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CONVEYING THE CALL

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A SHORT JOURNEY

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PREFACE

The Holy Qur'an is a book of guidance and spiritual progress. This book outlines the values and beliefs that can make you the best person you can be. It teaches a way of thinking that is positive, progressive and solution-oriented. Any person who adopts the worldview of this book becomes a person who believes in justice for all, equality for all and personal responsibility. The Qur'an is a book of persuasion - it is a book that speaks to you like a friend. Stories of famous people are given only as a way to prove a point, laws are few and are connected with trying to make you a better person. Poetic phrases become beautiful ways to remember sound advice and good teachings. You can open the book at any page, start reading and learn something useful. In short, the Qur'an is a personal letter from God to you, asking you to become something more than you thought you could be, someone whom God loves and someone who loves His world so much that he or she will do everything in their power to take good care of it. This translation of the meaning of the Qur'an is not the same as the original Arabic Qur'an. You can use this book to get at the meanings and message of the Qur'an, but it is the original Arabic text where the message truly resides. May your search bear fruit and may the message of the Qur'an guide your way for all the rest of your days.

Ameen

THE OPENING

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise belongs to God, Lord of all Worlds, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgement. It is you we worship; it is you we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path, the path of those you have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray.

[Chapter 1, Verses 1-7]

QURAN

This is the Book in which there is no doubt, containing guidance for those who are mindful of God, who believe in the unseen, keep up the prayer, and give out of what We have provided for them; those who believe in the revelation sent down to you [Muhammad], and in what was sent before you, those who have firm faith in the Hereafter. Such people are following their Lord's guidance and it is they who will prosper.

[Chapter 2, Verses 2-5]

CLINGING SUBSTANCE

Read in the name of your Lord who created - created human beings from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous - Who taught by the pen - He taught human beings what they didn't know before.

[Chapter 96, Verses 1-5]

MORNING BRIGHTNESS

By the sun in its morning brightness and by the moon as it follows it, by the day as it displays the sun's glory and by the night as it conceals it, by the sky and how He built it and by the earth and how He spread it, and by the soul and its balanced (nature) and its innate awareness (of right and wrong). The one who purifies his soul succeeds and the one who corrupts it fails. *[Chapter 91, Verses 1-10]*

GOD

Say, He is God the One, God the eternal. He does not give birth nor was he born and there is nothing like him. *[Chapter 112, Verses 1-4]*

BALANCE

It is the Lord of mercy who taught the Quran, He created the human being and taught him to communicate. The sun and the moon follow their calculated courses, the plants and the trees submit to his designs; and the heaven He raised and imposed the balance so that you may not exceed in the balance. Weigh with justice and do not fall short in the balance. He set down the earth for his creatures with its fruits, its palm trees and sheathed clusters, its husked grain, its fragrant plants, so which of your Lord's favours will you deny? *[Chapter 55, Verses 1-13]*

NATURE

It is God who splits open the seed and the fruit stone: He brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living— that is God— so how can you turn away from the truth? He makes the dawn break; He makes the night for rest; and He made the sun and the moon to a precise measure. That is the design of the Almighty, the All Knowing. It is He who made the stars, so that they can guide you when land and sea are dark: We have made the signs clear for those who have knowledge. It is He who first produced you from a single soul, then gave you a place to stay [in life] and a resting place [after death]. We have made Our revelations clear to those who understand. It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We produce the shoots of each plant, then bring greenery from it, and from that We bring out grains, one riding on the other in close-packed rows. From the date palm come clusters of low-hanging dates, and there are

gardens of vines, olives, and pomegranates, alike yet different. Watch their fruits as they grow and ripen! In all this there are signs for those who would believe.

[Chapter 6, Verses 95-99]

SIGNS OF GOD

So celebrate God's glory in the evening, in the morning, praise is due to Him in the heavens and the earth, in the late afternoon, and at midday. He brings the living out of the dead and the dead out of the living. He gives life to the earth after death, and you will be brought out in the same way. One of His signs is that He created you from dust and – lo and behold! – you became human and scattered far and wide. Another of His signs is that He created spouses from among yourselves for you to live with in tranquility: He ordained love and kindness between you. There truly are signs in this for those who reflect. Another of His signs is the creation of the heavens and earth, and the diversity of your languages and colours. There truly are signs in this for those who know. Among His signs are your sleep, by night and by day, and your seeking His bounty. There are signs in this for those who listen. Among His signs, too, are that He shows you the lightning that terrifies and inspires hope; that He sends water down from the sky to restore the earth to life after death. There truly are signs in this for those who use their reason. Among His signs, too, is the fact that the heavens and the earth stand firm by His command. In the end, you will all emerge when He calls you from the earth. Everyone in the heavens and earth belongs to Him, and all are obedient to Him. He is the One who originates creation and will do it again– this is even easier for Him. He is above all comparison in the heavens and earth; He is the Almighty, the All Wise.

[Chapter 30, Verses 17-27]

PURPOSE

[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed- and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving - [and] who created seven heavens in layers. You

do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency. So return [your] vision [to the sky]; do you see any breaks? Then return [your] vision twice again. [Your] vision will return to you humbled while it is fatigued. And We have certainly beautified the nearest heaven with stars *[Chapter 67, Verses 2-5]*

REFLECTION

Your Lord is God, who created the heavens and earth in six stages, then established Himself on the throne; He makes the night cover the day in swift pursuit; He created the sun, moon, and stars to be subservient to His command; all creation and command belong to Him. Exalted be God, Lord of all the worlds! Call on your Lord humbly and privately— He does not like those who transgress His bounds: do not corrupt the earth after it has been set right— call on Him fearing and hoping. The mercy of God is close to those who do good. It is God who sends the winds, bearing good news of His coming grace, and when they have gathered up the heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land where We cause rain to fall, bringing out all kinds of crops, just as We shall bring out the dead. Will you not reflect? Vegetation comes out of good land in abundance, by the will of its Lord, but out of bad land only scantily: We explain Our Revelations in various ways to those who give thanks. *[Chapter 7, Verses 54-58]*

CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

Are the disbelievers not aware that the heavens and the earth were once fused together in a single piece, and then We split them apart? We made every living thing from water? So won't they believe? And We put firm mountains on the earth, lest it should sway under them, and set broad paths on it, so that they might follow the right direction, and We made the sky a protected ceiling, but they, from its signs, are turning away. It is He who created night and day, the sun and the moon, each floating in its orbit. We have not granted everlasting life to any other human being before you either [O Muhammad]

– if you die, will [the disbelievers] live for ever? Every soul is certain to taste death: We test you all through the bad and the good, and to Us you will all return.

[Chapter 21, Verses 30-35]

THE SHADOW

Do you not see how your Lord lengthens the shadow? If He had willed, He could have made it stand still— We made the sun its indicator— but We gradually draw it towards Us, little by little. *[Chapter 25, Verses 45-46]*

OBSERVATION

Do the disbelievers not see how rain clouds are formed, how the heavens are lifted, how the mountains are raised high, how the earth is spread out? So remind, [O Muhammad]; you are only a reminder: You are not over them a controller. *[Chapter 88, Verses 17-22]*

USING REASON

This Book is sent down from God, the Mighty, the Wise. There are signs in the heavens and the earth for those who believe: in the creation of you, in the creatures God scattered on earth, there are signs for people of sure faith; in the alternation of night and day, in the rain God provides, sending it down from the sky and reviving the dead earth with it, and in His shifting of the winds there are signs for those who use their reason. These are God's signs that We recount to you [O Muhammad, to show] the Truth. If they deny God and His revelations, what message will they believe in? *[Chapter 45, Verses 2-6]*

DISGRACE

Had your Lord willed, all the people on earth would have believed. So can you [O Muhammad] compel people to believe? No soul can believe except by God's will, and He brings disgrace on those who do not use their reason. Say, "Observe what is in the heavens and earth." But of no avail will be signs or warners to a people who do not

believe. So do they wait except for like [what occurred in] the days of those who passed on before them? Say, "Then wait; indeed, I am with you among those who wait."

[Chapter 10, Verses 99-102]

GOD'S ONENESS

Say, 'Praise be to God and peace on the servants He has chosen. Who is better: God, or those they set up as partners with Him? Who created the heavens and earth? Who sends down water from the sky for you— with which We cause gardens of delight to grow: you have no power to make the trees grow in them— is it another god beside God? No! But they are people who take others to be equal with God. Who is it that made the earth a stable place to live? Who made rivers flow through it? Who set immovable mountains on it and created a barrier between the fresh and salt water? Is it another god beside God? No! But most of them do not know. Who is it that answers the distressed when they call upon Him? Who removes their suffering? Who makes you successors in the earth? Is it another god beside God? Little notice you take! Who is it that guides you through the darkness on land and sea? Who sends the winds as heralds of good news before His mercy? Is it another god beside God? God is far above the partners they put beside him! Who is it that creates life and reproduces it? Who is it that gives you provision from the heavens and earth? Is it another god beside God?' Say, 'Show me your evidence then, if what you say is true.' Say, 'No one in the heavens or on earth knows the unseen except God.' They do not know when they will be raised from the dead: their knowledge cannot comprehend the Hereafter; they are in doubt about it; they are blind to it. So the disbelievers say, 'What! When we and our forefathers have become dust, shall we be brought back to life again? We have heard such promises before, and so did our forefathers. These are just ancient fables.' *[Chapter 27, Verses 59-68]*

GOD'S NAMES

If We had sent this Quran down to a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and

split apart in its awe of God: We offer people such illustrations so that they may reflect. He is God: there is no god other than Him. It is He who knows what is hidden as well as what is in the open, He is the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. He is God: there is no god other than Him, the Controller; the Holy One, Source of Peace, Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Almighty, the Compeller; the Truly Great; God is far above anything they consider to be His partner. He is God: the Creator, the Originator, the Shaper. The best names belong to Him. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him: He is the Almighty, the Wise. *[Chapter 59, Verses 21-24]*

LIGHT

God is the Light of the heavens and earth. His Light is like this: there is a niche, and in it a lamp, the lamp inside a glass, a glass like a glittering star, fuelled from a blessed olive tree from neither east nor west, whose oil almost gives light even when no fire touches it—light upon light— God guides whoever He will to his Light; God draws such comparisons for humankind; God has full knowledge of everything. *[Chapter 24, Verses 35]*

WHEN IN NEED

Everything in the heavens and earth belongs to God. God is self-sufficient and worthy of all praise. If all the trees on earth were pens and all the seas, with seven more seas besides, [were ink,] still God's words would not run out: God is Almighty and All Wise. Creating and resurrecting all of you is only like creating or resurrecting a single soul: God is All Hearing and all Seeing. Do you not see that God causes the night to merge into day and the day to merge into night; that He has subjected the sun and the moon, each to run its course for a stated term; that He is aware of everything you [people] do? This is because God is the Truth, and what they invoke beside Him is false. He is the Most High, Most Great. Do you not see that ships sail through the sea, by the grace of God, to show you [people] some of His wonders? Truly there are signs in this for every steadfast,

thankful person. When the waves loom over those on board like giant shadows they call out to God, devoting their religion entirely to Him. But, when He has delivered them safely to land, some of them waver— only a treacherous, thankless person refuses to acknowledge Our signs. O Humankind, be mindful of your Lord and fear a day when no parent will take the place of their child, nor a child take the place of their parent, in any way. God's promise is true, so do not let the present life delude you, nor let the Deceiver delude you about God. *[Chapter 31, Verses 26-33]*

GOD'S KNOWLEDGE

He has the keys to the unseen: no one knows them but Him. He knows all that is in the land and sea. No leaf falls without His knowledge, nor is there a single grain in the darkness of the earth, or anything, fresh or withered, that is not written in a clear Record. It is He who calls your souls back by night, knowing what you have done by day, then raises you up again in the daytime until your fixed term is fulfilled. It is to Him that you will return in the end, and He will tell you what you have done. He is the Supreme Master over His subjects. He sends out recorders to watch over you until, when death overtakes any of you, those sent by Us take his soul— they never fail in their duty. Then they will all be returned to God, their true Lord. The Judgement truly belongs to Him, and He is the swiftest of reckoners. Say [O Muhammad], 'Who is it that saves you from the dark depths of land and sea when you humbly and secretly call to Him [and say], "If He rescues us from this, We shall truly be thankful"?' Say, 'God rescues you from this and every distress; yet still you worship others beside Him.' *[Chapter 6, Verses 59-64]*

THE CREATOR OF COLOUR

Have you not considered how God sends water down from the sky and that We produce with it fruits of varied colours; that there are in the mountains layers of white and red of various hues, and jet black; that there are various colours among human beings, wild animals, and livestock too? It is those of His servants who have knowledge who

stand in true awe of God. God is Almighty, Most Forgiving. Those who recite God's scripture, keep up the prayer, give secretly and openly from what We have provided for them, may hope for a trade that will never decline: He will repay them in full, and give them extra from His bounty. He is Most Forgiving, Most Appreciative. *[Chapter 35, Verses 27-30]*

FAVOURS

[He is] Lord of the two sunrises and Lord of the two sunsets. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? He released the two seas, meeting [side by side]; between them is a barrier [so] neither of them transgresses. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? From both of them emerge pearl and coral. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? And to Him belong the ships [with sails] elevated in the sea like mountains. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? Everyone upon the earth will perish, and there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honour. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? Whoever is within the heavens and earth asks Him; every day He is bringing about a matter. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? We will attend to you, O prominent beings. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? O company of jinn and humankind, if you are able to pass beyond the regions of the heavens and the earth, then pass. You will not pass except by authority [from God]. So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? *[Chapter 55, Verses 17-34]*

GRATITUDE

He creates you in your mothers' wombs, in one stage after another, in threefold depths of darkness. Such is God, your Lord; He holds control, there is no god but Him. How can you turn away? If you are ungrateful, remember God has no need of you, yet He is not pleased by ingratitude in His servants; if you are grateful, He is pleased [to see] it in

you. No soul will bear another's burden. You will return to your Lord in the end and He will inform you of what you have done: He knows well what is in the depths of [your] hearts. *[Chapter 39, Verses 6-7]*

FRIENDS OF GOD

In whatever matter you may be engaged and whatever part of the Quran you are reciting, whatever work you are doing, We witness you when you are engaged in it. Not even the weight of a speck of dust in the earth or sky escapes your Lord, nor anything lesser or greater: it is all written in a clear record. But for those who are on God's side there is no fear, nor shall they grieve. For those who believe and are conscious of God, for them there is good news in this life and in the Hereafter— there is no changing the promises of God— that is truly the supreme triumph. *[Chapter 10, Verses 61-64]*

CONVICTION

We shall show them Our signs in every region of the earth and in themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that your Lord witnesses everything? Truly, they doubt that they will meet their Lord; truly He encompasses everything. *[Chapter 41, Verses 53-54]*

CONTENTMENT

So [Humankind] respond to your Lord before there comes a Day that cannot, against God's will, be averted— you will have no refuge on that Day, and no possibility of denying [your sins]. If they still turn away [remember that] We have not sent you [O Muhammad] to be their guardian: your only duty is to deliver the message. And when We let the human being taste mercy from Us, he becomes happy with it, and when adversity afflicts them because of what their hands have done, the human being becomes ungrateful. God has control of the heavens and the earth; He creates whatever He will— He grants female offspring to whoever He will, male to whoever He will, or

both male and female, and He makes whoever He will barren: He is All Knowing and All Powerful. It is not granted to any mortal that God should speak to him except through revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger to reveal by His command what He will: He is Exalted and Wise. *[Chapter 42, Verses 47-51]*

SEEING GOD

Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, "Be," and it is. Those who do not know say, "Why does God not speak to us or there come to us a sign?" Thus spoke those before them like their words. Their hearts resemble each other. We have shown clearly the signs to a people who are certain [in faith]. *[Chapter 2, Verses 117-118]*

ISLAM

Say, [O Muhammad], "O people, if you are in doubt as to my religion - then I do not worship those which you worship besides God; but I worship God, who causes your death. And I have been commanded to be of the believers and [commanded], 'Direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth, and never be of those who associate others with God; and do not invoke besides God that which neither benefits you nor harms you, for if you did, then indeed you would be of the wrongdoers. And if God should touch you with adversity, there is no remover of it except Him; and if He intends for you good, then there is no repeller of His bounty. He causes it to reach whom He wills of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. Say [O Muhammad], "O People, the truth has come to you from your Lord, so whoever is guided is only guided for [the benefit of] his soul, and whoever goes astray only goes astray [in violation] against it. And I am not over you a manager.'" And follow what is revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and be patient until God will judge. And He is the best of judges. *[Chapter 10, Verses 104-109]*

WORSHIP

Every previous people to whom a messenger was sent also said, 'A sorcerer, or maybe a madman!' Did they tell one another to do this? No! They are a people who exceed all bounds so ignore them [O Muhammad]— you are not to blame— and go on reminding [people], it is good for those who believe to be reminded. I created jinn and humankind only to worship Me. *[Chapter 51, Verses 56]*

KINSHIP

It is He who released the two bodies of flowing water, one sweet and fresh and the other salty and bitter, and put an insurmountable barrier between them. It is He who creates human beings from fluid, then makes them kin by blood and marriage: your Lord is All Powerful! Yet instead of God they worship things that can neither benefit nor harm them. *[Chapter 25, Verses 53-55]*

DISBELIVERS

Say [O Muhammad], 'Disbelievers: I do not worship what you worship, you do not worship what I worship, I will never worship what you worship, you will never worship what I worship: you have your religion and I have mine.'

[Chapter 109, Verses 1-6]

MUHAMMAD

Say [O Muhammad], 'I am only a human being, like you, to whom it has been revealed that your God is One. Anyone who fears to meet his Lord should do good deeds and give no one a share in the worship due to his Lord' *[Chapter 18, Verses 110]*

NATURAL RELIGION

So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. This is the natural disposition God instilled in humankind— there is no altering God's creation— and this is the right religion, though most people do not realize it. Turn to Him alone, all of you. Be mindful of Him; keep up the prayer; do not join those who ascribe partners to God.

[Chapter 30, Verses 30-31]

STEEP ROAD

I swear by this land, and you're a legal resident of this land, and I swear by the bond between a parent and a child- and so it was that We created human beings to labour on in toil and hardship. Does he think there's no power over him, and while he may boast, "I have wealth to waste!" does he think no one's watching him? Haven't We given him a pair of eyes, a tongue and a pair of lips and then shown him the two roads (of good and evil)? Yet, he makes no effort to travel the steep road, and how can you understand what the steep road is? It is to free a slave, to feed at a time of hunger an orphaned relative or a poor person in distress, and to be one of those who believe and urge one another to steadfastness and compassion. *[Chapter 90, Verses 1-17]*

EASE AND HARDSHIP

By the night when it covers, by the radiant day, by His creation of male and female! Truly, varied are the goals (for which you strive). There is the one who gives, who is mindful of God, who testifies to goodness, We shall smooth his way towards ease. There is the one who is miserly, who is self-satisfied, who denies goodness. We shall smooth his way towards hardship and his wealth will not help him as he falls. Our part is to provide guidance, this world and the next belong to Us. *[Chapter 92, Verses 1-13]*

COMMON KINDNESS

[Muhammad], have you considered the person who denies the Judgement? It is he who pushes aside the orphan and does not urge others to feed the needy. So woe to those who pray but are heedless of their prayer; those who are all show and forbid common kindnesses *[Chapter 107, Verses 1-7]*

THE GARDENERS

We have tried them as We tried the owners of a certain garden, who swore that they would harvest its fruits in the morning and made no allowance [for the Will of God]: a disaster from your Lord struck the garden as they slept and by morning it was stripped bare, a desolate land. Still they called each other at daybreak, 'Go early to your field if you wish to gather all its fruits,' and went off, whispering, 'Make sure no poor person enters the garden today!'— they left early, bent on their purpose— but when they saw the garden, they said, 'We must have lost our way! No—we are ruined!' The wisest of them said, 'Did I not say to you, "Will you not glorify God?"'— they said, 'Glory be to God, Our Lord! Truly, we were doing wrong!'— and then they turned to each other in mutual reproach. They said, 'Alas for us! We have done terrible wrong, but maybe our Lord will give us something better in its place: we truly turn to Him in hope.' Such is the punishment [in this life], but greater still is the punishment in the Hereafter, if only they knew. There will be Gardens of bliss for those who are mindful of God. Should We treat those who submit to Us as We treat those who do evil? What is the matter with you? On what basis do you judge? *[Chapter 68, Verses 17-36]*

CHARITY

Whoever is given wisdom has truly been given much good, but only those with insight bear this in mind. Whatever you may give, or vow to give, God knows it well, and those who do wrong will have no one to help them. If you give charity openly, it is good, but

if you keep it secret and give to the needy in private, that is better for you, and it will atone for some of your bad deeds: God is well aware of all that you do.

[Chapter 2, Verses 269-271]

SINCERITY

You who believe, do not cancel out your charitable deeds with reminders and hurtful words, like someone who spends his wealth only to be seen by people, not believing in God and the Last Day. Such a person is like a rock with earth on it: heavy rain falls and leaves it completely bare. Such people get no rewards for their works: God does not guide the disbelievers. But those who spend their wealth in order to gain God's approval, and as an affirmation of their own faith, are like a garden on a hill: heavy rain falls and it produces double its normal yield; even if no heavy rain falls, it will still be watered by the dew. God sees all that you do. Would any of you like to have a garden of palm trees and vines, graced with flowing streams and all kinds of produce, which, when you are afflicted with old age and feeble offspring, is struck by a fiery whirlwind and burnt down? In this way God makes His messages clear to you, so that you may reflect on them.

[Chapter 2, Verses 264-266]

DIVINE LOVE

Your God is the one God: there is no god except Him, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. In the creation of the heavens and earth; in the alternation of night and day; in the ships that sail the seas with goods for people; in the water which God sends down from the sky to give life to the earth when it has been barren, scattering all kinds of creatures over it; in the changing of the winds and clouds that run their appointed courses between the sky and earth: there are signs in all these for those who use their minds. Even so, there are some who choose to worship others besides God as rivals to Him, loving

them with the love due to God, But those of faith are overflowing in their love for God.
[Chapter 2, Verses 163-165]

USING YOUR GIFTS

It is God who endowed you with hearing, sight, and hearts—how seldom you are grateful! It is He who made you multiply on earth. It is to Him that you will be gathered: it is He who gives life and death; the alternation of night and day depends on Him; will you not use your minds? *[Chapter 23, Verses 78-80]*

THE HUMBLE

Seek help with steadfastness and prayer— though this is hard indeed for anyone but the humble, who know that they will meet their Lord and that it is to Him they will return.
[Chapter 2, Verses 45-46]

PRAYER

Indeed, humankind was created anxious: when evil touches him, impatient, and when good touches him, withholding [of it], except the observers of prayer -Those who are constant in their prayer and those within whose wealth is a known right for the petitioner and the deprived -And those who believe in the Day of Recompense.
[Chapter 70, Verses 19-26]

DEPRESSION AND SATISFACTION

And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind." He will say, "My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?" [God] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten." And thus do We recompense he who transgressed and did not believe in the signs of his Lord. And the punishment of the Hereafter is more severe and more enduring. Then, has it not

become clear to them how many generations We destroyed before them as they walk among their dwellings? Indeed in that are signs for those of intelligence. And if not for a word that preceded from your Lord, punishment would have been an obligation [due immediately], and [if not for] a specified term [decreed]. So be patient over what they say and exalt [God] with praise of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting; and during periods of the night [exalt Him] and at the ends of the day, that you may be satisfied. And do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given enjoyment to [some] categories of them, [its being but] the splendour of worldly life by which We test them. And the provision of your Lord is better and more enduring.

[Chapter 20, Verses 124-131]

HEALING

O Humankind, there has to come to you instruction from your Lord and healing for what is in the breasts and guidance and mercy for the believers. Say [O Muhammad], "In the bounty of God and in His mercy - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate." *[Chapter 10, Verses 57-58]*

DESTINY

We have bound each human being's destiny to his neck. On the Day of Resurrection, We shall bring out a record for each of them, which they will find spread wide open, 'Read your record. Today your own soul is enough to calculate your account.' Whoever accepts guidance does so for his own good; whoever strays does so at his own peril. No soul will bear another's burden.

[Chapter 17, Verses 13-15]

GUIDANCE

[O Muhammad], if My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I respond to those who call Me, so let them respond to Me, and believe in Me, so that they may be guided.

[Chapter 2, Verse 186]

INNER PEACE

Those who have faith and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of God— truly it is in the remembrance of God that hearts find peace—those who believe and do righteous deeds: joy awaits these, and their final homecoming will be excellent.' So We have sent you [O Muhammad] to a community— other communities passed away long before them— to recite to them what We reveal to you. Yet they disbelieve in the Lord of Mercy. Say, 'He is my Lord: there is no god but Him. I put my trust in Him and to Him is my return.' *[Chapter 13, Verses 28-30]*

TRANQUILITY

What about the one whose heart God has opened in devotion to Him, so that he walks in light from his Lord? Alas for those whose hearts harden at the mention of God! They have clearly lost their way. God has sent down the most beautiful of all teachings: a Scripture that is consistent and draws comparisons; that causes the skins of those in awe of their Lord to shiver. Then their skins and their hearts soften at the mention of God: such is God's guidance. *[Chapter 39, Verses 22-23]*

LONGING

Did We not relieve your heart for you, and remove the burden that weighed so heavily on your back, and raise your reputation high? So truly where there is hardship there is

also ease; truly where there is hardship there is also ease. So when you have finished (your duties), then stand up (for worship). And to your Lord direct (your) longing.

[Chapter 94, Verses 1-8]

WISDOM

We endowed Luqman with wisdom: 'Be thankful to God: whoever gives thanks benefits his own soul, and as for those who are thankless—God is self-sufficient, worthy of all praise.' Luqman counselled his son, 'My son, do not attribute any partners to God: attributing partners to Him is a terrible wrong.' We have commanded people to be good to their parents: their mothers carried them, with strain upon strain, and it takes two years to wean them. Give thanks to Me and to your parents— all will return to Me. If they strive to make you associate with Me anything about which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. Yet keep their company in this life according to what is right, and follow the path of those who turn to Me. You will all return to Me in the end, and I will tell you everything that you have done. [And Luqman continued], 'My son, if even the weight of a mustard seed were hidden in a rock or anywhere in the heavens or earth, God would bring it [to light], for He is All Subtle and All Aware. Keep up the prayer, my son; command what is right; forbid what is wrong; bear anything that happens to you steadfastly: these are things to be aspired to. Do not turn your nose up at people, nor walk about the place arrogantly, for God does not love arrogant or boastful people. Go at a moderate pace and lower your voice, for the ugliest of all voices is the braying of donkeys.' [Humankind], do you not see how God has made what is in the heavens and on the earth useful to you, and has lavished His blessings on you both outwardly and inwardly? *[Chapter 31, Verses 12-20]*

ARROGANCE

Honour your pledges: you will be questioned about your pledges. Give full measure when you measure, and weigh with accurate scales: that is better and fairer in the end.

Do not follow blindly what you do not know to be true: ears, eyes, and heart, you will be questioned about all these. Do not strut arrogantly about the earth: you cannot break it open, nor match the mountains in height. The evil of all these actions is hateful to your Lord. This is some of the wisdom your Lord has revealed to you [O Muhammad]: do not set up another god beside God, or you will be thrown into Hell, blamed and rejected. *[Chapter 17, Verses 34-39]*

REPELLING EVIL

And who is better in speech than one who invites to God and does righteousness and says, "Indeed, I am of the Muslims." Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then you will see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend, but only those who are steadfast in patience, only those who are blessed with great righteousness, will attain to such goodness. *[Chapter 41, Verses 33-35]*

HUMANITY

The believers are brothers, so make peace between your two brothers and be mindful of God, so that you may be given mercy. Believers, no one group of men should jeer at another; who may after all be better than them; no one group of women should jeer at another; who may after all be better than them; do not speak ill of one another; do not use offensive nicknames for one another. How bad it is to be called a mischief-maker after accepting faith! Those who do not repent of this behaviour are evildoers. Believers avoid making too many assumptions— some assumptions are sinful— and do not spy on one another or speak ill of people behind their backs: would any of you like to eat the flesh of your dead brother? No, you would hate it. So be mindful of God: God is Ever Relenting, Most Merciful. O Humankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you. Indeed, God is Knowing and Acquainted. *[Chapter 49, Verses 10-13]*

GOOD AND BAD WORD

Those who believed and did good deeds will be brought into Gardens graced with flowing streams, there to remain with their Lord's permission: their greeting there is 'Peace'. Do you not see how God makes comparisons? A good word is like a good tree whose root is firm and whose branches are high in the sky, yielding constant fruit by its Lord's leave— God makes such comparisons for people so that they may reflect— but an evil word is like a rotten tree, uprooted from the surface of the earth, with no power to endure. God will give firmness to those who believe in the firmly rooted word, both in this world and the Hereafter, but the evildoers He leaves to stray: God does whatever He will. *[Chapter 14, Verses 23-27]*

THE BEE

And your Lord inspired the bee, saying, 'Build yourselves houses in the mountains and trees and what people construct. Then feed on all kinds of fruit and follow the ways made easy for you by your Lord!' From their bellies comes a drink of different colours in which there is healing for people. There truly is a sign in this for those who think. It is God who has created you and in time will cause you to die. Some of you will be reduced, in old age, to a most abject state, so that, after having knowledge, they will know nothing at all: God is truly All Knowing and All Powerful. *[Chapter 16, Verses 68-70]*

TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD

Say "God is the Creator of all things: He is the One, the All Compelling." He sends water from the sky that fills riverbeds to overflowing, each according to its measure. The stream carries on its surface a growing layer of froth, like the froth that appears when people melt metals in the fire to make ornaments and tools: in this way God illustrates truth and falsehood— the froth disappears, but what is of benefit to humankind stays

behind— this is how God makes illustrations. There will be the best of rewards for those who respond to their Lord *[Chapter 13, Verses 16-18]*

THE STORY OF QARUN

Qarun was one of Moses' people, but he oppressed them. And We gave him of treasures whose keys would burden a band of strong men. His people said to him, 'Do not gloat, for God does not like people who gloat. Seek the life to come by means of what God has granted you, but do not neglect your rightful share in this world. Do good to others as God has done good to you. Do not seek to spread corruption in the land, for God does not love those who do this,' but he answered, 'This wealth was given to me on account of the knowledge I possess.' Did he not know that God had destroyed many generations before him, who had greater power than him and built up greater wealth? The guilty will not be questioned about their sins. He went out among his people in all his pomp, and those whose aim was the life of this world said, 'If only we had been given something like what Qarun has been given: he really is a very fortunate man,' but those who were given knowledge said, 'Alas for you! God's reward is better for those who believe and do good deeds: only those who are steadfast will attain this.' We caused the earth to swallow him and his home: he had no one to help him against God, nor could he defend himself. The next day, those who had, the day before, wished to be in his place exclaimed, 'Alas [for you, Qarun]! It is God alone who gives what He will, abundantly or sparingly, to whichever He will of His creatures: if God had not been gracious to us, He would have caused the earth to swallow us too.' Alas indeed! Those who deny the truth will never prosper. We grant the Home in the Hereafter to those who do not seek superiority on earth or spread corruption: the happy ending is awarded to those who are mindful of God. Whoever comes before God with a good deed will receive a better reward; whoever comes with an evil deed will be punished only for what he has done. *[Chapter 28, Verses 76-84]*

LOVE OF WEALTH

Indeed humankind, to his Lord, is ungrateful- and he is witness to this – he is truly excessive in his love of wealth. Does he not know that when the contents of graves burst forth, when the secrets of hearts are uncovered, on that Day, their Lord will be fully aware of them all? *[Chapter 100, Verses 6-11]*

THIS LIFE

Bear in mind that the present life is just a game, a diversion, an attraction, a cause of boasting among you, of rivalry in wealth and children. It is like plants that spring up after the rain: their growth at first delights the sowers, but then you see them wither away, turn yellow, and become stubble. There is terrible punishment in the next life as well as forgiveness and approval from God; the life of this world is only an illusory pleasure. So race for your Lord's forgiveness and a Garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for those who believe in God and His messengers: that is God's bounty, which He bestows on whoever He pleases. God's bounty is infinite. No misfortune can happen, either in the earth or in yourselves, that was not set down in writing before We brought it into being– that is easy for God– so you need not grieve for what you miss or gloat over what you gain. God does not love the conceited, the boastful, those who are miserly, and who tell other people to be miserly. If anyone turns away, remember that God is self-sufficient and worthy of praise. We sent Our messengers with clear signs, the Scripture and the Balance, so that people could uphold justice: We also sent iron, with its mighty strength and many uses for humankind, so that God could mark out those who would help Him and His messengers though they cannot see Him. Truly God is Powerful, Almighty. *[Chapter 57, Verses 20-25]*

MATERIALISM

Whatever things you have been given for the life of this world are merely [temporary] gratification and vanity: that which is with God is better and more lasting- will you not use your reason? Can the person who will see the fulfilment of the good promise We gave him be compared to someone We have given some enjoyments for this worldly life but who, on the Day of Resurrection, will be summoned? *[Chapter 28, Verses 60-61]*

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Whoever desires the reward of this world - then with God is the reward of this world and the Hereafter. And ever is God Hearing and Seeing. O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for God, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, God is more worthy of both. So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed God is ever, with what you do, Acquainted.

[Chapter 4, Verses 134-135]

UNIVERSAL JUSTICE

You who believe, be steadfast in your devotion to God and bear witness impartially: do not let hatred of others lead you away from justice, but adhere to justice, for that is closer to awareness of God. Be mindful of God: God is well aware of all that you do. God has promised forgiveness and a rich reward to those who have faith and do good works *[Chapter 5, Verses 8-9]*

THE MUSLIMS

Blessed is He who has placed in the sky great stars and placed therein a [burning] lamp and luminous moon. And it is He who has made the night and the day in succession for whoever desires to remember or desires gratitude. And the servants of the Most

Merciful are those who walk humbly on the earth, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace, those who spend the night bowed down or standing, worshipping their Lord, who plead, 'Our Lord, turn away from us the suffering of Hell, for it is a dreadful torment to suffer! It is an evil home, a foul resting place!' They are those who are neither wasteful nor niggardly when they spend, but keep to a just balance; those who never invoke any other deity beside God, nor take a life, which God has made sacred, except in the pursuit of justice *[Chapter 25, Verses 61-68]*

LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL

God wants to make clear to you [the lawful from the unlawful] and guide you to the [good] practices of those before you and to accept your repentance. And God is Knowing and Wise. God wants to accept your repentance, but those who follow [their] passions want you to digress [into] a great deviation. And God wants to lighten for you [your difficulties]; and humankind was created weak. O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, God is to you Ever Merciful. *[Chapter 4, Verses 26-29]*

TWO BROTHERS

When they both offered a sacrifice [to God], and it was accepted from one of them but was not accepted from the other. One said, "I will kill you," but the other said, "God only accepts the sacrifice of those who are mindful of Him. If you raise your hand to kill me, I will not raise mine to kill you. I fear God, the Lord of all worlds, and I would rather you were burdened with my sins as well as yours and became an inhabitant of the Fire: such is the evildoers reward." But his soul prompted him to kill his brother: he killed him and became one of the losers. God sent a raven to scratch up the ground and show him how to cover his brother's corpse and he said, "Woe is me! Could I not have been like this raven and covered up my brother's body?" He became remorseful. On account of

[his deed], We decreed to the Children of Israel that if anyone kills a person— unless in retribution for murder or spreading corruption in the land— it is as if he kills all humankind, while if any saves a life it is as if he saves the lives of all humankind

[Chapter 5, Verses 26-29]

THE MESSENGER

They ask you [O Muhammad] about intoxicants and gambling: say, 'There is great sin in both, and some benefit for people: the sin is greater than the benefit.' They ask you what they should give: say, 'Give what you can spare.' In this way, God makes His messages clear to you, so that you may reflect on this world and the next. They ask you about [the property of] orphans: say, 'It is good to set things right for them. If you combine their affairs with yours, remember they are your brothers and sisters: God knows those who spoil things and those who improve them. Had He so willed, He could have made you vulnerable too: He is Almighty and Wise. *[Chapter 2, Verses 219-220]*

TEN COMMANDMENTS

Say [O Muhammad], 'Come! I will tell you what your Lord has really forbidden you. Do not ascribe anything as a partner to Him; be good to your parents; do not kill your children in fear of poverty'— We will provide for you and for them— 'stay well away from committing obscenities, whether openly or in secret; do not take the life God has made sacred, except by (legal) right. This is what He commands you to do: perhaps you will use your reason. Stay well away from the property of orphans, except with the best [intentions], until they come of age; give full measure and weight, according to justice'— 'We do not burden any soul with more than it can bear—' when you speak, be just, even if it concerns a relative; keep any promises you make in God's name. This is what He commands you to do, so that you may take heed'— this is My path, leading straight, so follow it, and do not follow other ways: they will lead you away from it—' This is what He commands you to do, so that you may refrain from wrongdoing.' *[Chapter 6, Verses 151-153]*

CORRUPTION

Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]. Say, [O Muhammad], “Travel through the land and observe how was the end of those before. Most of them were associators [of others with God]. So direct your face toward the correct religion before a Day comes from God of which there is no repelling. *[Chapter 30, Verses 41-43]*

THE BOOKS

God: there is no god but Him, the Ever Living, the Ever Watchful. Step by step, He has sent the Scripture down to you [O Muhammad] with the Truth, confirming what went before: He sent down the Torah and the Gospel earlier as a guide for people and He has sent down the distinction [between right and wrong]. Those who deny God’s revelations will suffer severe torment: God is Almighty and capable of retribution. Nothing on earth or in heaven is hidden from God: it is He who shapes you all in the womb as He pleases. There is no God but Him, the Mighty, the Wise it is He who has sent this Scripture down to you [Muhammad]. Some of its verses are definite in meaning—these are the cornerstone of the Scripture—and others are ambiguous. The perverses at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities in their attempt to make trouble and to pin down a specific meaning of their own: only God knows the true meaning. Those firmly grounded in knowledge say, ‘We believe in it: it is all from our Lord’—only those with real perception will take heed. *[Chapter 3, Verses 2-7]*

PREVIOUS REVELATIONS

(Those previous revelations clearly taught that) no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another, and that human beings shall have nothing more than what they strive for; that the results of (human) efforts will soon be seen, and then he’ll be paid back in full;

that the final destination is back to your lord, for he's the one who grants laughter and tears and both death and life; that He Himself created the two sexes, male and female, from an ejected drop of sperm; that He will undertake the second Creation; that it is He who gives wealth and possessions [Chapter 53, Verses 38-48]

THE QURAN

Praise be to God, who has sent down upon His slave [Muhammad] the Book and has not made therein any deviance. [He has made it] straight, to warn of severe punishment from Him and to give good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they will have a good reward. In which they will remain forever and to warn those who say, "God has taken a son." They have no knowledge of it, nor had their fathers. Grave is the word that comes out of their mouths; they speak not except a lie. Then perhaps you would kill yourself through grief over them, [O Muhammad], if they do not believe in this message, [and] out of sorrow. We have adorned the earth with attractive things so that We may test people to find out which of them do best, but We shall reduce all this to barren dust. [Chapter 18, Verses 1-7]

VISION

[He is] Originator of the heavens and the earth. How could He have a son when He does not have a companion and He created all things? And He is, of all things, Knowing. That is God, your Lord; there is no deity except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He is Disposer of all things. No vision can take Him in, but He takes in all vision. He is the All Subtle, the All Aware. Now clear proof has come to you from your Lord: if anyone sees it, that will be to his advantage; if anyone is blind to it, that will be to his loss-. And [say O Muhammad], "I am not a guardian over you." And thus do We diversify the verses so the disbelievers will say, "You (Muhammad) have studied," and so We may make the Qur'an clear for a people who know.

[Chapter 6, Verses 101-105]

MARY

The angels said to Mary: 'Mary, God has chosen you and made you pure: He has truly chosen you above all women. Mary, be devout to your Lord, prostrate yourself in worship, bow down with those who pray.' That is from the news of the unseen which We reveal to you, [O Muhammad]. And you were not with them when they cast their pens as to which of them should be responsible for Mary. Nor were you with them when they disputed. The angels said, 'Mary, God gives you news of a Word from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, who will be held in honour in this world and the next, who will be one of those brought near to God. He will speak to people in his infancy and in his adulthood. He will be one of the righteous.' She said, 'My Lord, how can I have a son when no man has touched me?' [The angel] said, 'This is how God creates what He will: when He has ordained something, He only says, "Be", and it is. He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel, And [make him] a messenger to the Children of Israel, [who will say], "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make the shape of a bird for you out of clay, then breathe into it and, with God's permission, it will become a real bird; I will heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead back to life with God's permission; I will tell you what you may eat and what you may store up in your houses. There truly is a sign for you in this, if you are believers. I have come to confirm the truth of the Torah which preceded me, and to make some things lawful to you which used to be forbidden. I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. Be mindful of God, obey me: God is my Lord and your Lord, so serve Him— that is a straight path.'" [Chapter 3, Verses 42-51]

JESUS

O Humankind, the Messenger has come to you with the truth from your Lord, so believe; it is better for you. But if you disbelieve - then indeed, to God belongs whatever is in the heavens and earth. O People of the Book, do not go to excess in your religion,

and do not say anything about God except the truth: the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was nothing more than a messenger of God, His word, directed to Mary, a spirit from Him. So believe in God and His messengers and do not speak of a 'Trinity'— stop [this], that is better for you— God is only one God, He is far above having a son, everything in the heavens and earth belongs to Him and He is the best one to trust. The Messiah would never disdain to be a servant of God, nor would the angels who are close to Him. He will gather before Him all those who disdain His worship and are arrogant: to those who believe and do good works He will give due rewards and more of His bounty; to those who are disdainful and arrogant He will give an agonizing torment, and they will find no one besides God to protect or help them. O Humankind, there has come to you a conclusive proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light. So those who believe in God and hold fast to Him - He will admit them to mercy from Himself and bounty and guide them to Himself on a straight path.

[Chapter 4, Verses 170-175]

TRINITY

Those people who say that God is the third of three are defying [the truth]: there is only One God. If they persist in what they are saying, a painful punishment will afflict those of them who persist. Why do they not turn to God and ask His forgiveness, when God is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful? The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a messenger; other messengers had come and gone before him; his mother was a virtuous woman; both ate food [like other mortals]. See how clear We make these signs for them; see how deluded they are. Say, 'How can you worship something other than God, that has no power to do you harm or good? God alone is the All Hearing and All Knowing.'

[Chapter 5, Verses 73-76]

MERCY

I shall ordain My mercy for those who are conscious of God and pay the prescribed alms; who believe in Our Revelations; who follow the Messenger– the unlettered prophet they find described in the Torah that is with them, and in the Gospel– who commands them to do right and forbids them to do wrong, who makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful, and relieves them of their burdens, and the iron collars that were on them. So it is those who believe him, honour and help him, and who follow the light which has been sent down with him, who will succeed.' Say [O Muhammad], 'O people, I am the Messenger of God to you all, from Him who has control over the heavens and the earth. There is no God but Him; He gives life and death', so believe in God and His Messenger; the unlettered prophet who believes in God and His words, and follow him so that you may find guidance.' [Chapter 7, Verses 156-158]

THE NATURAL EXTENSION

You are sure to find that the closest in affection towards the believers are those who say, 'We are Christians,' for there are among them people devoted to learning and ascetics. These people are not given to arrogance, and when they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger (Muhammad), you will see their eyes overflowing with tears because they recognize the Truth [in it]. They say, 'Our Lord, we believe, so count us amongst the witnesses. Why should we not believe in God and in the Truth that has come down to us, when we long for our Lord to include us in the company of the righteous?' For saying this, God has rewarded them with Gardens graced with flowing streams, and there they will stay; that is the reward of those who do good. Those who reject the truth and deny our messages will be the inhabitants of Hellfire.

[Chapter 5, Verses 82-86]

THE WAY OF THE PROPHETS

Say, [O believers], "We have believed in God and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." So if they believe in the same as you believe in, then they have been [rightly] guided; but if they turn away, they are only in dissension, and God will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing. [And say, "Ours is] the religion of God. And who is better than God in [ordaining] religion? And we are worshippers of Him." Say, [O Muhammad], "Do you argue with us about God while He is our Lord and your Lord? For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. And we are sincere [in deed and intention] to Him." *[Chapter 2, Verses 136-139]*

RELIGION OF ABRAHAM

Believers, bow down, prostrate yourselves, worship your Lord, and do good so that you may succeed. And strive for God with the striving due to Him. He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty. [It is] the religion of your father, Abraham. God named you "Muslims" before [in former scriptures] and in this [revelation] that the Messenger may be a witness over you and you may be witnesses over the people. So keep up the prayer, give the prescribed alms, and seek refuge in God: He is your protector—an excellent protector and an excellent helper *[Chapter 22, Verses 77-78]*

COMMON GROUND

Say [O Muhammad], "People of the Book, let us arrive at a statement that is common to us all: we worship God alone, we ascribe no partner to Him, and none of us takes others beside God as lords." If they turn away, say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to God]." *[Chapter 3, Verses 64-69]*

SUBMISSION

Indeed, those who have believed and those who were Jews and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and those who associated with God - God will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed God is, over all things, Witness; God witnesses all things. Do you not realize that everything in the heavens and earth submits to God: the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, and the animals? So do many human beings, though for many others punishment is well deserved.

[Chapter 22, Verses 17-18]

DROP OF FLUID

It is God who created you from dust and later from a drop of fluid; then He made you into two sexes; no female conceives or gives birth without His knowledge; no person grows old or has his life cut short, except in accordance with a Record: all this is easy for God. *[Chapter 35, Verse 11]*

MEN AND WOMEN

And the believers, men and women, are protecting friends one of another; they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and they establish worship and they pay the poor-due, and they obey God and His messenger. God will give His mercy to such people: God is Almighty and Wise. God has promised the believers, both men and women, Gardens graced with flowing streams where they will remain; good, peaceful homes in Gardens of lasting bliss; and— greatest of all—God's good pleasure. That is the supreme triumph.

[Chapter 9, Verses 71-72]

EQUALITY

For men and women who are devoted to God— believing men and women, obedient men and women, truthful men and women, steadfast men and women, humble men and

women, charitable men and women, fasting men and women, chaste men and women, men and women who remember God often— God has prepared forgiveness and a rich reward. *[Chapter 33, Verse 35]*

GOODNESS

Goodness does not consist in turning your face towards east or west. The truly good are those who believe in God and the Last Day, in the angels, the Scripture, and the prophets; who give away some of their wealth, however much they cherish it, to their relatives, to orphans, the needy, travellers and beggars, and to liberate those in bondage; those who keep up the prayer and pay the prescribed alms; who keep pledges whenever they make them; who are steadfast in misfortune, adversity, and times of anger. These are the ones who are true, and it is they who are aware of God. *[Chapter 2, Verse 177]*

MISFORTUNE

If God were to hasten on for people the harm [they have earned] as they wish to hasten on the good, their time would already be up. But We leave those who do not expect to meet Us to wander blindly in their excesses. When misfortune comes upon a human being, he cries out to Us, whether lying on his side, sitting, or standing, but as soon as We relieve him of his trouble he goes on his way as if he had never cried out to Us to remove his trouble. In this way the deeds of such heedless people are made attractive to them. *[Chapter 10, Verses 11-12]*

DEATH

'Little is the enjoyment in this world, the Hereafter is far better for those who are mindful of God: you will not be wronged by as much as the fibre in a date stone. Death will overtake you no matter where you may be, even inside high towers.' When good fortune comes their way, they say, 'This is from God,' but when harm befalls them, they say, 'This is from you [Muhammad]'. Say to them [O Muhammad], 'Both come from God.'

What is the matter with these people that they can barely understand what they are told? *[Chapter 4, Verses 77-78]*

THE TEST

And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient, who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to God, and indeed to Him we will return." Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided. *[Chapter 2, Verses 155-158]*

THIS LIFE

It is He who enables you to travel on land and sea until, when you are sailing on ships and rejoicing in the favouring wind, a storm arrives: waves come at those on board from all sides and they feel there is no escape. Then they pray to God, professing sincere devotion to Him, 'If You save us from this we shall be truly thankful.' Yet no sooner does He save them than, back on land, they behave outrageously against all that is right. People! Your outrageous behaviour only works against yourselves. Take your little enjoyment in this present life; in the end you will return to Us and We shall confront you with everything you have done. The life of this world is like this: rain that We send down from the sky is absorbed by the plants of the earth, from which humans and animals eat. But when the earth has taken on its finest appearance, and adorns itself, and its people think they have power over it, then the fate We commanded comes to it, by night or by day, and We reduce it to stubble, as if it had not flourished just the day before. This is the way We explain the revelations for those who reflect. *[Chapter 10, Verses 22-25]*

JIHAD

God will defend the believers; God does not love the unfaithful or the ungrateful. Those who have been attacked are permitted to take up arms because they have been wronged— God has the power to help them—those who have been driven unjustly from their homes only for saying, 'Our Lord is God.' If God did not repel some people by means of others, many monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, where God's name is much invoked, would have been destroyed. God is sure to help those who help His cause— God is Strong and Mighty. *[Chapter 22, Verses 38-40]*

HOSTILE AND FRIENDLY DISBELIEVERS

God may still bring about affection between you and your present enemies— God is All Powerful, God is Most Forgiving and Merciful— and He does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with anyone who has not fought you for your faith or driven you out of your homes: God loves the just. But God forbids you to take as allies those who have fought against you for your faith, driven you out of your homes, and helped others to drive you out: any of you who take them as allies will truly be wrongdoers. *[Chapter 60, Verses 7-9]*

INIMITABLE QURAN

So remind [O Muhammad], for you are not, by the favour of your Lord, a soothsayer or a madman. If they say, 'He is only a poet: we shall await his fate,' Say [O Muhammad], 'Wait if you wish; I too am waiting'— does their reason really tell them to do this, or are they simply insolent people? If they say, "He has made it up himself"— they certainly do not believe— let them produce one like it, if what they say is true. Or were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain. *[Chapter 52, Verses 29-36]*

THE INDEPENDENT

O Humankind, it is you who stand in need of God— God needs nothing and is worthy of all praise— if He wills, He can do away with you and bring in a new creation, that is not difficult for God. No burdened soul will bear the burden of another: even if a heavily laden soul should cry for help, none of its load will be carried, not even by a close relative. But you [O Muhammad] can only warn those who fear their Lord, though they cannot see Him, and keep up the prayer— whoever purifies himself does so for his own benefit— everything returns to God. The blind and the seeing are not alike, nor are darkness and light; shade and heat are not alike, nor are the living and the dead. God makes anyone He wills hear [His message]: you cannot make those in their graves hear. You are only here to warn them— We have sent you with the Truth as a bearer of good news and warning— every community has been sent a warner.

[Chapter 35, Verses 15-24]

WORK WITHOUT FAITH

But the deeds of those who disbelieve are like a mirage in a desert: the thirsty person thinks there will be water but, when he gets there, he finds only God, who pays him his account in full— God is swift in reckoning. Or like shadows in a deep sea covered by wave upon wave, with clouds above— layer upon layer of darkness— if he holds out his hand, he is scarcely able to see it. The one to whom God gives no light has no light at all. Do you not see that all those who are in the heavens and earth praise God, as do the birds with wings outstretched? Each knows its [own way] of prayer and glorification: God has full knowledge of what they do. Control of the heavens and earth belongs to God: and to God is the final return. Do you not see that God drives the clouds, then gathers them together and piles them up until you see rain pour from their midst? He sends hail down from [such] mountains in the sky, pouring it on whoever He wishes and diverting it from whoever He wishes— the flash of its lightning almost snatches sight

away. God alternates night and day— there truly is a lesson in [all] this for those who have eyes to see— and God created each animal out of [its own] fluid: some of them crawl on their bellies, some walk on two legs, and some on four. God creates whatever He will; God has power over everything. *[Chapter 24, Verses 39-45]*

IMPORTANCE OF REASONING

It is He who created you from dust, then from a drop of fluid, then from a tiny clinging form, then He brought you forth as infants, then He allowed you to reach maturity, then He let you grow old— though some of you die sooner— and among you is he who is taken in death before [that], so that you reach a specified term; and perhaps you will use reason. It is He who gives life and death, and when He ordains a thing, He says only 'Be' and it is. *[Chapter 40, Verses 67-68]*

REJECTING REASON

For those who defy their Lord We have prepared the torment of Hell: an evil destination. They will hear it drawing in its breath when they are thrown in. It blazes forth, almost bursting with rage. Its keepers will ask every group that is thrown in, 'Did no one come to warn you?' They will reply, 'Yes, a warner did come to us, but we did not believe him. We said, "God has revealed nothing: you are greatly misguided"'. They will say, 'If only we had listened, or reasoned, we would not be with the inhabitants of the blazing fire,' and they will confess their sins. Away with the inhabitants of the blazing fire! But there is forgiveness and a great reward for those who fear their Lord though they cannot see Him. Whether you keep your words secret or state them openly, He knows the contents of every heart. How could He who created not know His own creation, when He is the Most Subtle, the All Aware? It is He who has made the earth manageable for you—travel its regions; eat His provision— and to Him you will be resurrected.

[Chapter 67, Verses 6-15]

HUMAN

So when the human is touched by adversity, he implores Us, then when We bestow a blessing upon him, he says: "I attained this because of knowledge I had!" Indeed, it is a test, but most of them do not know. Those who lived before them said the same. What they did was of no use to them; they suffered its evil effects. Today's wrongdoers will also suffer the evil effects of their deeds: they will not escape. Do they not know that God provides abundantly for anyone He will and gives sparingly to anyone He will? There truly are signs in this for those who believe. Say, "[God says], My servants who have harmed yourselves by your own excess, do not despair of God's mercy. God forgives all sins: He is truly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful. Turn to your Lord. Submit to Him before the punishment overtakes you and you can no longer be helped. [Chapter 39, Verses 49-54]

FORGIVENESS

Hurry towards your Lord's forgiveness and a Garden as wide as the heavens and earth prepared for the righteous, who give, both in prosperity and adversity, who restrain their anger and pardon people— God loves those who do good—those who remember God and implore forgiveness for their sins if they do something shameful or wrong themselves— who forgives sins but God? — and who never knowingly persist in doing wrong. The reward for such people is forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens graced with flowing streams, where they will remain. How excellent is the reward of those who labour! [Chapter 3, Verses 133-136]

POWERLESS

How can you ignore God when you were lifeless and He gave you life, when He will cause you to die, then resurrect you to be returned to Him? It was He who created all that is on the earth for you, then turned to the sky and made the seven heavens; it is He who has knowledge of all things. [Chapter 2, Verses 28-29]

CONTEMPLATION

Do they not contemplate within themselves? God has not created the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth and for a specified term. And indeed, many of the people, in [the matter of] the meeting with their Lord, are disbelievers. Have they not travelled through the earth and observed how was the end of those before them? *[Chapter 30, Verses 8-9]*

THE SCEPTIC

Doesn't the human being see that We created him from a drop of fluid? Yet— lo and behold! — he disputes openly, producing arguments against Us, forgetting his own creation. He says, 'Who can give life back to bones after they have decayed?' Say [O Muhammad], 'He who created them in the first place will give them life again: He has full knowledge of every act of creation'. *[Chapter 36, Verses 77-79]*

THE TRANCE

So were We incapable of the first creation? No indeed! Yet they doubt a second creation. We have created the human being and We know what his soul whispers to him. We are closer to him than even his jugular vein, with two receptors set to record, one on his right side and one on his left: he does not utter a single word without an ever-present watcher. The trance of death will bring the Truth with it: 'This is what you tried to escape.' *[Chapter 50, Verses 15-19]*

CLOSER AND CLOSER

Truly you [people] love this fleeting world and neglect the life to come. On that Day there will be radiant faces, looking towards their Lord, and on that Day there will be the sad and despairing faces of those who realize that a great calamity is about to befall them. Truly, when the soul reaches the collarbone; when it is said, 'Could any charm-heal-

er save him now?’ when he knows it is the final parting; when his legs are brought together: on that day he will be driven towards your Lord. He neither believed nor prayed, but denied the truth and turned away, walking back to his people with a conceited swagger. Closer and closer it comes to you. Closer and closer still. Does the human think he will be left alone? Was he not just a drop of spilt-out sperm, which became a clinging form, which God shaped in due proportion, fashioning from it the two sexes, male and female? Does He who can do this not have the power to bring the dead back to life?

[Chapter 75, Verses 20-40]

THE ANNOUNCEMENT

What are they asking about? The momentous announcement about which they differ. They will find out. In the end they will find out. Did We not make the earth smooth, and make the mountains to keep it stable? Did We not create you in pairs, give you sleep for rest, the night as a cover, and the day for your livelihood? Did We not build seven strong [heavens] above you, and make a blazing lamp? Did We not send water pouring down from the clouds to bring forth with it grain, plants, and luxuriant gardens? Indeed, the Day of Judgement is an appointed time *[Chapter 78, Verses 1-17]*

RESURRECTION

O Humankind, be mindful of your Lord, for the earthquake of the Last Hour will be a mighty thing: on the Day you see it, every nursing mother will think no more of her baby, every pregnant female will miscarry, you will think people are drunk when they are not, so severe will be God's torment. Yet still there are some who, with no knowledge, argue about God, who follow every devilish rebel fated to lead astray those who take his side, and guide them to the suffering of the blazing flame. O Humankind, [remember,] if you doubt the Resurrection, that We created you from dust, then a drop of fluid, then a clinging form, then a lump of flesh, both shaped and unshaped: We mean to make Our power clear to you. Whatever We choose We cause to remain in the womb for an ap-

pointed time, then We bring you forth as infants and then you grow and reach maturity. Some die young and some are left to live on to such an age that they forget all they once knew. You sometimes see the earth lifeless, yet when We send down water it stirs and swells and produces every kind of joyous growth: this is because God is the Truth; He brings the dead back to life; He has power over everything. And [that they may know] that the Hour is coming - no doubt about it - and that God will resurrect those in the graves. *[Chapter 22, Verses 1-7]*

THE LAST DAY

When the sun is shrouded in darkness, when the stars are dimmed, when the mountains are set in motion, when pregnant camels are abandoned, when wild beasts are herded together, when the seas boil over, when souls are sorted into classes, when the baby girl buried alive is asked for what sin she was killed, when the records of deeds are spread open, when the sky is stripped away, when Hell is made to blaze and Paradise brought near: then every soul will know what it has brought about. I swear by the planets that recede, move, and hide, by the night that descends, by the dawn that softly breathes: this is the speech of a noble messenger. *[Chapter 81, Verses 1-19]*

THE INEVITABLE

We have created you, so why do you not believe? Have you seen that which you emit? Is it you who creates it, or are We the Creator? We ordained death to be among you. Nothing could stop us if we intended to change you and recreate you in a way unknown to you. You have learned how you were first created: will you not reflect? Consider the seeds you sow in the ground, Is it you who makes it grow, or are We the grower? If We willed, We could make it [dry] debris, and you would remain in wonder, [Saying] "Indeed, we are [now] in debt; Rather, we have been deprived." Consider the water you drink— Is

it you who brought it down from the clouds, or is it We who bring it down? If We willed, We could make it bitter; so why are you not grateful? Consider the fire you kindle, Is it you who produced its tree, or are We the producer? We have made it a reminder and provision for the travellers, so glorify the name of your Lord, the Supreme. I swear by the positions of the stars— a mighty oath, if you only knew— that this is truly a noble Quran, in a protected Record that only the purified can touch, sent down from the Lord of all being. How can you scorn this statement? And how, in return for the livelihood you are given, can you deny it? Then why, when the soul at death reaches the throat, while you gaze on—We are nearer to him than you, though you do not see Us— why, if you are not to be judged, do you not restore his soul to him, if what you say is true? If that dying person is one of those who will be brought near to God, he will have rest, ease, and a Garden of Bliss; if he is one of those on the Right, [he will hear], 'Peace be on you,' from his companions on the Right; but if he is one of those who denied the truth and went astray, he will be welcomed with scalding water. He will burn in Hell. This is the certain truth, glorify the name of your Lord the Supreme. *[Chapter 56, Verses 57-96]*

DAY OF JUDGEMENT

When the sky is torn apart, when the stars are scattered, when the seas burst forth, when graves turn inside out: each soul will know what it has done and what it has left undone. Humankind, what has lured you away from God, your generous Lord, who created you, shaped you, proportioned you, in whatever form He chose? Yet you still take the Judgement to be a lie! Over you stand watchers, noble recorders who know what you do: the good will live in bliss, and the wicked will burn in the Fire. They will enter it on the Day of Judgement and they will find no escape. What will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is? Yes! What will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is? The Day when no soul will be able to do anything for another; on that Day, command will belong to God. *[Chapter 82, Verses 1-19]*

THE BELIEVER'S PRAYER

Truly, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alteration of night and day are signs for people who think deeply, who remember God while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying]: 'Our Lord! You have not created all this without purpose— You are far above that! — so protect us from the torment of the Fire. Our Lord! You will truly humiliate those You commit to the Fire. The evildoers have no one to help them. Our Lord! We have heard someone calling us to faith— "Believe in your Lord"— and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, wipe out our bad deeds, and grant that we join the righteous when we die. Our Lord! Bestow upon us all that You have promised us through Your messengers— do not humiliate us on the Day of Resurrection— You never break Your promise.' Their Lord has accepted them (and will comfort them by) saying "I'll never let the efforts of any of you who made an effort (on behalf of God) become lost, be he male or female, for you're equally from each other. I will certainly wipe out the bad deeds of those who emigrated and were driven out of their homes, who suffered harm for My cause, who fought and were killed. I will certainly admit them to Gardens graced with flowing streams, as a reward from God: the best reward is with God.'

[Chapter 3, Verses 190-195]

THE EASE

It will not be but one blast, and at once they are all brought present before Us. So today no soul will be wronged at all, and you will not be recompensed except for what you used to do. Indeed the companions of Paradise, that Day, will be amused in [joyful] occupation - They and their spouses - in shade, reclining on adorned couches. [And] "Peace," a word from a Merciful Lord. *[Chapter 36, Verses 53-58]*

THE RACE FOR WEALTH

Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you, until you visit the graveyards. No! You are going to know. Then no! You are going to know. No! If you only knew with knowledge of certainty... You will surely see the Hellfire. Then you will surely see it with the eye of certainty. Then you will surely be asked that Day about pleasure. *[Chapter 102, Verses 1-8]*

ATOM'S WEIGHT

When the earth is shaken violently in its [last] quaking, when the earth throws out its burdens, when humankind cries, "What is happening to it?"; on that Day, it will tell all because your Lord will inspire it [to do so]. On that Day, people will come forward in separate groups to be shown their deeds: whoever has done an atom's-weight of good will see it, but whoever has done an atom's-weight of evil will see that. *[Chapter 99, Verses 1-8]*

STAGE TO STAGE

When the sky is ripped apart, obeying its Lord as it rightly must, when the earth is levelled out, casts out its contents, and becomes empty, obeying its Lord as it rightly must, you humans, toiling laboriously towards your Lord, will meet Him: whoever is given his record in his right hand will have an easy reckoning and return to his people well pleased, but whoever is given his record from behind his back will cry out for destruction—he will burn in the blazing Fire. He used to live among his people well pleased. He thought he would never return [to his Lord]—indeed he will! His Lord was watching him. I swear by the glow of sunset, by the night and what it covers, by the full moon, you will progress from stage to stage. So why do they not believe? Why, when the Quran is read to them, do they not prostrate themselves [to God]? *[Chapter 84, Verses 1-21]*

THE REWARD

The only people who truly believe in Our messages are those who, when they are reminded of them, bow down in worship, celebrate their Lord's praises, and do not think themselves above this. Their sides shun their beds in order to pray to their Lord in fear and hope; they give to others some of what We have given them. No soul knows what joy is kept hidden in store for them as a reward for what they have done. So, is someone who believes equal to someone who defies God? No, they are not equal. Those who believe and do good deeds will have Gardens awaiting them as their home and as a reward for what they have done. *[Chapter 32, Verses 15-19]*

HONOR

Indeed, your Lord is in observation. As for the human being, when his Lord tries him and [thus] is generous to him and favours him, he says, "My Lord has honoured me." But when He tries him and restricts his provision, he says, "My Lord has humiliated me." No! But you do not honour the orphan. And you do not encourage one another to feed the poor. And you consume inheritance, devouring [it] altogether, and you love wealth with immense love. No! When the earth has been levelled - pounded and crushed - And your Lord has come and the angels, rank upon rank, and brought [within view], that Day, is Hell - that Day, the human will remember; but what good to him will be the remembrance? He will say, "Oh, I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life." So on that Day, none will punish [as severely] as His punishment, and none will bind [as severely] as His binding [of the evildoers]. [To the righteous it will be said], "O soul, in [complete] rest and satisfaction, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him], and enter among My [righteous] servants and enter My Paradise." *[Chapter 89, Verses 14-30]*

TIME

By time, indeed, humankind is in loss, except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.

[Chapter 103, Verses 1-3]

DAYBREAK

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak, from the evil of that which He created, and from the evil of darkness when it settles, and from the evil of the blowers in knots, and from the evil of an envier when he envies." *[Chapter 113, Verses 1-5]*

HUMANKIND

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of humankind, The Sovereign of humankind. The God of humankind, from the evil of the retreating whisperer - who whispers [evil] into the hearts of humankind - from among the jinn and humankind. *[Chapter 114, Verses 1-6]*



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QURAN

A SHORT JOURNEY

Have you ever thought about your purpose in life? Or had questions such as, how do I gain inner peace? What is right and wrong and who decides? What is the best way to live? How do I gain mastery over myself and develop into the best person I can be? What happens after I die? Is there a God, and if so what's the proof? If you have ever had questions such as these, then this is the book for you. The holy Quran is the last book sent down for the guidance of humanity.

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