of His.

### **An Ode to Cattle**

16:5 And the cattle He created for you. Therein are warmth and other advantages, and from them you eat.

16:6 An in them you witness beauty, when you bring them back [home], and when you drive them out for pasture.

16:7 And they carry your burdens to a distant land which you could only reach with great hardship. Surely your Lord is Clement and Merciful.

Some cattle may not have appreciated being beasts of burden.

#### **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "While a shepherd was amongst his sheep, a wolf attacked them and took away one sheep. When the shepherd chased the wolf, the wolf turned towards him and said, 'Who will be its guard on the day of wild animals when nobody except I will be its shepherd.'

And while a man was driving a cow with a load on it, it turned towards him and spoke to him saying, 'I have not been created for this purpose, but for ploughing.'"

The people said, "Glorified be Allah."

The Prophet said, "But I believe in it and so does Abu Bakr and Umar."

*Bukhari 57.15*

### **Brought Down from Paradise**

Allah sent a small herd of sixteen of the ruminants down from Paradise after He banished the first couple to Earth.

39:6 He created you from a single soul; then, out of it, He made its mate, and brought down for you of the cattle eight pairs. He creates you in your mothers' bellies, one creation after another, in three shadows of darkness.<sup>24</sup> That indeed is Allah, your Lord. His is the dominion; there is no god but He. How, then, are you diverted?

Of humans, God “made couples”; likewise, he did so “of the cattle pairs” so that He may make more of each.

42:10 Whatever you disagree upon, unto Allah is the decision thereof. That, then, is Allah, my Lord. In Him I have put my trust, and unto Him I repent.

42:11 Creator of the heavens and earth. Of yourselves He has made couples and of the cattle pairs, multiplying you thereby. Nothing is like unto Him; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

42:12 To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth. He expends the provision to whom He wishes or constricts it. Indeed, He has knowledge of everything.

### **Water, Men and Cattle**

Never forget that it is Allah who sends the water which makes things grow that both humans and cattle can eat. Just don't be smug about it, or else...

10:24 The present life is like water We send down from the sky, causing the vegetation of the earth, from which people and cattle eat, to grow luxuriant. But when the earth puts on its ornamental garb and is adorned, and the people think they are able to get what they want from it, Our Retribution comes upon it day or night, making its produce like a cropped harvest, as if it had never flourished before. Thus We expound Our Revelations to people who reflect.

A mix of revealed truths about what Allah discussed in the previous verse ends in a revelation not unlike the “dust to dust” verse of Genesis.

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<sup>24</sup> 1) The anterior abdominal wall, 2) the uterine wall, and 3) the amniochorionic membrane. The idea that Allah knew so much about embryology is considered a miracle of the Koran.

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20:53 He who made the earth a bed for you, and opened routes for you in it, and sent down water from the sky; from it we bring forth diverse pairs of plants.

20:54 Eat and pasture your cattle. In that there are signs for people of understanding.

20:55 From it We have created you, and into it We shall return you, and from it We shall raise you a second time.

Water was sent down to bring an unnamed town back to life and quench the thirst of every human and cattle that existed at the time.

25:48 And it is He Who sent the wind as good news before His Mercy; and We have sent down from heaven pure water,

25:49 To bring to life thereby a dead town, and give it to drink to such numerous cattle and humans as We have created.

25:50 And We have alternated it among them, so that they may remember. However, most men have refused all but thanklessness.

Not only does Allah send down the water that makes things grow “that their cattle and their own folk eat,” but He also makes it flow where it is needed.

32:27 Do they not see that We conduct the water unto the barren land, bringing forth thereby vegetation, from which their cattle and their own folk eat? Do they not see, then?

Allah does not give names to cattle.

5:103 Allah has not prescribed the designation of Bahirah, Sa'ibah, Wasilah or Hami (cattle sacrificed to idols at the Ka'ba); but the unbelievers impute falsehood to Allah, and most of them do not understand.

### **Allah on the Versatility of His Cattle**

6:142 Of cattle there are some for burden and some for slaughter. Eat of what we provided for you and do not follow in the footsteps of the Devil. Surely he is a manifest enemy of yours.

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36:71 Have they not seen that We have created for them, of Our Handiwork, cattle whereof they are now the owners?

36:72 And We subdued them to them, so that of some are their mounts and of some they eat.

36:73 And from them they have many benefits and beverages. Will they not, then, give thanks.

Allah seems to be under the impression that an udder is an extension of a cow's stomach.

16:66 And there is, surely, a lesson for you in the cattle. We give you to drink of what is in their bellies, between the bowels and blood, pure milk which is palatable to the drinkers.

From their hides you can make tents and from their "fur," "wool," and "hair" you can make furnishings.

16:80 Allah has made of your homes places for you to dwell in, and has made for you from the hides of cattle light houses to carry on the day of moving and on the day of settling down. And from their wools and their furs and their hair He [has made for you] furnishings and means of enjoyment for a while.

It is not clear, in the very next revelation, whether "and has given you garments to protect you from the heat" refers to the hides of cattle.

16:81 Allah has made for you from what He created, sunshades, and from the mountains, places of retreats, and has given you garments to protect you from the heat and coats of mail to protect you while fighting. Thus he perfects His blessings to you so that you may submit.

16:82 Then, if they turn away, your duty (*Muhammad*) is to deliver the clear Message.

16:83 They know Allah's Blessing, then they deny it; and most of them are ungrateful.

Another mention of milk originating from the bellies of cows.

23:21 And surely in the cattle you have a lesson. We give you to drink what is in their bellies, and you have therein many uses, and from them you eat.

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Cattle are not unlike ships.

23:22 And on them and on the ships you are borne.

Cattle can be anything you can imagine.

40:79 It is Allah Who created for you the cattle, so that some you may ride<sup>25</sup> and some you may eat.

40:80 And in them, you have other benefits as well; and upon them you may attain any need within your breasts. And upon them and upon the ships you may be borne along.

Another mention of that dead town brought back to life with just enough water is followed by another comparison of cattle to ships with Allah as the shipwright.

43:11 And Who sent down water from heaven in set measure; and so We revived therewith a dead town. Thus you shall be brought forth;

43:12 And Who created all the pairs and made for you such ships and cattle as you can mount.

43:13 That you might sit upon their backs, then remember the Grace of your Lord when you are seated thereon and say: "Glory be to Him Who subjected this to us, whereas we were not equal to it.

43:14 "And, surely, unto our Lord we shall return."

### **Slicing the Ears of Cattle**

Herdsmen, at the time of Muhammad, marked livestock that was no longer suitable for breeding purposes by slicing an ear. Allah considered this altering His creation.

4:118 Cursed by Allah. For he (the Devil) said: "I shall take from your servants for myself a fixed number,

4:119 "And I will lead them astray, will raise their expectations and order them to cut off the cattle's ears. I will order them to alter Allah's creation." Whoever takes the Devil for companion, instead of Allah, has incurred a great loss!

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<sup>25</sup> 16:8 And horses, mules and asses [He created] for you to mount, and as an adornment; and He creates what you do not know.

4:120 He promises them and raises their expectations; but the Devil promises them nothing but illusion.

4:121 Those people, their shelter shall be Hell and they shall find no escape from it.

4:122 But those who have believed and done the good deeds, We shall admit them into Gardens beneath which rivers flow, dwelling therein forever. This is Allah's True Promise; and who is more truthful in speech than Allah?

Scholars have interpreted Allah's revelation about cutting the ears of cattle as a decree against cruelty to animals. The gratuitous cruelty that is inherent in the ritual slaughter of animals would belie this.

## Oaths

If an oath prevents you from doing good, break it!

2:224 Do not make Allah in your oaths (when you swear by Allah) a hindrance to doing good, to fearing Allah and to making peace between people. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

The example of the Prophet:

### **Narrated Zahdam:**

Once I went to Allah's Apostle with a group of Al-Ash'ariyin, and met him while he was angry, distributing some camels of Rakat. We asked for mounts but he took an oath that he would not give us any mounts, and added, "I have nothing to mount you on."

In the meantime some camels of booty were brought to Allah's Apostle and he asked twice, "Where are Al-Ash'ariyin?" So he gave us five white camels with big humps.

We stayed for a short while (after we had covered a little distance), and then I said to my companions, "Allah's Apostle has forgotten his oath. By Allah, if we do not remind Allah's Apostle of his oath, we will never be successful."

So we returned to the Prophet and said, "O Allah's Apostle! We asked you for mounts, but you took an oath that you would not give us any mounts; we think that you have forgotten your oath."

He said, "It is Allah Who has given you mounts. By Allah, and Allah willing, if I take an oath and later find something else better than that, then I do what is better and expiate my oath."

*Bukhari 67.427*



Thoughtless oaths are forgiven.

2:225 Allah will not take you to task for what is not meant [to be said] in your oaths; but He will take you to task for what you mean in your hearts. Allah is Forgiving, Clement.

Oaths are not for sale!

3:77 Those who sell the covenant of Allah and their own oaths for a small price will have no share in the life to come; Allah will neither speak to them nor look at them nor purify them on the Day of Resurrection. A painful punishment is in store for them!

When and why this revelation was sent.

**Narrated Abdullah bin Mas'ud:**

Allah's Apostle said, "Whoever takes a false oath so as to take the property of a Muslim (illegally) will meet Allah while He will be angry with him."

Al-Ash'ath said: "By Allah, that saying concerned me. I had common land with a Jew, and the Jew later on denied my ownership, so I took him to the Prophet who asked me whether I had a proof of my ownership. When I replied in the negative, the Prophet asked the Jew to take an oath."

I said, "O Allah's Apostle! He will take an oath and deprive me of my property."

So, Allah revealed the following verse: "Verily! Those who purchase a little gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths." (3.77)

*Bukhari 41.599*

A solemnly-affirmed oath is not a trivial thing.

16:91 Fulfil the Covenant of Allah when you make a covenant [with Him], and do not break the oaths after you solemnly affirmed them, taking Allah as witness. Surely Allah knows what you do.

A parable about oaths:

16:92 And do not be like her who unravels her yarn after she has spun it first; taking your oaths as means of deception

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among you, because one party is more numerous than another. Allah only tries you by this, and He will certainly make clear to you on the Day of Resurrection that whereon you differ.

The parable about the yarn spinner, according to Moududi, is supposed to be a warning to the Jews about breaking their oaths to Arabs, which brings up the next verse in this series where Allah reveals that if He had been in the mood, He would have made Jews and Arabs “one nation.”

16:93 Had Allah pleased, He would have made you one nation, but He leads whom He pleases astray and guides whom He pleases. And you will surely be questioned about what you did.

Do not use oaths to deceive.

16:94 And do not make your oaths as means of deception among you, lest a foot should slip (lest your faith be shaken) after being firm, and lest you should taste evil on account of debarring others from Allah’s Path. Grievous will be your punishment!

It will be to your disadvantage if you break your oath (Revelation 48:10).

48:7 To Allah belongs the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is All-Mighty and Wise.

48:8 Indeed, We have sent you forth as a witness, a bearer of good news and a warner;

48:9 That you (people of Medina) may believe in Allah and His Messenger, to honour, revere and glorify Him, morning and evening.

48:10 Those who pay you (the Prophet) homage are actually paying Allah homage. Allah’s Hand is above their hands; so he who breaks his oath only breaks it to his loss, and he who fulfills what he has pledge unto Allah, He will grant him a great wage.

Those who honour their oaths will inherit Paradise.

23:8 Those who honour their trusts and promises;

23:9 And observe their prayers;

23:10 Those are the inheritors,

23:11 Who will inherit Paradise wherein they will dwell forever.

# Slavery

Sometimes it is difficult to ascertain the moral or ethical imperative on which Allah bases His instructions; for example, His condoning slavery and condemning the practice of lending money at interest. Both convey an economic advantage to the slave-owner and the money-lender respectively. However, the transaction involving only money can be to the benefit of both contracting parties. The transaction in humanity, on the other hand, usually benefits only the title-holder while confining the *other* (the slave) to a life of servitude.

## A God's Dilemma

Allah seems to be of two minds when it comes to slavery. The Koran unambiguously condones slavery, and what the Koran allows, no one can deny; that would be like contradicting God. Yet, in many verses like those that follow, God appears to go out of his way to find excuses for freeing slaves. He even calls "righteous" those who would spend their money "for the freeing of slaves."

2:177 Righteousness is not to turn your faces towards the East and the West; the righteous is he who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the Prophets; who gives of his money, in spite of loving it, to the near of kin, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarers and the beggars, and for the freeing of slaves; who performs the prayers and pays the alms-tax. Such are also those who keep their pledges once they have made them, and endure patiently privation, affliction and in times of fighting (in the Way of Allah). Those are the truthful and the God-Fearing.

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Allah's suggestion that believers spend some of their wealth "for the freeing of slaves" would have meant little, if anything, for females in bondage. Under normal circumstances, you only freed slaves that had the means to look after themselves. In Muhammad's time, and in traditional Islamic society, the forced seclusion of women and their

property-like status meant that a female slave could never be expected to look after herself. Therefore, her slave status was more or less a lifetime thing, unless she was a believer and her proprietor decided to make her one of his four permanent wives or give her in marriage to another believer in return for some benefit or to settle an obligation.

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One of the contrivances that God uses to compel slave owners to free some of their slaves was requiring the freeing of a slave as penance for a transgression, such as part of the payment for the accidental killing of a believer by another believer.

4:92 It is not given to a believer to kill another believer except by mistake; and he who kills a believer by mistake should free a slave who is a believer and pay blood-money to his relatives, unless they remit it as alms. If he happens to belong to a people who are your enemies, but he is a believer, then you should free a believing slave. If he belongs to a people bound with you by a compact, then blood-money should be paid to his relatives and a believing slave should be freed. As for him who has not the means, he should fast for two consecutive months, as a penance from Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, Wise!

A slave could also find freedom in death as retribution for the deliberate killing of another slave-owner's property.

2:178 O believers, retaliation for the slain is prescribed for you; a free [man] for a free [man], a slave for a slave and a female for a female. But if he is pardoned by his brother (the aggrieved), usage should be followed (capital punishment would be replaced by blood-money) and he should pay him (the aggrieved) liberally and kindly. This is remission and mercy from your Lord. He who transgresses after that will have a painful punishment.

The freeing of a slave is also the penance if you ignore your wife's sexual needs, claiming she reminds you of your mother, and then wish to get back together to indulge in more than social intercourse.

58:2 Those of you who ignore their wives saying: "You are like our mother's back", should know that they are not really their mothers. Their mothers are only those women who gave them birth, and they are certainly making a reprehensible

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statement and a lie. But Allah is indeed All-Pardoning, All-Forgiving.

58:3 And those who say of their wives: “You are like our mother’s back”, then retract what they said, have to free a slave before touching each other. That is what you are admonished, and Allah is Fully Aware of what you do.

A slave could also be freed as penance for a broken oath.

5:89 Allah will not take you to task for what is unintentional in your oaths, but will take you to task for the oaths you intentionally take. Expiation for it, is feeding ten poor people with such average food as you would feed your own families, clothing them or freeing one slave. But he who cannot find [the means] should fast three days. That is the expiation for your oaths when you have sworn (those oaths which you have not kept). Keep your oaths; that is how Allah makes clear His Revelations to you, that you may be thankful.

If you have a choice between marrying a believing slave or an unbelieving free-woman, Allah recommends that you marry a believing slave. This could also be construed as Allah again doing what he can to free slaves, in this instance a female slave, by making her a respectable woman.

2:221 Do not marry unbelieving women (polytheists) until they believe. A believing slave-girl is certainly better than an unbelieving woman, even if the latter pleases you. And do not give your women (believing women) in marriage to polytheists<sup>26</sup> until they believe. A believing slave is certainly better than a polytheist, even if the latter pleases you. Those (the polytheists) call to the Fire and Allah calls to Paradise and Forgiveness by His Leave; and He makes clear His Revelations to mankind so that they may be mindful.

Slave-girls are captives of war, the wives of an enemy defeated in battle or females given as settlement of a debt or other obligations such as compensation to resolve a blood-feud. You should be kind to your slave-girls, whom Allah refers to as “what your right hands possess” or variations thereof.

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<sup>26</sup> Fakhry’s translation of Verse 2:221 is the only translation consulted that uses the term polytheists instead of unbelievers. In his translation, “marrying your women” to Christians and Jews would appear to be permitted.

4:36 Worship Allah and do not associate with Him anything. Show kindness to the parents, to kinsmen, to orphans, the destitute, the close and distant neighbour, the companion by your side, and those whom your right-hands possess. Allah does not love the arrogant and the boastful,

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Being kind to what “your right-hands possess”, e.g., your female captives, did not prohibit non-consensual sex.

Abu Sirma said to Abu Sa'id al Khadri (Allah be pleased with him): O Abu Sa'id, did you hear Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) mentioning al-'azl?

He said: Yes, and added: We went out with Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) on the expedition to the Bi'l-Mustaliq and took captive some excellent Arab women; and we desired them, for we were suffering from the absence of our wives, (but at the same time) we also desired ransom for them.

So we decided to have sexual intercourse with them but by observing 'azl (withdrawing the male sexual organ before emission of semen to avoid conception). But we said: We are doing an act whereas Allah's Messenger is amongst us; why not ask him?

So we asked Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him), and he said: It does not matter if you do not do it, for every soul that is to be born up to the Day of Resurrection will be born.

*Imam Muslim 8:3371*

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Kindness does not extend to sharing with your slave-girls all the extra that Allah may have given to you.

16:71 Allah has favoured some of you over the others in provision; but those favoured will not give their provision to those [slaves] whom their right hands possess so as to be equal therein. Will they then deny Allah's blessings?

## **Why Slavery Can Never Be Abolished**

The question remains: Why did Allah, in revelations that were meant to guide mankind for thousands of years, not simply abolish slavery? In the brutal, inescapable logic of Islam, how could a believer make amends for a transgression where a slave is part of the penance if he was not allowed to own slaves in the first place? Then there is Revelation 30:30, the single most significant and probably insurmountable obstacle to the Islamic World formally renouncing slavery in all its forms, for this would mean altering the original nature of Allah's Creation, of which slavery always was and is an integral part.

30:29 Yet, the wrongdoers have followed their fancies without knowledge. Who, then, will guide those whom Allah has led astray and who have no supporters?

30:30 So, set you face towards religion uprightly. It is the original nature according to which Allah fashioned mankind. There is no altering Allah's Creation. That is the true religion; but most men do not know.

30:31 Returning unto Him. Fear Him, perform the prayer and do not be like the idolaters;

30:32 Those who have rent their religion asunder and split into factions, each party rejoicing in what they had.

The Koran's explicit condoning of slavery and the increase in the number of slaves around the world, especially in countries where traditional Islam finds acceptance, has to be particularly worrisome for non-traditional believers and unbelievers alike.

## **Slavery and the Prophet**

Judging from a sample of the sayings and examples of Muhammad, he too is in favour of slavery, perhaps even more so than the god for whom he claimed to speak. He even rebuked one of his wives for freeing (manumitting) a slave-girl instead of giving her to an uncle.

### **Narrated Kurib:**

The freed slave of Ibn 'Abbas, that Maimuna bint Al-Harith told him that she manumitted (freed) a slave-girl without taking the permission of the Prophet. On the day when it was



her turn to be with the Prophet, she said, "Do you know, O Allah's Apostle, that I have manumitted my slave-girl?"

He said, "Have you really?" She replied in the affirmative.

He said, "You would have got more reward if you had given her (i.e. the slave-girl) to one of your maternal uncles."

*Bukhari 47.765*

Muhammad helped a man in need of money by selling his slave for him.

**Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah:**

A man decided that a slave of his would be manumitted after his death and later on he was in need of money, so the Prophet took the slave and said, "Who will buy this slave from me?"

Nu'aim bin Abdullah bought him for such and such price and the Prophet gave him the slave.

*Bukhari 34.351*

Muhammad cancelled a dying man's wish that six of his slaves be freed, freeing only two and keeping the other four for himself or perhaps for someone else.

Imran b. Husain reported that a person who had no other property emancipated six slaves of his at the time of his death. Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) called for them and divided them into three sections, cast lots amongst them, and set two free and kept four in slavery; and he (the Holy Prophet) spoke severely of him.

*Muslim 4112*

Muhammad cancelled the freeing of a slave and sold it on behalf of its owner who had no other chattel.

**Narrated Jabir:**

A man manumitted a slave and he had no other property than that, so the Prophet cancelled the manumission (and sold the slave for him). Nu'aim bin Al-Nahham bought the slave from him.

*Bukhari 41.598*

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One last hadith about what Muhammad had to say about slavery; it's somewhat of a confounding one.

**Narrated Anas bin Malik:**

The Prophet said: "The freed slave belongs to the people who have freed him."

*Bukhari 80.753*

## **The Babylonian Exile and the Roman Diaspora**

17:2 We gave Moses the Book and made it a guidance to the Children of Israel [saying]: “Do not take besides Me any other guardian.”

17:3 O progeny of those whom We caused to be carried along with Noah; He was truly a very thankful servant.

17:4 And We decreed for the Children of Israel in the Book: “You shall make mischief in the land twice, and you shall become very haughty.”

In 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar [634 – 562 BC] destroyed the *First Temple* and took the Jews into captivity to Babylon. The first “mischief” in the Bible for this unfortunate turn of events was rebelling against God and disobeying His commandments. The Koran, of course, is short on specifics.

17:5 And when the punishment for the first [making of mischief] became due, We sent forth against you servants of Ours possessing great might who went after you in your country. Thus our threat was accomplished.

In 539 B.C., Cyrus the Great proclaimed what has been called *The Edict of Cyrus*, allowing all people who had been taken into captivity by the Babylonians to return home. It was not a military success, as intimated by the following revelation that allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and Judea, but a simple act of goodwill; it was a kindness for which the Jews honoured Cyrus in the Bible with the name Messiah (Isaiah 45:1).

17:6 Then, We gave you back your turn against them and aided you with wealth and children and increased you in number.

In A.D. 70, during the reign of the Roman Emperor Titus, it was time for the punishment once more. Allah’s odd servants on this occasion were the Roman legions who would destroy the rebuilt *Second Temple*. There is no mention of the diaspora.

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17:7 [And We said]: “If you do good, you do good for yourselves, and if you do evil, you do it for yourselves too.<sup>27</sup> And when the punishment for the second [making of mischief] became due, [We send our men again] to afflict you, and to enter the Mosque (Temple) as they entered it the first time and to utterly destroy what they conquered.

There is hope, but don't push it!

17:8 It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you; but if you go back [to mischief], We shall come back and make Hell a prison for the unbelievers.

Just follow the Guide and believe, and pray for good, not evil—and don't be hasty, for God's sake!

17:9 Surely, this Qur'an guides to that which is most upright and announces to the believers who do good works the good news that they shall have a great reward.

17:10 And those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have prepared for them a very painful punishment.

17:11 Man prays for evil, just as he prays for good; and man is very hasty.

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<sup>27</sup> 45:15 He who does a righteous deed, it is to his own advantage, and he who perpetrates evil, it is to his own loss. Then, unto your Lord you shall be returned.

41:46 He who performs the righteous deed performs it to his own advantage, and he who perpetrates evil perpetrates it to his loss. Your Lord is not unjust to His servants.

## **Trees to Impress a God**

The palm tree, the olive tree, the lotus tree and the acacia (a "gourd tree") are the only variety of trees found on Earth that Allah mentions by name, with palms being the most often cited by a wide margin. Trees, with perhaps the assistance of a strong wind, like everything else in His creation—except for some stubborn human beings who will be severely punished—bow down to Allah.

22:18 Have you not seen that to Allah bows down whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on earth, as well as the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the beasts and many of the people? And for many the punishment has been decreed. And he whom Allah humiliates, will have no one to honour him. Allah does whatever He pleases.

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In two other revelations, it's not just "many of the people"; it's everyone and everything, including their shadows, prostrating themselves before Allah.

13:15 Those in the heavens and on the earth prostrate themselves to Allah willingly or unwillingly, and so do their shadows morning and evenings.

16:48 Have they not considered all the things Allah has created, casting their shades right and left, and prostrating themselves before Allah in humility?

Allah was obviously aware that the length of shadows is dependent on the angle of the sun.

25:45 Have you not considered your Lord, how He has stretched out the shadow? Had He willed, He would have made it still, then made the sun a signal thereof.

25:46 Then, We would have drawn it towards Us slowly.

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Where you can find the trees that produce olive oil and olives:

23:18 And We send down water from heaven in measure, then lodge it in the ground, although we are Able to allow it to drain away.

23:19 Then through it We produce for you gardens of palm trees and vines, from which you get many fruits whereof you eat.

23:20 And a tree (the olive tree) growing out of Mount Sinai that produces oil and condiments for eaters.

Olive oil powers Allah's Light.

24:35 Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. His light is like a niche in which there is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, the glass is like a glittering star. It is kindled from a blessed olive tree, neither of the East nor the West. Its oil will almost shine, even if no fire has touched it. Light upon light, Allah guides to His Light whomever He pleases and gives the examples to mankind. Allah has knowledge of everything.

"Green trees" (assumed to be conifers), whose main use is as firewood, are mentioned.

36:80 It is He Who produces fire from green trees for you; and behold you are kindling flames from it.

The wood used to make a fire is "a boon to the desert-dwellers."

56:71 Or did you see the fire which you kindle?

56:72 Did you make its timber to grow or were We the Growers?

56:73 We have made it a reminder and a boon to the desert-dwellers.

56:74 Glorify, then, the name of your Great Lord.

The Tree of Zaqqum can be found in the depth of Allah's Hell. Its fruit, when eaten, cooks your stomach from the inside.

44:43 The Tree of Zaqqum (the Tree of Bitterness) will certainly be

44:44 The food of the sinner.

44:45 Like molten lead, which boils in the bellies;

44:46 Like boiling water.

The two types of trees that may be the most abundant in Paradise:

56:27 As for the Companions of the Right (people in heaven);  
and behold the Companions of the Right?

56:28 They are in the midst of thornless (sic) Lotus trees,

56:29 And braided acacias,

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Muhammad couldn't have missed the biggest tree of Paradise during his visit with Allah to negotiate the daily prayers.

**Narrated Anas bin Malik:**

The Prophet said, "There is a tree in Paradise (which is so big and huge that) if a rider travels in its shade for one hundred years, he would not be able to cross it."

*Bukhari 54.474*

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If trees were pens... The following revelation has nothing to do with the 77,700 or so words in an English translation of the Koran, according to *Islamicstudies.info*, but the number of words Allah hears: "He is hearing every sound in the universe distinctly at one and the same time, and no sound can absorb his hearing so completely that He may hear no other sound."

31:27 Were all trees on earth so many pens and the sea, coupled by seven other seas, supplying them with ink, Allah's Words would not be exhausted. Allah is, indeed, All-Mighty and Wise.

# You Are What You Eat

## The Table Is Set

The longest surah about dining etiquette and what a believer can and cannot eat of Allah's edible bounty is appropriately titled The Table.

### THE TABLE

#### 5 *Al-Mâ'idah*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

You may not eat game while on pilgrimage. The reason for this being a sin is not clear, but it may have something to do with not being tempted to interrupt your pilgrimage to go hunting for dinner.

5:1 O believers, fulfil your obligations. Lawful to you are the beast of the flock, except what is being recited to you now: "Game is unlawful to you while you are on pilgrimage." Allah decrees whatever He pleases.

Revealed truths about what believers can consume, and under what circumstances, are often accompanied by a warning to fear Allah, as in the following:

5:2 O believers, do not violate the Rites of Allah, or the Sacred Month, or the sacrificial offerings, or the animals with garlands, or those who repair to the Sacred House seeking the bounty and pleasure of their Lord. When you are through with the rites of pilgrimage, you can go hunting. And let not the hatred of those who debar you from the Sacred Mosque prompt you to transgress. Help one another in righteousness and piety, but not in sin and aggression. Fear Allah; Allah is Severe in retribution.

The longest verse in the Koran on what foods are halal (allowed) and what foods are haram (prohibited).

5:3 You are forbidden the eating of carrion, blood, the flesh of swine as well as whatever is slaughtered in the name of anyone other than Allah. [You are forbidden] also the



animals strangled or beaten to death, those that fall and die, those killed by goring with the horn or mangled by wild beasts, except those which you slaughter and those sacrificed on stones set up [for idols]. [You are forbidden] to use divining arrows<sup>28</sup>; it is an evil practice. Today, those who disbelieve have despaired of your religion; so do not fear them, but fear Me. Today, I have perfected your religion for you, completed my Grace on you and approved Islam as a religion for you. Yet, whoever is compelled by reason of hunger (to eat what is forbidden), but not intending to sin, then surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

What your dog or trained falcon catches for you, you can eat.

5:4 They ask you (O Muhammad) what is lawful to them. Say: "The good things are lawful; and such hunting birds or hounds that you have taught, as Allah has taught you. You may eat whatever they catch for you, mentioning Allah's name over it. Fear Allah, for Allah is, indeed, Quick in reckoning!"

Scholars believe the last verse revealed to Muhammad is about the food of the Jews and the women of the People of the Book.

5:5 This day the good things have been made lawful to you; the food of the People of the Book is lawful to you, and your food is lawful to them; and so are the believing women who are chaste, and the chaste women of those who were given the Book before you, provided you give them their dowries and take them in marriage, not in fornication or as mistresses. If any one denies the faith, his work shall be of no avail to him, and in the Hereafter he will rank with the losers.

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Jesus of Nazareth did away with many of the dietary rules of the Torah. In one interpretation of Mark 7:19, Jesus declares all food clean therefore permissible, and in Acts 10:15, God – in a vision to the apostle Peter – is said to declare that all formerly unclean animals are now clean, therefore may be consumed: "Do not call anything impure that

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<sup>28</sup> Arrows used by pre-Islamic Arabs to cast lots. Divining arrows were strips of wood without points usually marked with values, inscriptions or symbols. These arrows were usually thrown haphazardly to divide the spoils, foretell the future, know the opinion of gods, and so on.

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God has made clean." Therefore, the reference to "the food of the People of the Book is lawful to you" in Revelation 5:5 probably means the food of the Jews. Remember, the Koran is very much a synthesis of pagan traditions and Jewish beliefs, the reason for the similarities between what their respective flavour of the same god considers halal and haram food, e.g., pork.

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Those who would deny any of "the good things" Allah allows are "transgressors," so I wouldn't do that.

5:87 O believers, do not forbid the good things that Allah has made lawful to you and do not transgress; for Allah does not like the transgressors.

Do not be fooled by the pleasing, undoubtedly delicious fare that Allah has provided into thinking that He is not a god to be feared.

5:88 Eat of the pleasant things which Allah has given you; and fear Allah in whom you believe.

(See Chapter "Slavery" for Revelation 5:89 of this series, which is about freeing a slave as penance for a broken oath.)

Wine is not one of the good things!

5:90 O believers, wine, gambling, idols and divining arrows are an abomination of the Devil's doing; so avoid them that perchance you may prosper!

5:91 The Devil only wishes to stir up enmity and hatred among you, through wine and gambling, and keep you away from remembering Allah and from prayer. Will you not desist, then?

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2:219 They ask you about wine and gambling, say: "In both there is great sin and some benefit for people. But the sin is greater than the benefit." And they ask you about what they should spend, say: "What you can spare." Thus Allah makes clear to you His Revelations so that you may reflect,

If Muslims, to this day, cannot enjoy a glass of wine with dinner, blame Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, who was what we would call a reformed alcoholic and one of Muhammad's closest collaborators and future caliph.

The most bizarre revelations in the Koran are those concerning wine: the different verses progressively leading to its interdiction are in response to Umar asking God to clarify what He means. Exegetes tell us that Umar ardently wished that wine be explicitly prohibited by a revealed truth: "Dear God," he said, "show us what we must do concerning wine. It makes us lose both our mind and our money." It was then that God revealed: "O believers, do not approach prayer while you are drunk, until you know what you say!" (4:43)

Umar is completely unhappy with God's response when Muhammad reads him the verse; the prohibition against wine is not explicit enough as far as he is concerned. As if to satisfy Umar, the exegetes tell us, in all seriousness, God sends down another revelation: "They ask you about wine and gambling, say: "In both there is great sin and some benefit for people. But the sin is greater than the benefit." (2:219)

It's still not enough for Umar; he wants wine explicitly prohibited. It is then that a third revelation is received: "The Devil only wishes to stir up enmity and hatred among you, through wine and gambling, and keep you away from remembering Allah and from prayer. Will you not desist, then?" (5:91)

This time Umar appears satisfied: "Very good! I now consider the matter settled."

Hela Ouardi, *Meutre à la mosquée*, Albin Michel, 2021, p. 55-56 (my translation).

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The following, a somewhat convoluted revealed truth, would imply that straying from Allah's decreed diet may not be that big of a deal if you do all the other things that He expects of a believer.

5:93 Those who believe and do the good deeds are not to blame for what they eat, if they are God-fearing, believe and do the good deeds, then fear God, and believe, then fear God and do good. Allah loves the charitable.

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Be careful; it could be a test!

5:94 O believers, Allah will certainly test you with some game that your hands or lances may catch, so Allah may know who fears Him unseen. Whoever transgresses thereafter shall be painfully punished.

There is a range of punishments for breaking Allah's injunction against killing game during the pilgrimage:

5:95 O believers, do not kill game while you are on pilgrimage. Whoever of you kills it willfully will have to give the like of what he killed of cattle, as determined by two just men from yourselves, to reach the Ka'ba as an offering; or will have to feed as expiation a number of poor men, or the equivalent of that in fasting so that he may taste the evil consequences of his action. Allah will pardon what is past; but he who offends again, Allah will wreck vengeance upon him. Allah is Mighty, Capable of Retribution.

Catching sea fare is halal while on pilgrimage.

5:96 Lawful to you is the catch of the sea<sup>29</sup> and its food as an enjoyment for you and for travellers; but unlawful to you is the game of the land so long as you are on pilgrimage. Fear Allah unto Whom you shall be gathered.

To "eat from that over which the Name of Allah has not been mentioned" is running the risk of being labelled an idol worshipper, along with all the bad things that entails.

6:121 And do not eat from that over which the Name of Allah has not been mentioned; it is indeed sinful. The devils shall insinuate to their followers to dispute with you; but if you obey them, then you will surely be polytheists.

A believer is not at fault for eating any of the proscribed foods if it was not his intention or he was forced to do so.

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<sup>29</sup> The nearest sea, the Red Sea, is 43 miles from Mecca. It would have been next to impossible in Muhammad's time for someone on pilgrimage to make the round trip to catch some fish without missing most of the event, which may explain Allah making it halal.

2:172 O believers, eat of the good things which We have provided for you and give thanks to Allah, if He is the One Whom you worship.<sup>30</sup>

2:173 He has only forbidden you [to eat] carrion, blood, pork and that over which (when slaughtered) any name other than that of Allah is invoked. But he who is constrained (constrained to eat those forbidden things) without intending to disobey or transgress, will commit no sin. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

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16:114 Eat then from the lawful and good things which Allah provided you, and give thanks for Allah's blessing, if you truly worship Him.

16:115 He has forbidden you carrion, blood, the flesh of swine and that over which any other name than that of Allah is invoked. But whoever is compelled while neither transgressing nor exceeding the bounds, Allah is All-forgiving, Merciful.

People who foolishly kill their children or deny them food that Allah has deemed halal "are not well-guided."

6:140 Those who kill their children foolishly without knowledge are real losers; and they forbid what Allah has provided for them, thus fabricating lies against Allah. They go astray and they are not well-guided.

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Is there ever a reason to kill a child in cold blood? Deuteronomy 21:18-21 would have a son who consistently disobeys his parents stoned to death "so shalt thou put evil away from among you." The familial evil in Allah's books that must be severely dealt with is similar: a rebellious child who would question his parents' beliefs and raise fears that he will one day abandon Islam or convince them to do so. To kill such a child is not committing a foolish murder. (See *Shared Prophets: "On the Road with Moses and Khidr,"* Boreal Books for an example of an exemplary murder of a boy.)

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<sup>30</sup> Nowhere in the Koran, to my knowledge, is a believer someone who does not worship Allah (and Allah exclusively), as implied in this revelation.

## **Answering Difficult Questions About What's on the Menu**

Some listeners obviously had questions for Muhammad after he announced Allah's dietary rules. As He often does when asked a difficult question, Allah advised His spokesman to do what politicians do all the time: answer the question with another question and impute ulterior motives to the questioner, such as wanting to make God out to be a liar.

6:143 [Take] eight in pairs: of sheep two and of goats two. Say: "Has He forbidden the two males, or the two females, or what the womb of two females contain? Tell me if you a truthful."

6:144 And [take] of camels two and of cows [and oxen] two. Say: "Has He forbidden the two males, the two females, or what the womb of females contain? Or have you been witnesses when Allah commanded you to do this?" Who then is more unjust than he who imputes falsehood to Allah, in order to lead people astray, without knowledge? Surely, Allah will not guide the wrongdoing people.

Pork is for other gods, as Allah's spokesman makes clear in Revelation 6:145, which appears to be in response to a question about a specific food that Muhammad skirts by repeating the general rule and adding the prohibition against eating "the flesh of swine."

6:145 Say: "I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to an eater to eat from, unless it is carrion, or running blood, or the flesh of swine - which are unclean. For it is profane and slaughtered to [gods] other than Allah. However, he who is constrained, intending neither to commit a sin nor to exceed the bounds, then surely your Lord is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

### **Vegetarians are not Muslims**

Believers who do not eat meat are not real Muslims. Not only that, but they may lead others astray by following 'their fancies'.

6:118 Eat, then, of that upon which the name of Allah has been mentioned, if you really believe in His Revelations.

6:119 And why is it that you do not eat from that upon which Allah's name is mentioned, when He has explained to you what is unlawful to you, except for what you are compelled to [eat]? Indeed many shall lead others astray by their fancies, without any knowledge. Surely, your Lord knows best the transgressors.

The following hadith confirms that those who do not eat what Allah has allowed are not true believers.

Three women approached the Prophet one day. One of them said, "O Prophet! My husband has shunned the company of his wife."

The second said, "My husband has stopped eating meat!"

The third said, "My husband has stopped using perfume!"

Hearing the women, the Prophet was upset. He saw that misguided ideas were beginning to take root amongst his followers.

Although it was not the time for any mandatory prayer, he proceeded to the mosque. He went in such a great hurry that even his cloak was not properly placed on his shoulder and one end of it was touching the ground. He ordered the people to assemble in the mosque. People rushed there leaving aside their tasks.

The Prophet ascended the pulpit and said, "I have heard that my companions are getting wrong ideas."

He added, "I am Allah's Messenger, I eat meat and delicious food! I wear good clothes! I wear perfumes and keep the company of my wives and have conjugal relations with them! Whosoever opposes my ways is not my follower!"

The Prophet has repeated this sentence on several occasions: "One who does not adopt my ways is not a Muslim."

*Wasa'il*

### **What Do the Jews Have To Do With It!**

At one point in time, Yahweh and Allah were in almost complete agreement as to the foods that the believers in both flavours of god could eat.

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3:93 All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, save what Israel forbade itself before the Torah was revealed. Say: "Bring then the Torah and recite it, if you are truthful."

3:94 Whoever, afterwards, fabricates falsehood against Allah, those are truly the evildoers.

Why Allah imposed additional restrictions as to what Jews can eat.

6:146 We have forbidden the Jews every [animal] with claws; and the fat of oxen and sheep except what their backs or entrails carry, or what is mixed with bones. This was the punishment We inflicted on them on account of their aggression. We are surely Truthful.

Eating of the good stuff disallowed by Allah and claiming that it is permitted, as the Jews did, may give you momentary pleasure but will lead to an eternity of hurt, unless you were not aware you were committing evil and repented afterwards.

16:116 And when you speak do not lie by saying: "This is lawful and this is unlawful", in order to impute lies to Allah. Surely those who impute lies to Allah will not prosper.

16:117 A little enjoyment and then a great punishment is in store for them.

16:118 We forbade the Jews what We have related to you earlier. And We did not wrong them, but they wronged themselves.

16:119 Surely, with respect to those who commit evil in ignorance, and later repent and make amends, your Lord thereafter is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

Allah's dietary rules would have been met with Abraham's approval.

16:120 Indeed, Abraham was a model [of virtue], obedient to Allah and upright; and he was not one of the polytheists.

16:121 [He was] thankful for His Blessings, and Allah elected him and guided him to a Straight Path.

16:122 We made him praiseworthy in this world, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the righteous.



16:123 Then We revealed to you (Muhammad): "Follow the religion of Abraham, the upright; for he was not one of the polytheists."

Moududi:

Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was commanded to follow the way of Abraham and not the way of the Jews, and they themselves knew that these things were not unlawful in the law of Abraham. For instance, the Jews did not eat the flesh of camel but this was lawful according to Abraham. Likewise, ostrich, hare, duck, etc., were unlawful in the Jewish law, but they were lawful according to Abraham.

### **Where You May Dine**

24:61 The blind are not at fault, the lame are not at fault, the sick are not at fault, nor are you if you eat in your houses, the houses of your fathers, the houses of your mothers, the houses of your brothers, the houses of your sisters, the houses of your paternal uncles, the houses of your paternal aunts, the houses of your maternal uncles, the houses of your maternal aunts, those of which you are in possession of the keys or those of your friend. You are not at fault if you eat altogether or separately, but if you enter any houses, greet each other with a blessed and good greeting from Allah. That is how Allah makes clear to you the Signs, that perchance you may understand.

## **Tolerance Abrogated**

Of all the incongruities that devotees of a religion steeped in inconsistencies have to accept, the concept of abrogation has to be the most outlandish. Abrogation is common in the real world as better information replaces information that is out of date. In the world of revealed truths, retractions should not even be the exception. It defies logic, and therein lies the incongruity, the weirdness.

Scholars and clerics from the Middle Ages (eighth to eleventh century) initially identified more than two hundred abrogated revelations, apparently oblivious to the uncomfortable conclusion that can be derived from their endeavour. The inherent absurdity of an omniscient deity not getting it right the first or even the second time around may explain attempts by contemporary diviners of the Word of God to refute the very concept of abrogation. One such academic, Muhammad Asad (1900-92), argued that Verse 10:64 was evidence of the immutability of Allah's Words.

10:64 Theirs is the good news in the present life and the Hereafter. And there will be no alteration of the Words of Allah. That is the great triumph.

Not so, according to Ahmad von Denffer (1949-present). For this eminent scholar, understanding abrogation is central to the correct application of God's laws. Denffer quotes four revelations to Asad's one, where Allah admits to occasionally changing His mind.

2:106 Whichever verse We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring instead a better or similar one. Do you not know that Allah has the power over all things?

13:39 Allah blots out and confirms what He pleases; and with Him is the Mother of the Book.

16:101 And if We replace a verse by another - and Allah knows best what He reveals - they say: "You [Muhammad] are only a forger." Surely, most of them do not know.

17:86 If We please, We certainly can blot out that which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad); then you would find no guardian to assist you against Us.

(See *Let Me Rephrase That! Your Guide to Abrogations*, Boreal Books, 2015.)

### **Two Once Extraordinary Verses About Tolerance**

2:62 The believers (Muslims), the Jews, the Christians and the Sabians – whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does what is good, shall receive their reward from their Lord. They shall have nothing to fear and they shall not grieve.

When you come across a verse like Revelation 2:62, you are taken aback because the message it appears to convey is so different from that of intolerance which infuses the Koran. Like all of Allah's seemingly universal declarations, there is a catch. Those who do not believe in an omnipotent monotheistic deity whose name is Allah, such as Indians (Hindus), Buddhists, Confucianists, Shintoists, animists, atheists, agnostics, etc., can do all the good they can and live an exemplary life; it won't matter a whit. Allah may not even write their good deeds down. What would be the point?!

20:112 And he who does the righteous deeds, while a believer, will fear neither injustice nor inequity.

21:94 Whoever does what is good, while a believer, his endeavour will not be denied, and We are indeed writing it down for him.

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22:50 Those who believe and do the righteous deeds will receive forgiveness and a bountiful provision,

22:51 But who strive against our Revelations defying Us – those are the people of Hell.

In any event, it doesn't matter; Revealed Truth 2:62 has been abrogated by another immutable fact communicated to a mortal by a deity in Revelation 3:85.

3:85 Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

Then there is the often-repeated canard: Revelation 109:6.

THE UNBELIEVERS

*109 Al-Kâfirîn*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

109:1 Say: "O unbelievers,

109:2 "I do not worship what you worship,

109:3 "Nor do you worship what I worship;

109:4 "Nor do I worship what you have worshipped,

109:5 "Nor do you worship what I worship

109:6 "You have your religion and I have mine."

Revelation 109:6 is not directly abrogated by Revelation 3:85, but by the infamous Verse of the Sword.

9:5 Then, when the Sacred Months (these are the four months during which war was prohibited in pre-Islamic times) are over, kill the idolaters wherever you find them, take them [as captives], besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every point of observation. If they repent afterwards, perform the prayer and pay the alms (*become Muslims*), then release them. Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Merciful.

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The Verse of the Sword has a companion verse, Revelation 9:111, the Salvific Covenant: do this for me and I will do that for you (aka. save you, give you Paradise).

9:111 Allah has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth in return for Paradise; they fight in the Way of Allah, kill and get killed. That is a true promise from Him in the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an; and who fulfills his promise better than Allah? Rejoice then at the bargain you have made with Him; for that is the great triumph.

The Verse of the Sword and the Salvific Covenant, taken together, are

the Koran's equivalent of a Declaration of War on humanity, a universal jihad until all of humankind submits to the Will of Allah (see *Jihad in the Koran: "Announcing a Universal War,"* Boreal Books).

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Revelation 9.5 nullifies more than 100 revealed truths that have even a passing reference to tolerance and peace (see *Let Me Rephrase That!: "Verse of the Sword,"* Boreal Books), such as Revelation 2:256 about there being "no compulsion in religion."

2:256 There is no compulsion in religion; true guidance has become distinct from error. Thus he who disbelieves in the Devil and believes in Allah grasps the firmest handle that will never break. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

Authors like Fouad Laroui ask us to forget all the nasty and pedantic stuff found in the Koran, what he calls "window dressing," and concentrate on the good about getting along and doing God's work, such as:

2:215 They ask you (the question was put to the Messenger by a wealthy old man) what they should spend. Say: "Whatever bounty you give is for the parents, the near of kin, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer. And whatever good you do, Allah is fully cognizant of it."

If only that were possible! Consider a revelation containing an amenable near-universal prayer if you ignore the last line. Pity!

2:286 Allah does not charge any soul beyond its capacity. It gets [rewarded for] what [good] it has earned, and is called to account for what [evil] it has committed. Lord, forgive us if we have forgotten or erred. Lord, do not lay on us a burden like that You laid on those before us, and do not burden us with what we cannot bear. Pardon us, forgive us and have mercy on us. You are our Protector. Give us victory over the unbelieving people.

### **The Clear Proof(s)**

40:65 He is the Living One; there is no god but He. So call on Him professing sincerely the religion unto Him. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

40:66 Say: "I have been forbidden to worship those you call upon, apart from Allah; since the clear proofs have come to me from my Lord and I have been commanded to submit to the Lord of the Worlds."

As he became more powerful, Muhammad discovered the persuasive power of the sword and Allah became a lot less tolerant. This is evident in what are known as the Medinan Surahs—one of which contains the Verse of the Sword—that were revealed following His spokesman's flight to the oasis city. One of the 26 Medinan Surahs is The Clear Proof, which damns the People of the Books to burn in Hell for an eternity.

### THE CLEAR PROOF

#### *98 Al-Bayyinah*

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

98:1 The unbelievers, among the People of the Book and the idolaters, would not desist till the clear proof comes to them;

98:2 A Messenger from Allah reciting purified scrolls,

98:3 Wherein are valuable books.

98:4 Those who were given the Book (*the Bible*) did not diverge except after the clear proof (*the Qur'an*) came to them.

If Islam is "the religion of truth" then all other religions spread nothing but lies.

98:5 And they were only commanded to worship Allah, professing the religion sincerely to Him as upright believers, to perform the prayers and give the alms. That is the religion of truth.

The entire concept of the Koran is based on a simple premise: God was fed up with sending instructions on how we should live and how He should be worshipped via prophets who miscommunicated His message or were misunderstood by a less-than-receptive audience. God's patience had run out. He would send one last messenger, His greatest spokesman, with His final instructions for mankind: the Koran. For their refusal to accept the Koran as the overriding book of revealed truths, Jews and Christians—the "worst of creatures"—would be joining the idolaters in Hell.

98:6 The unbelievers, among the People of the Book and the idolaters, shall be in the Fire of Hell, dwelling therein forever. Those are the worst of creatures.

98:7 Those who have believed and did the righteous deeds – those are the best of creatures.

98:8 Their reward with their Lord will be Gardens of Eden, beneath which rivers flow, dwelling therein forever. Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him. That is the lot of whoever fears His Lord.

In the Medinan Surah The Family of 'Imram, Allah is not specific as to who quarrelled over the proofs and for whom "a terrible punishment is in store" (Revelation 3:105). Also in 3:105, 'the clear proof' of 98.4 has morphed into 'the clear proofs'.

3:101 How could you disbelieve, while God's revelations are recited to you, and His Messenger is in your midst? He who holds fast to Allah has been guided to a straight path.

3:102 O believers, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.

3:103 And hold fast to Allah's Bond (his religion), all of you, and do not fall apart. And remember Allah's grace upon you; how you were enemies, then He united your hearts (by becoming Muslims) so that you have become, by His Grace, brethren. You were on the brink of the pit of Fire, but He saved you from it. Thus Allah manifests to you His Revelations so that perchance you might be rightly guided!

3:104 And let there be among you a nation calling to goodness, bidding the right and forbidding the wrong. Those are the prosperous.

3:105 And do not be like those who fell apart and quarrelled, after the clear proofs came to them. For those a terrible punishment is in store.

## Tidbits

A reminder that you don't do good because it is the right thing to do but because you will be rewarded by God.

2:110 Perform the prayers and give the alms-tax. Whatever good you do for your own sake, you will find it with Allah (you will be rewarded for it), surely Allah is cognizant of what you do.

Allah's Face is everywhere, even if He never laid claim in the Koran to being the owner of the North and the South.

2:115 To Allah belongs the East and the West. So whichever way you turn (while praying), there is Allah's Face. Indeed, Allah is Omnipresent and Omniscient.

Have a happy homecoming!

2:121 Those to whom We have given the Book recite it as it ought to be recited. Those [people] believe in it; but those who disbelieve are the losers.

13:28 Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in remembering Allah." Indeed, in remembering Allah the hearts find comfort.

13:29 May those who believe and do the good works be blessed and have a happy homecoming!

Don't bribe the judge!

2:188 Do not devour each other's money unjustly or offer it to the judges in order to devour a part of other people's money sinfully and knowingly.

Why some people are smart and others, less so:

2:269 He gives wisdom to whom He wills. And he who receives wisdom has received an abundant good. But none take heed except people of understanding.



Piety has its price.

3:92 You will not achieve piety until you spend part of what you cherish; and whatever you spend, Allah knows it very well.

The "upright people" of Revelation 3:113 are Jews who have embraced Islam.

3:113 They are not all alike. For of the People of the Book, there is an upright nation who recite Allah's Revelations, throughout the night, while prostrating themselves.

3:114 They believe in Allah and the Last Day, bid the right and forbid the wrong and hasten to do the good deeds. Those are among the righteous people!

3:115 And whatever good they do, they will not be denied. Allah knows well the God-fearing!

A somewhat uncharacteristic admonition from Allah is that women, whom the Koran considers in most circumstances nothing more than chattel, have "a share of what they earned."

4:32 Do not covet that with which Allah has favoured some of you over the others. Men have a share of what they earned, and women a share of what they earned. And ask Allah to give you of His Bounty. Allah indeed has knowledge of everything!

Don't be a cheapskate!

4:37 Those who are niggardly, and order other people to be niggardly, and conceal what Allah has given them of His Bounty, We have prepared for the unbelievers a demeaning punishment.

Atom comes from the Greek *átomos*, used by ancient Greeks to describe something infinitely small. The use of the word by the translator, in the following passage has nothing to do with the atomic structure of matter.

4:40 Surely Allah will not wrong anyone an atom's weight; and if it is a good deed, He will multiply it and give from Himself in addition a great reward.

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Allah exhorts you to judge justly.

4:58 God commands you to deliver trusts to their owners and, if you judge between people, to judge justly. Splendid is Allah's exhortation to you. Allah is indeed All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

Allah has no objection to lawyers sharing in the proceeds of a successful litigation or mediation.

4:85 He who offers a good intercession (he who intercedes for people in accordance with Muslim law) shall have a share of it; and he who offers a bad intercession shall suffer from its consequences. Allah has power over everything.

A caution on the use of foul language:

4:148 Allah does not like the public uttering of foul words, except by one who has been wronged. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

4:149 Whether you do good openly, or secretly, or pardon an evil deed, Allah is indeed All-Pardoning, All-Powerful.

On Judgement Day, Allah will retell what you should already know.

5:105 O believers, take care of yourselves; you will not be harmed by him who has gone astray, if you are well-guided. To Allah you will all return; then He will tell you what you were doing.

Is Allah the flip side of God?

5:98 Know that God is Severe in punishment and that Allah is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

Evil is appealing because of its abundance.

5:100 Say: "The evil and the good are not equal, even if the abundance of the evil should appeal to you." Fear then Allah, O people of understanding, that perchance you may prosper.

Allah loves to test people.

6:53 Likewise, We test some of them through others so that they may say: "Are these the ones whom Allah has favoured among us?" Does not Allah know best the thankful?

Moududi:

By enabling the poor and the indigent, the people who have a low station in society to precede others in believing, God has put those who wax proud of wealth and honour to a severe test.

Is Allah extending mercy to Himself like He does to anyone “who perpetrates evil in ignorance?”

6:54 And when those who believe in Our Revelations come to you, say: “Peace be upon you. Your Lord has prescribed Mercy upon Himself (He is making mercy incumbent upon Himself, *Moududi*), that he who perpetrates evil in ignorance, repents afterwards and mends his ways [will find Him] All-Forgiving, Merciful.

Allah is the only judge you want. He wrote the Book on justice!

6:114 Shall I seek a judge other than Allah, when He is the one Who sent down the Book fully expounded? Those to whom We have given the Book (the Torah) know that it is revealed from your Lord in truth. Do not then be one of the doubters.

6:115 The Word of your Lord has been completed in truth and justice; no one can change His Words. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

Muslims, at this writing, are almost 2 billion strong. They may soon be in the majority. Should you trust them?

6:116 And were you to obey most people on earth, they will lead you away from the Path of Allah. They follow nothing but conjecture, and they only lie.

6:117 Your Lord knows best who strays from His Path, and He knows best who are the rightly guided.

How it feels to ascend to heaven:

6:125 Whomever Allah wants to guide, He opens his heart up to Islam, and whomever He wants to lead astray, He makes his heart extremely constricted, as though he were ascending

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to heaven.<sup>31</sup> Thus Allah inflicts His punishment upon those who do not believe.

6:126 This is the Path of your Lord, perfectly Straight. We have expounded the revelations to people who take heed.

6:127 Theirs is the abode of peace with their Lord and He is their Protector, for what they used to do.

People are so ungrateful!

10:12 And if hardship afflicts man, he calls Us lying down, sitting or standing; but when We lift his hardship, he passes on, as if he never called Us to [lift] a hardship that afflicted him. Thus what the transgressors do seems fair to them.

Even what animals do is recorded in a book.

11:6 There is no beast on earth but its sustenance is [provided] by Allah; and He knows its resting place and its repository. All is in a Manifest Book.

I would not play hide-and-go-seek with Allah.

13:10 It is the same whether any of you conceals his words or utters them, and whether he hides by night or goes forth by day.

13:11 There are guardian [angels] before him and behind him, guarding him by Allah's Command.<sup>32</sup> Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in their hearts. And if Allah wills to afflict a people with a misfortune, it cannot be turned away, and they have, apart from Allah, no protector.

Allah imitating Zeus:

13:12 It is He who shows you the lightning, inspiring fear and hope, and originates the laden clouds.

13:13 And the thunder sounds His praise and the angels, too, in awe of Him. And He sends forth the thunderbolts smiting

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<sup>31</sup> The opposite should occur since atmospheric pressure decreases as you rise through the air.

<sup>32</sup> "That is, Allah not only directly watches over whatever each person does, and is fully aware of everything he does, but He has also appointed such guardians as accompany him everywhere and keep a full record of all his deeds." *Moududi*

with them whomever he pleases. Nevertheless, they dispute about Allah, but he is Mighty in prowess.

Allah can't be bribed, so don't even try.

13:18 To those who obey their Lord belongs the best [reward (Paradise)], but those who disobey Him, were they to have all that is on earth plus its equal, would offer it as ransom. To those a bad reckoning is reserved, and their abode will be Hell, and what a miserable resting-place!

Another revelation about Allah being a whimsical God who "does whatever He pleases."

14:27 Allah confirms those who believe with the firm word in the present life, and in the life to come; but He leads the wrongdoers astray. Allah does whatever He pleases.

14:28 Have you not seen those who turn Allah's Grace into disbelief and lead their people to the abode of ruin (Hell)?

14:29 In Hell they will burn, and what a wretched abode!

Allah is a god who just keeps on giving, but are you appreciative? Nooo... It's so unfair!

14:34 He gives you all you ask Him for. And were you to count Allah's favours you will never be able to exhaust them. Man is truly unjust and ungrateful.

Allah is responsible for you getting dementia.

16:70 Allah created you, then He will cause you to die. For some of you will be brought back to the worst age, so that they will no longer know anything, after having acquired knowledge. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.

What about daughters and granddaughters?

16:72 Allah has given you wives from among yourselves, and from your wives, sons and grandsons, and has provided you with all the good things. Will they believe in falsehood, then, and deny Allah's Blessings?

What you don't understand!

17:43 Glory be to Him and may He be greatly exalted above what they say.

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17:44 The seven heavens, the earth what is in them praise Him, and there is nothing which does not celebrate His praise; but you do not understand their praise. He is indeed Clement, All-Forgiving.

Those who were blind to Allah's Revelations in the here-and-now will remain so in the Hereafter, as odd as that may sound, since they will be surrounded by the evidence of what they contained.

17:72 And he who is blind in this world will be blind in the Hereafter and will stray even more from the right Way.

What is better than wealth and children?

18:46 Wealth and children are the adornment of the present life, but the everlasting good works are better in your Lord's Sight in reward and better in expectations.

God is not into sports, although He could probably make it as a major league pitcher.

21:16 We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is in between them in sport.

21:17 Had We wished to take to Ourselves a means of sport, We would have found it within Us, if We wanted to do it.

21:18 No, We hurl the truth against falsehood and it overcomes it; and behold it has vanished. Woe unto you (the Meccans), for what you describe (the way you describe Allah).

A community divided.

21:92 This, your community is indeed a single community and I am your Lord; so worship Me.

21:93 They fell apart into factions; but they will all return unto Us.

Moududi:

It means: "O mankind, in reality all of you belonged to one community and had one and the same religion and all the Prophets brought one and the same Creed which was this: 'Allah alone is the Lord of all mankind: therefore they should worship Him alone.'" But afterwards the people corrupted this Creed and invented and adopted the things they liked

and mixed their own theories, whims and practices in it. This brought into being countless communities and religions.

What you risk losing if your worship of Allah is tepid:

22:11 And of the people, there are some who worship Allah tepidly. When good fortune comes his way, he is pleased with it, but if an ordeal befalls him, he turns around (goes back to disbelief) losing both this world and the world to come. That is the manifest lost.

That chirping you hear is birds glorifying Allah.

24:41 Have you not seen how Allah is glorified by whatever is in the heavens or the earth, and by the birds in flight. He knows the prayer of each and its glorification. Allah knows well what they do.

Another revelation about Allah being responsible for the alternation of night and day.

24:44 He alternates the night and day. In that there is a lesson for those who have eyes to see.

Say it like you mean it!

29:2 Have the people supposed that they will be left alone to say: "We believe", and then they will not be tested?

29:3 We have indeed tested those who preceded them; and Allah shall certainly know those who speak the truth and shall know those who lie.

29:4 Or have those who do the evil deeds supposed that they will outstrip Us? Wretched is what they judge!

Allah provides for both beasts and humans.

29:60 How many a beast does not bear its provision, yet Allah provides for it and for you. He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

Why Allah will allow some to keep their ill-gotten gains.

30:41 Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea, on account of what men's hands have earned; so that He may let them taste the reward of some of their deeds, that perchance they may return.

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Grey hairs come from Allah.

30:54 It is Allah who created you from a weak substance, then gave you strength after weakness, then after strength weakness and grey hair. He creates what He pleases and He is the All-Knowing, All-Powerful.

Some blessings can be perceived (the “outward”), some cannot (the “inward”), and still “some people” dispute Allah’s wisdom and existence without any basis.

31:20 Have you not seen how Allah has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and on earth and granted you His Blessings, both outward and inward (visible and invisible, *Moududi*)? Some people, however, continue to dispute regarding Allah, without any knowledge or guidance or an illuminating Book.

“To create all of you or to resurrect all of you is to Him like (creating or resurrecting) a single person.” *Moududi*

31:28 He did not create you or resuscitate you but as a single soul. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Hearing.

Allah’s angels extend His blessings on the believers. Believers, in return, when they encounter their Lord, will wish Him peace.

33:43 It is He Who blesses you, with His angels (His angels invoke blessings on you, *Moududi*), that He may bring you out of the shadows of darkness into light; and He is Ever Merciful towards the believers.

33:44 Their greeting, when they encounter Him (*when they are welcomed into Paradise*) is: “Peace”, and He has prepared for them a generous reward.

Allah is a real know-it-all, but you already knew that.

34:1 Praise be to Allah, to whom belong whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth, and praise be to him in the Hereafter. He is the All-Wise, the All-Informed.

34:2 He knows what penetrates into the earth and what goes out of it, what descends from heaven and what ascends to it. He is the All-Merciful, the All-Forgiving.



“On the Day of Resurrection, every culprit will be seized in a way as though he lay in hiding close by.” *Moududi*

34:51 If you could see how they were terrified. There was no escape, and they were seized from a near place.

“They should have believed when they lived in the world; they have come a long way away from it. After having arrived in the Next World how can they get a chance to repent and believe?” *Moududi*

34:52 And they say: “We believe in it”, but whence can they attain it (the belief) from afar?

Allah is not a modest god, but you already knew that, too.

35:10 Whoever wishes Glory, it is to Allah that the glory utterly belongs. Unto Him good words ascend and the righteous deeds uplifts it. Those who contrive evil deeds will incur terrible punishment and the contriving of these will come to grief.

Why should only creatures that crawl die for man’s sins?

35:45 Were Allah to take men to task for what they have earned, He would not have left upon the face of the earth a single creature that crawls; but He defers them unto an appointed term. Then, when their term arrives, Allah is surely fully Conversant with His servants.

If in old age you have lost a few centimeters in height, that is also Allah’s doing, don't you know?

36:68 Whoever We grant old age, We would cause to shrink in form. Do they not understand, then?

Allah did not create what He created in vain, despite what you might have heard from people “who work corruption in the land.”

38:27 We have not created the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain. That is the presumption of the unbelievers; so woe betide the unbelievers because of the Fire.

38:28 Or shall We regard those who believe and do the righteous deeds like those who work corruption in the land, or shall We regard the God-fearing like the transgressors.

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Still another revelation about Allah being responsible for the alternation of night and day.

39:5 He created the heavens and the earth in truth. He wraps up the night around the day and He wraps the day around the night. He has subjected the sun and the moon, each running for an appointed term. He is indeed the All-Mighty, the All-Forgiving.

The bounteous who will have a bounty in both worlds.

39:10 Say: "O My servants who have believed, fear your Lord. Those who have been bounteous in this world will have a bounty, and Allah's earth is vast. The steadfast will be paid their wages in full, without reckoning."

Bad deeds don't have to be a deal breaker. Paradise can still be yours if you perform enough offsetting good deeds.

39:32 Who, then, is more unjust than one who imputes lies to Allah and denounces the Truth as a lie when he hears it? Is not in Hell an abode for the unbelievers?

39:33 But he who brings the Truth and believes in it – those are the true God-fearing people.

39:34 They shall have what they wish from their Lord. That is the reward of the beneficent.

39:35 That Allah might remit their worst deeds and reward them their due according to the fairest deeds they used to do.

Allah's punishment is not only lasting, it is downright degrading.

39:40 "Whoever is visited by punishment will be degraded by it and a lasting punishment will befall him."

If Allah mends an injury, don't assume it is because you are special or have "some knowledge" that others don't. If you do, you may be smitten by something much worse.

39:49 When an injury touches a man, he calls upon Us. Then if We accord him a bounty from Us, he says: "I have been granted it on account of some knowledge." However, it is a mere trial, but most of them do not know.

39:50 Thus those who preceded them have said it, but what they have earned did not avail them.

39:51 And so the evils of what they had earned smote them, and the evil-doers among these will be smitten by the evils of what they earned; and they will not frustrate Us.

The creation of heaven and Earth was a much more impressive feat than was the creation of the first man.

40:57 Surely, the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of mankind, but most people do not know.

Allah does not have to be the only one with the fairest of speeches.

41:33 Who is fairer in speech than one who calls unto Allah and performs the righteous deeds and says: "I am one of those who submit."

Sterility comes also from Allah.

42:49 To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He creates whatever He pleases, and grants whomever He wishes females, and whomever He wishes males.

42:50 Or He marries them, males and females, and makes whomever He wishes sterile. Indeed, He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.

Angels can write; it is a necessary skill, in their case.

43:78 We brought you (*Meccans, Moududi*) the Truth, but most of you were adverse to the Truth.

43:79 Or had they contrived some scheme. We are certainly contriving too.

43:80 Or do they think that We do not hear their secret and their private counsels. Yes, indeed, and Our Messengers (angels) are in their midst writing down.

You are doubly evil if you think Allah will consider your evilness on a par with those who do good and believe in Him.

45:21 What, do those who have perpetrated the evil deeds believe that We shall regard them as equal to those who have believed and done the righteous deeds, whether in their life or death (making their lives and deaths alike, *Moududi*)? Evil is their judgement.

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If two believers are fighting, help the one who is being oppressed, otherwise try to stop the fight.

49:9 If two parties of the believers should fight one another, bring them peacefully together; but if one of them seeks to oppress the other, then fight the oppressor until it (sic) reverts to Allah's Command. If it reverts, then bring them together in justice and be equitable; for Allah loves the equitable.

49:10 Surely, the believers are brothers; so bring your two brothers together and fear Allah, so that you may receive Mercy.

Nicknames are out!

49:11 O believers, let not one people scoff at another people, lest they be better than they; nor women at other women, lest they be better than they. Do not slander yourselves and do not revile each other with false names. Wretched is the name of ungodliness, after belief! He who does not repent, such are the wrongdoers, indeed.

The Creation did not weary Allah one bit, and He will do it again.

50:15 Were We wearied by the first creation? No, they are in doubt regarding a new creation (the new world order after the Day of Resurrection, *Moududi*).

Had Allah wished, you would be a totally different person.

56:60 We have decreed death upon you and We would not be outstripped;

56:61 Had We wanted to change the like of you and form you afresh in a fashion you do not know.

56:62 You have already known the first fashioning; if only you would remember.

You reap what Allah sows!

56:63 Have you seen what you till?

56:64 Do you sow it yourselves, or are We the Sowers?

56:65 Had We wished, We would have reduced it to rubble, and so you would have remained wondering:

56:66 "We are penalized, indeed;

56:67 "No, we are being deprived."

Why Allah sent iron down from heaven:

57:25 We have sent forth our Messengers with clear proofs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance, so that people might act equitably. We have also sent down iron, which has mighty power and benefits for mankind, and that Allah might know who supports Him and His Messengers invisibly. Allah is indeed Strong and Mighty.

Forget Allah, and you will forget who you are.

59:18 O believers, fear Allah and let each soul consider what it has forwarded for the morrow. Fear Allah; He is Aware of what you do.

59:19 Do not be like those who forgot Allah, and so He made them forget themselves. Those are indeed the sinners.

If it's a choice between Allah and your children...

63:9 O believers, let not your possessions or your children distract you from the remembrance of Allah. Whoever does that – those are the real losers.

Fear Allah, without ever having seen Him, and great things are in store.

67:12 Indeed, those who fear their Lord unseen will be accorded forgiveness and a great reward.

"If you lend Allah a fair loan," i.e., fund efforts to expand the reach of Islam, expect a good return on your investment.

64:17 If you lend Allah a fair loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you.<sup>33</sup> Allah is All-Grateful, All-Clement;

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<sup>33</sup> Example from a fundraising letter:

I am writing to you on behalf of Canberra Islamic Centre (CIC) Executive Committee in the holy month of Ramadan to seek your financial support and prayer for ongoing Islamic project in our National Capital... Your donation is an investment in the path of Islam that will benefit to the Muslim generations in Canberra/Australia. As mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (64.17) "If you lend Allah a fair loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you. Allah is All Grateful, All Clement."

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64:18 Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, the All-Mighty, the Wise.

Then again, with Allah, you never know.

67:16 Are you sure that He Who is in heaven will not cause the earth to cave in upon you? Behold how it quakes!

67:17 Or are you sure that He Who is in heaven will not let loose upon you a squall of pebbles? Then you shall know how My Warning sounds.

You and what army?

67:20 Or who is this who is a sentinel (your army, *Moududi*) for you to protect you against the Compassionate. The unbelievers are simply in error.

67:21 Or who is this who will provide for you, if He withholds His provision? Rather they have persisted in arrogance and aversion.

As if anyone needed a reminder.

76:25 And mention the Name of your Lord morning and evening.

76:26 As for part of the night, prostrate yourself to Him and glorify Him all night long.

76:27 Those people (the unbelievers) love the present world and leave behind them (ahead of them, *Moududi*) a burdensome Day (Judgement Day).

If you have aching joints, it is not because Allah did not fasten them well.

76:28 We have created them and fastened their joints well; and if We wish We change their likes completely.

76:29 This indeed is a reminder; so he who wishes will follow, unto His Lord, a path.

You must wish in tandem with Allah.

76:30 Yet, you do not wish unless Allah wishes. Allah is truly All-Knowing and Wise.

76:31 He admits into His Mercy whomever He wishes; and for the wrongdoers He has prepared a painful punishment.

Sleep as a period of rest.

78:9 And made your sleep a period of rest?

78:10 And made the night as a garment?

78:11 And made the day a source of livelihood?

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25:47 It is He who made the night a raiment for you, and sleep a period of rest, and made the day a rising up.

Allah swears to the stages of life and death and beyond.

84:16 No, I swear by the twilight,

84:17 And by the night and what it brings forth,

84:18 And by the moon when it is full,

84:19 That you will mount stage by stage.

Moududi:

You will not remain in one and the same state, but will have to pass through countless stages gradually, from youth to old age, from old age to death, from death to barzakh (the intermediary state between death and Resurrection), from barzakh to Resurrections from Resurrection to the Plain of Assembly, then to the Reckoning, and then to the meting out of rewards and punishments.

Did Allah witness the burning of believers and do nothing?

## THE CONSTELLATIONS

### 85 Al-Burûj

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

85:1 By the heaven of the many constellations;

85:2 And by the Promised Day;

85:3 And by every witness and what is witnessed.

85:4 Perish the companions of the Pit,

85:5 The fire well-stoked;

85:6 While they sat around it,

85:7 And were witnessing what they did to the believers.

85:8 They did not begrudge them except that they believed in Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Praiseworthy;

85:9 To Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. Allah is witness of everything.

Why Allah “straightens” out the provision.

89:15 As for man, whenever His Lord tests him, honouring him and favouring him with bounties, he says: “My Lord has honoured me.”

89:16 But when He tests him, straitening his provision, he says: “My Lord has despised me.”

89:17 Not at all: you do not actually honour the orphans;

89:18 And do not advocate the feeding of the destitute;

89:19 And you devour the inheritance greedily;

89:20 And you love wealth ardently.

**It!**

## THE SUN

### 91 Ash-Shams

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

91:1 By the sun and its forenoon brightness,

91:2 And the moon when it follows it,

91:3 And the day when it exhibits its light,

91:4 And the night when it obscures it;

91:5 And by the heaven and Him who erected it;

91:6 And the earth and Him who spread it out,

91:7 And the soul and Him who fashioned it well,

91:8 Inspiring it to profligacy and piety.

91:9 Prosperous shall be He who purifies it,

91:10 And ruined he who corrupts it.



Who is Allah talking to? The answer is in the footnote.

## COVETOUSNESS

### 102 At-Takâthur

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

- 102:1 Covetousness has distracted you,<sup>34</sup>  
 102:2 Till you visited the graveyards.  
 102:3 No; you shall surely know.  
 102:4 Again, no; you shall surely know.  
 102:5 No; if only you knew with certainty,  
 102:6 You would surely have perceived Hell (ended up in Hell, *Moududi*).  
 102:7 Then, you will have perceived it with visual certainty.  
 102:8 Then, on that Day (*Judgement Day*) you will surely be questioned about the Bliss (My Bounties you enjoyed, *Moududi*).

Believe, do good by Allah, and be steadfast to avoid falling prey to perdition.

## THE AEON

### 103 Al`Asr

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Compassionate, the Merciful*

- 103:1 By the aeon (time),  
 103:2 Man is, indeed, a prey to perdition,  
 103:3 Except for those who believe, do the righteous deeds, urge each other to seek the truth and urge each other to be *steadfast*.

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<sup>34</sup> “Ibn Abi Hatim has cited Abu Buraidah as saying that this Surah was sent down concerning the two tribes, Bani Harithah and Bani al-Harth, of the Ansar. The two tribes had first recounted the glories and illustrious deeds of their living men; then they had gone to the grave yard and bragged of the glorious deeds of their dead. Thereupon the Divine Revelation Alhakum at takathur came down.” *Moududi*

## AFTERWORD

### “Déja Vu All Over Again”<sup>35</sup>

54:40 We have, indeed, made the Qur’an easy to remember. Is there, then, any one who will remember?

As toilsome reading as I ever undertook. A wearisome confused jumble, crude, incondite; endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement.

*Thomas Carlyle [1795 - 1881] on the Koran*

Could these “endless iterations” be a symptom of a memory recall problem that is not unique to Allah, as we have gotten to know Him in *Getting to Know Allah?*<sup>36</sup> Of course, omniscient beings don’t experience memory lapses, but humans do.

#### **Narrated Aisha:**

The Prophet continued for such-and-such period imagining that he has slept (had sexual relations) with his wives, and in fact he did not.

*Bukhari 73.89*

In *Shared Prophets* (Boreal Books), I offer a practical answer that has to do with the way an illiterate might handle such a monumental task as communicating the contents of a book written by a god. In my books on the Koran, I have taken at face value that the Koran is, in part, a history crafted by God about how, from Adam to Muhammad, He chose people to speak on His behalf and deliver the message that He is the only god worthy of the title, how He should be worshipped, and how we should behave if we wish to eventually join Him in Paradise.

In *From Merchant to Messenger: The Prophet Muhammad’s struggle for legitimacy as revealed in the Koran* (Boreal Books), which documents

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<sup>35</sup> Yogi Berra

<sup>36</sup> God’s predilection for repeating Himself is also evident in His retelling of stories of prophets from the Bible (see *Shared Prophets: Biblical Figures in the Koran*, Boreal Books) with Adam’s creation recounted six times, Noah’s ten times, Eber/Hud’s three times, the story of Abraham and that of Lot related five times, that of Moses nine times... All with slight though sometimes significant variations in each retelling.

Muhammad's difficulties getting his brethren to accept him as the genuine article, it is obvious that the incessant indictments communicated on behalf of the god for whom he claimed to speak—the most distracting, those against the other gods and their worshippers—were not helping his cause. These “endless iterations” may have even forced God's Hand, making it inevitable that He would decide to use force and declare a proxy war against the unbelievers (see *Jihad in the Koran*, Boreal Books), which will not end until all of humanity bows down before Him.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said, "I have been ordered to fight with the people till they say, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah,' and whoever says, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah,' his life and property will be saved by me except for Islamic law, and his accounts will be with Allah, (either to punish him or to forgive him.)"

*Bukhari 52.196*

It is also apparent in the Koran, and even more so in the hadiths (see *1001 Sayings and Deeds of the Prophet Muhammad*, Boreal Books), that Muhammad not only received communications from God via His Messenger to the Messenger, the angel Gabriel, but that the angel carried messages back to the Sender. With what was at stake, you might have expected that, if it was really God repeating himself, His spokesman might have asked Gabriel to let Allah know this invited incredulousness. Then again, the stories repeatedly recited and the iterate rants may have been part of God's plan to “make the Koran easy to remember.” It is also a way of getting people to buy into just about any message by having them repeat it ad infinitum. Maybe that was the idea all along. And it worked, with Islam poised to be, according to Stephen Prothero, author of the *NY Times* bestseller *Religious Literacy*, “the religion of the twenty-first century”; and for many centuries to come, I suspect.

# Appendix

## 99 Names of Allah

The Quran mentions that Allah has “beautiful names” in four revelations (7:180, 17:110, 20:8, 59:24) but does not specify what these names are and how many exist. “The most popular list of 99 names of Allah among Muslims seems to be a list from a weak (da'if) hadith from the collection of Tirmidhi.”

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: “Indeed, Allah has ninety-nine Names, one hundred less one, whoever counts them shall enter Paradise. He is Allah, the one whom there is none worthy of worship except for Him, the Most Merciful (to the creation), the Most Beneficent (to the believers), the King, the Free of Deficiencies, the Granter of Safety, the Granter of Security, the Watcher, the Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme, the Creator, the Originator, the Fashioner, the Pardoner, the Overwhelming, the Giving, the Provider, the Opener, the Knowing, the Taker, the Giver, the Abaser, the Exalter, the One who grants honor, the One who humiliates, the Hearing, the Seeing, the Judge, the Just, the Kind, the Aware, the Forbearing, the Magnificent, the Oft-Forgiving, the Grateful, the Most High, the Great, the Guardian, the Powerful, the Reckoner, the Glorious, the Generous, the Watcher, the Responder, the Liberal Giver, the Wise, the Loving, the Majestic, the Reviver, the Witness, the Truth, the Guarantor), the Strong, the Firm, the One Who Aids, the Praiseworthy, the Encompasser, the One Who Begins things, the One Who brings things back, the One Who gives life, the One Who causes death, the Living, the Self-Sufficient, the One Who brings into existence, the Illustrious, the One, the Master, the Able, the Powerful, the One who hastens, the One who delays, the First, the Last, the Apparent, the Inner, the Owner, the Exalted, the Doer of Good, the Acceptor of repentance, the Avenger, the Pardoning, the Kind, the Owner of Dominion, the Possessor of Glory and Generosity, the One who does justice, the

Gatherer, the Rich, the Enricher, the Preventer, the Harmer, the One who benefits, the Light, the Guide, the Originator, the Lasting, the Inheritor, the Guide, the Tolerant.”

*Jami` at-Tirmidhi 6:45:3507*

This hadith, Tirmidhi himself questioned.

This (version of the) hadith is gharib [unusual, scarce]; it has been narrated from various routes on the authority of Abu Hurairah, but we do not know of the mention of the Names in the numerous narrations, except this one.

Ibn Taimiyya, another illustrious scholar, dismissed Abu Hurairah’s recollection as not being from the Prophet.

Al-Walid (one of the narrators of the hadith) related the Names from (the saying of) one of his Syrian teachers ... specific mention of the Names is not from the words of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), by the agreement of those familiar with Hadith.

These misgivings have meant that “Islamic scholars had to rely on *ijtihad* (independent judgement) to find these names in the Quran and Sunnah and different scholars came up with different lists. Out of the supposed 99 names of Allah, they altogether found at least 276 names”<sup>37</sup> and developed their own list of the Beautiful Names of Allah. Nonetheless, as *WikiIslam* reminds us, the at-Tirmidhi list remains the most popular in spite of lacking one the most mentioned attributes of Allah in the Koran: that of Compassion. The importance of memorising Allah’s ninety-nine beautiful names cannot be overestimated.

#### **Narrated Abu Huraira:**

Allah's Apostle said: “"Allah has ninety-nine names, i.e. one-hundred minus one, and whoever knows them will go to Paradise.”

*Bukhari 50:894*

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<sup>37</sup> 99 Names of Allah, *WikiIslam*, April 24, 2021.