

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Al-Fatihah

If you are one of those fortunate people who feel the need to discover the truth of their existence and the real purpose of life, then you have come to the right place! I welcome you to the world of Quran....the gift of Allah to mankind.

Today we embark upon our journey through Quran with Surah Al-Fatihah, which literally means "the opening".

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ {1}

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

How lovely it is to have a friend, a guide, a support....to whom you can entrust your affairs. Thus we begin our journey with Allah, knowing that He will be our constant companion and guide. We just need to have complete faith in Him.

Our faith in Allah is strengthened by acknowledging and appreciating the fact that He is our Creator and Sustainer.....not only of me and you but of the entire universe and all the worlds.... therefore only Allah is worthy of our ultimate appreciation and gratitude:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ {2}

All praise is for Allah, the 'Rabb' of the Worlds.

Normally we say these words so casually not realising what it means. Just think of the word "Al-Alamin" and try to visualize the vast universe filled with the creation of Allah. Of course our knowledge is limited and to imagine all of it in one glance is almost impossible. But just think how great that Rabb is.... who not only made all of this out

of nothing, but also nurtures each and every creature and knows the details of each and every thing. Obviously He is the most loving, the extremely compassionate and merciful:

الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ {3}

The Compassionate, the Merciful.

Without Allah's mercy I could not exist on this earth. Allah's love and compassion fills my life as well as yours. And we have so much to be grateful for. But we have to remember that no matter how privileged we might be; this life will come to an end. All the blessings are only for this limited time. The only thing which is permanent is what deeds we do in this life. And on the day of judgement we will all be standing before Allah waiting for the announcement of our final result:

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ {4}

Master of the Day of Judgment.

This is it.....the story of our life. It begins with recognizing Allah and being grateful to Him. Then we live our life with a positive attitude because Allah is Al-Rahman and Al- Rahim. And finally there is the Day of Judgment where we are going to meet Allah. So what exactly is the purpose of our life? Allah answers in the following verse:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ {5}

O'Allah! You alone we worship and You Alone we call on for help.

When I say that I worship only Allah, it means that I will obey Him in all areas of my life. But I cannot do so without Allah's help....

That is why we are being taught to say: "Allah! Only you we ask for help."

Remember that although people and places do make a difference.....still they are just a medium....the REAL source of all goodness is Allah.

So we ask Him to help us attain the most desired of all things.....guidance:

اهدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ {6}

O'Allah! Guide us to The Right Way.

Praying for guidance means that we ask Allah to show us the right way, and to enable us to walk on the right way.....until we reach our destination. What is the right way?

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ {7}

The Way of those whom You have favoured; not of those who have earned Your wrath, or of those who have lost The Way. [Ameen]

So our role models should be the people with whom Allah was pleased and He bestowed his blessings and favours on them. These are the Prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs, and the righteous.

Likewise it is equally important to stop idealizing the people on whom Allah had sent His guidance but they earned His anger and punishment because they denied the truth and followed their own desires. Similarly we have to be careful not to be among the people who do not even bother to find the right way and just follow their own illusions and ideas about life.

Thus ends the beautiful Surah Al-Fatihah which is an essence of our purpose of life as well as a prayer for the beginning of our journey through Quran. May Allah accept our prayer.....Ameen.



Surah Yasin

Surah Yasin is probably the most frequently read chapter of the Quran, in our country. Numerous benefits are associated with its reading, especially in the mornings or whenever there is any difficult situation; or if someone is critically ill; or just for *barakah*. You get invited for reading it in gatherings; like *khatam-e-Quran, khatam-e-Yasin* (reading it 41 or 71 times in one sitting) is a familiar and popular ritual, believed to be the remedy for all sorts of problems. Rarely does anyone pause to think that Surah Yasin like the rest of the Quran has a message in it for our guidance. Nobody bothers to find out what that message is. Mostly we prefer to treat this magnificent reminder like some magic words which will relieve us of our miseries.

Whereas the truth is that if we read this Surah, just once but with proper understanding and apply its wisdom in our lives, it can truly relieve us of our misery of uncertainty and save us from the agony of going round and round in a senseless pursuit of worldly interests. Not only this but it can also help us throw away the burden of accumulated negligence regarding the hereafter, making us feel bright and optimistic about attaining the rewards of paradise.

We all want permanent and everlasting success and happiness, but unfortunately we try to find it in this world, where it was not meant to be. The life in this world is only a test and instead of

running after its illusions, the only thing that we need to pursue in this world is the straight path that will lead us to the fulfilment of our desires, in the hereafter, which is when our actual life will begin. That is why Allah has taught us the dua "*Ihdinassirat al mustaqeem*" (guide us to the Straight Way) which we read in each and every unit of our five daily prayers. But only praying for guidance is not enough; we need to have a role model to follow in whom we can trust. Therefore Allah sent Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) as a perfect example for us to follow till the end of time. The Quran is the guide book and the life and personality of the Prophet (s.a.w) is the practical application of this guidance. Therefore Allah begins this magnificent Surah with the assurance that if we want success in both the worlds we need to believe and follow our Prophet(s.a.w) who is truly one of the Messengers and is on that straight path of guidance:

يس {1}

Ya Seen.

وَالْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ {2}

I swear by the Quran full of wisdom

إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ {3}

Most surely you are one of the messengers

عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ {4}

On a straight path

Next Allah tells us that this Quran is not just an ordinary thing. Now we might say that of course we know it's a sacred book of Allah, and so we put it on high shelves, never putting anything on top of it, holding it above newly married couples and reading it when someone dies. We think this is it! We have done our duty by showing this book the proper respect and now we can live our lives according to our own desires and self created standards of goodness. What we don't want to acknowledge is the fact that The Quran was not meant just to be placed on high shelves, rather it should have been given the highest place on our priority list. We take care not to put anything on top of it but when faced with any situation in life do we stop to consider whether we might be putting our own desires on top of its teachings? Holding it above the bride and bridegroom was never taught to us; it is our self created innovation for which we should seek forgiveness of Allah. But its spiritual protection should certainly be held above us as a refuge from shaitan and as a guide for our entire lifetime. And the way we neglect it in our life and so religiously read it for the dead, it seems as if we have forgotten that it's a magnificent guide for the living and not just an offering for the dead. Why Allah continues to let us live in spite of our thankless attitude is because He is Al- Raheem: the repeatedly merciful. So He keeps giving us chances to come back to him. But we should not forget that He is also Al-Aziz; The overpowering!

(This is) a revelation of the Exalted in Might, the Merciful.

What is the purpose of the Quran? Why did Allah sent this revelation to the Prophet (s.a.w)? As a warning to a nation whose forefathers were not warned and so they had become heedless (*ghafil*). Primarily it refers to the people of Makkah to whom no messenger had come after Prophet Ismail (a.s) who was the son of Ibrahim (a.s) Now the teachings of the prophets had gradually been forgotten and although the Arabs called themselves the followers of Ibrahim and Ismail but in reality they had gone far away from the spirit of Islam, replacing Allah's religion with a few self created rituals and worshipping idols made of wood and clay instead of worshipping the One and only Allah. If we compare it with our own situation, we find that there are amazing similarities of attitude. We also call ourselves Muslims and claim to believe in the Quran and the last Prophet of Allah but in reality there are only a handful of people who actually know what the Prophet's life was all about and what were his teachings. Similarly there are some people who "read" the Quran but again only a few of them understand its message. We don't worship Idols of course and believe in one Allah but let's be honest; Do we really follow Allah's commands in the way we plan and live our lives? Who are we following or "worshipping"? Our homes, our jobs, money, comfort, our own desires, or our own philosophies of life? As the Prophet (s.a.w) said in a Hadith:

"The worst Idol that is worshipped instead of Allah is the desire of the self"

What is the solution? What can bring us out of this ignorance and forgetfulness? What will save us from Allah's punishment in the hereafter? It is definitely the Quran and nothing else. Not just in bits and pieces but a proper study, verse by verse, word to word. So that we might get in touch with our reality and our purpose of life and most of all we need to get in touch with Allah, our Creator and Sustainer:

لَتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ آبَاؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غَافِلُونَ {6}

That you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, so they are unaware.

When I look at the Quran and its amazing clarity and depth, I wonder how a nation who has this treasure of wisdom can ever deviate from the straight path. Also I find it shocking that most people think it is not important to study this Book. They are mostly the highly educated, intellectual people who deny the need to act upon Allah's commands. Allah has stated the same thing in the next Ayat:

لَقَدْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ عَلَى أَكْثَرِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ {7}

Already the word has come into effect upon most of them, so they do not believe.

Allah says that most people will not believe in it.....but why?
Hasn't Allah provided them with the resources to acquire
knowledge and guidance? The fact is that the truth is obvious like
the bright sun but they have their eyes closed to it.

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ أَغْلَالًا فَهِيَ إِلَى الْأَذْقَانِ فَهُمْ مُقْمَحُونَ {8}

**Surely We have placed shackles on their necks, and these reach up to their
chins, so they have their heads raised aloft.**

The shackles in their necks are actually the pride of self
importance that keeps their head high in the air, so that they
cannot see their own reality of helplessness in front of the
absolute authority of Allah. They think that the power they have
in this world is going to remain with them forever and hardly
think of dying or the hereafter. The glamour of this worldly life
is like a wall in front of them which makes them totally forgetful
of the Akhirah:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا
يُبْصِرُونَ {9}

**And We have made before them a barrier and a barrier behind them, then
We have covered them over so that they do not see.**

Imagine yourself in an elevator.....you have walls all around you
without any window and a roof on top. As you move up or down you

can never know which floor you are on unless you see the indicators. No matter how intelligent you might be, you cannot perceive what is outside that enclosed space. Similarly the majority of people are so immersed in their worldly pursuits that they have erected invisible walls around themselves. Any talk of Allah, or Quran or Islam just bounces off these walls without touching them in any way. They have to lower these barriers themselves so that the truth of Quran might penetrate their hearts.

Allah is telling the Prophet (s.a.w) here, that if the people of Makkah were not listening to him it was not because of any lack of effort on his part. The fact was that their own pride and prejudice was preventing them from acknowledging the truth. His warning could benefit only those people who wanted to take advice when it was given to them and who feared Allah:

إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الذِّكْرَ وَخَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ الْغَيْبِ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِمَغْفِرَةٍ
وَأَجْرٍ كَرِيمٍ {11}

You can only warn one who follows the message and fears the Most Merciful unseen. So give him good tidings of forgiveness and noble reward.

The remarkable point of this Ayat is that these people fear "the Most Merciful"!!

How amazing it is that while some people use the same excuse for their lack of commitment, that Allah is so compassionate so we don't need to worry too much about the day of judgement; the

true believers fear Allah despite His Mercy.....It is for this kind of humbleness that Allah has given the good news of forgiveness and honourable rewards. The fear of accountability in the *Akhirah* is the most potent force which propels a believer towards purifying his heart and his actions. Because he knows that he is being watched all the time, and his thoughts and deeds are all being recorded by Allah. To reinforce this belief we need constant reminders otherwise we tend to get entangled in our day to day affairs and our life stretches out before us like an endless ocean. That is why Allah has sent us this following *Ayat* which acts as a most powerful reminder of the seriousness of our test in this world.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ
أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ {12}

Surely We give life to the dead, and We write down what they have put forth and what they have left behind, and We have enumerated everything in a clear register.

Before we move on, let's take a moment and ponder upon this beautiful *Ayat* which reflects the truth of our existence. Allah is telling us in very clear words that He is definitely going to raise the dead.....which means that our life is not going to end just like that. We are going to be born again so that we might be given the due return for our deeds. That is why each and every action of ours is being recorded in a clear Book. These include the deeds

that we do and also the footsteps or impressions that we leave behind through our attitude and behaviour. How can we be careless after reading such a warning? Imagine that all around you are cameras, which are clicking away constantly day and night; capturing images of what you do, both alone and in company, recording the words that you say and the words that simply echo in your minds which we call "thoughts". Not only that but these cameras are also recording something which might not be readily visible to human eye.....that is the impressions we create around us. The hidden effects of our deeds. For example if you write a book on Islam, it will not be recorded simply as the writing of one book, rather all the people who embraced Islam due to it, will also be counted in your favour. Similarly if you make a false accusation against someone, it will not be simply written as one mischief only, rather the damage created by that will also be counted against you. The examples could go on and on but the thing to understand is that whatever we do or say is not simply the act that appears at the time but it has an everlasting impact too. So we need to be very careful because apparently we might be doing great deeds of goodness but in such a way that it might drive a lot of people away from religion.

It makes me think that if we understand this one *Ayat* and really absorb its message then our environment would be so much better where everybody would be conscious about his own affairs and would be extra careful in his dealings with others. There would be no one hanging around without a purpose because there will be an awareness that we are going to have to answer for all our time on this earth. And the best thing about this is that no

one can ever be judgemental about themselves or others because we simply cannot count the effects of our deeds and personalities. So until the time we are declared free from hell fire and actually gain an entry into paradise we can never be quite sure of ourselves. What an eye opener it is for those who want to see!

To further illustrate this important concept, Allah states an example of a town where He sent two messengers. But the people of that town rejected them. So Allah sent a third messenger too but the people continued to blame them instead of believing that they had really brought the truth from Allah. It is human weakness that people don't want to be proved wrong so when they see that their lives are going totally against the message brought by the Messengers of Allah, they start finding faults with them instead of accepting their own mistakes and correcting themselves. Look at their rash comments:

قَالُوا إِنَّا تَطَيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَلَيَمَسَّنَّكُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ {18}

They said, "Indeed, we consider you a bad omen. If you do not desist, we will surely stone you, and there will surely touch you, from us, a painful punishment."

And while these people were busy trying to establish their superiority, by denying the truth, there came upon them a man

who had come running from the remote part of the city, calling to them:

"O My people! Follow these Messengers. Follow the ones who ask no reward of you and are rightly guided."

Now, one might ask, who was this person? Allah doesn't tell us his exact identity because it is not important for us to know who he was, rather what he said and did was so remarkable that it has been recorded for us as an eternal example of unquestioning and complete belief in Allah, acceptance of His message and Loyalty for His Messengers. It is apparent that he had not attended any regular lectures on Tauheed because he had come from the further part of the city. He hadn't had any direct contact with the messengers, yet whatever he had heard of Allah's message had had such a deep impact on him that he was ready to give up all his former beliefs and ideas, in order to enter completely into the religion of Islam. His humility and acceptance of his own reality before the creator is amazing; as is apparent from his words:

وَمَا لِي لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ {22}

And what reason have I that I should not serve Him Who brought me into existence? And to Him you shall be brought back;

أَتَأْخُذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً إِنْ يُرِدْنِ الرَّحْمَنُ بِضُرٍّ لَا تُغْنِ عَنِّي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُنْقِذُونِ {23}

Should I take other than Him [false] deities [while], if the Most Merciful intends for me some adversity, their intercession will not avail me at all, nor can they save me?

إِنِّي إِذَا لَفِيَ ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ {24}

Indeed, In that case I shall most surely be in clear error:

Just look at his logic and realistic attitude. He recognizes that since Allah had created him and has all the power then why should he worship anything else? It is not difficult for him to accept his helplessness before Allah; a reality which remains hidden from those people who cannot see beyond the walls of their false pride. He begs them to listen to him, one more time:

إِنِّي آمَنْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاسْمَعُونِ {25}

Indeed I have believed in your Lord, therefore listen to me.

Consequently they killed that man and as he died he found that he had been granted paradise:

قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَا لَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ {26}

It was said, "Enter Paradise." He said, "I wish my people could know

بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ {27}

Of how my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honoured."

He was honoured by Allah simply because of his true faith, and compassion for his people. Because even after being granted the paradise he is feeling sorry for his fellow men. If he would have been self-centred like the majority of people nowadays, he would have simply rejoiced in his good fortune and that's it.

What is our attitude when we see someone heading towards self destruction? We think well he deserves punishment and Oh thank God, I am such a pious person, Alhamdulillah.....

Do we feel any pain of his disbelief? Do we feel sorry for the countless people who do not have any awareness of what's going to befall them in the hereafter? If not, then what kind of faith is this?

If we ponder upon it, this is really the ideal combination; belief in the Creator and tenderness towards His creation. One is not acceptable without the other. We need to work upon both, even though it is difficult to shove off our natural tendency of hoarding everything good for our own self and simply not caring about others. It will be sheer folly to think that we will please our Lord just by having perfect belief in Him, if we are not loving and compassionate towards other people. And similarly it is not good enough to do charitable deeds for mankind if we don't have the right *Aqeedah*.

As for those who disbelieve even after seeing all the signs and hearing all the true warnings, Allah doesn't need any armies to destroy them all. He is compassionate and merciful but His punishment is also very swift:

إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ خَامِدُونَ {29}

It was not but one shout, and immediately they were extinguished.

And it doesn't end here, because the actual day of reckoning has yet to come when the due rewards and punishments will be dealt out to all. No one can escape that day:

وَأِنْ كُلٌّ لَّمَّا جَمِيعٌ لَدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ {32}

And Indeed all of them shall surely be brought before Us.

The disbelievers could not come to terms with the idea of resurrection. They said it was not possible for dust and bones to be turned again into human beings. And the sad thing is that nowadays even the Muslims have become so detached from the Quran that their faith in the hereafter has also become blurred. Allah wants us to look carefully and contemplate on the signs which He has placed for us in this world so that we might realize that it is not difficult for Allah to give life to the dead:

وَآيَةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيِّتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ

{33}

And a sign for them is the dead earth. We have brought it to life and brought forth from it grain, and from it they eat...

Most of us have become so absorbed in the race of materialism that we ignore the numerous blessings of Allah. We take these things for granted although each one of these is a miracle of Allah. Why is Allah telling us about it in the next Ayat? Because when we think about the amazing beauty of Allah's creation, then it makes us feel aware of Allah's love and mercy. The heart becomes soft and fills up with awe and admiration for this Supreme Creator who made such fabulous things for us:

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنَّاتٍ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ وَفَجَّرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْعُيُونِ

{34}

And We make therein gardens of palms and grapevines and We make springs to flow forth in it,

لِيَأْكُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ {35}

That they may eat of the fruit thereof, and their hands did not make it; will they not then be grateful?

What has caused us to be so blind to the beauty of nature? It is mainly because of an ever growing struggle for material gains. Look at the overcrowded streets of over populated cities and see the restlessness in the expressions of people. Their way of talking, their manner of driving, their dealing with each other is like they are in some kind of mad race, in which no one knows where they have come from or where they are headed to.....

All this comes to a halt when the day turns into the night, so softly and imperceptibly that we hardly notice it. The whole world seems to be covered by a dark comforting blanket. Isn't it a miracle in itself? But only if we contemplate.....

وَأَيَّةٌ لَهُمُ اللَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ النَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُمْ مُظْلَمُونَ {37}

And a sign for them is the night. We remove from it [the light of] day, so they are [left] in darkness.

Next Allah talks about the Sun and Moon, how each of them orbits in its own path, with its own speed, never deviating from their path, nor obstructing the other. Their obedience is so focused unlike us Human Beings, forever deviating from the right track, interfering into other's affairs, wasting time and energy on non productive issues:

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِي
فَلَكَ يَسْبَحُونَ {40}

Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in a sphere.

Another amazing sign of Allah's control over everything is the way He enables us to move across waters in ships. It is a miracle, because we know that even a small needle cannot hold itself on top of the water, and just look at the huge ships that remain floating? Who has caused it to happen except Allah?

وَآيَةٌ لَهُمْ أَنَّا حَمَلْنَا ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ فِي الْفُلِّ الْمَشْحُونِ {41}

And a sign to them is that We carried their offspring in the laden ship.

And in the middle of that endless expanse of water who can save us from drowning except Allah. But the ungrateful people don't acknowledge the greatness of Allah and go on living as if they are the masters of their own lives. So if they are reminded that they should fear Allah, they remain totally unmoved:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّقُوا مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَمَا خَلْفَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ
{45}

And when it is said to them: Beware of what is before you and what is behind you, so that mercy may be had on you.

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ آيَةٍ مِّنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ {46}

And no sign comes to them from the signs of their Lord except that they are from it turning away.

The main reason for their arrogance is that they don't believe in the Akhirah. Their mockery is obvious in the way they ask about it:

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ {48}

And they say: When will this threat come to pass, if you are truthful?

But the fact is that the day of judgement will come on its appointed time whether we believe in it or not, whether we fear it and prepare accordingly or prefer to close our eyes to it:

إِن كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ جَمِيعٌ لَّدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ {53}

It will not be but one blast, and at once they shall all be brought before Us;

That is going to be another world and things will be totally different there. There will be no illusions that day. And no injustices:

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ {54}

So this day no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and you will not be recompensed except for what you used to do.

Next we have the beautiful picture of paradise. The hardships one might face in this world in order to remain true to Allah, are nothing when you view it from the perspective of the Hereafter. What are a few years of sacrifice as compared to the eternal bliss of Paradise?

إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغْلٍ فَاكِهُونَ {55}

Surely the companions of Paradise, that Day, will be amused in [joyful] occupation -

هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظِلَالٍ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ مُتَكئونَ {56}

They and their shall be in shades, reclining on raised couches.

لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَلَهُمْ مَّا يَدْعُونَ {57}

They shall have fruits therein, and they shall have whatever they desire.

Who are these lucky people? Do they live on any other planet, in some other environment, where it's "easy" to follow Islam? Where there are no temptations? Where there is no shaitan? No they are right here with us but we hardly pay any attention to them. So the believers in spirit and the believers in name, live side by

side. The truthful and the liar might be brothers, living in the same house, the honest and the criminal might be working as colleagues. No one knows where he stands in the sight of Allah. The sincere Momin and the hypocrite might be offering their Salat in the same mosque shoulder to shoulder, But on that day they will no longer be intermingled:

وَامْتَازُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ {59}

[Then He will say], "But stand apart today, you criminals.

What happens when you point out someone in a gathering, telling him he has done something wrong? The first reaction is shame and it is immediately followed by defensive arguments. But in that world of the hereafter, the criminals will not be allowed to offer any false excuses:

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَى أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ {65}

On that day We will set a seal upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned.

Today it might seem impossible that our hands and feet could be speaking against us. But if you think about it, if Allah could teach

our tongues to speak, then how can He not put the same capability in our limbs? After all He is the one who created us, but the sad truth is that we have forgotten the Creator:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ {77}

Does man not consider that We created him from a [mere] sperm-drop - then at once he is a clear adversary?

Allah is asking such a simple question here, from all those who have doubts about the resurrection:

أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ
بَلَىٰ وَهُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ {81}

Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yes! [it is so] and He is the Knowing Creator

We really need to focus our hearts and minds on the presence and Power of Allah who is the Creator, Owner and Provider of all things. The more we learn about Him, the easier it will be to understand His message and to follow the true path of Success. Nothing is difficult for Him to accomplish. If we are living here in spite of disobeying Him, it doesn't mean that we can get away with it. It's just Allah's Mercy and Compassion that He has given us a life span in which we have the means to acquire guidance and

can turn towards him in sincere repentance. But if we don't change our ways then we are going to have to pay for our wrong doings. It was so easy for Allah to make this universe and it is equally easy for Him to destroy it all in the blink of an eye or even sooner than that. What will save us then, except our good deeds that we did in the hope that Allah might accept them and have mercy on us. Thus ends Surah Yasin, telling us once again in very clear words that Allah is the Absolute Owner of everything and we all have to return to Him. What other words will wake us from our heedlessness if not these?

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ {82}

His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it: Be, so it is.

فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ {83}

Therefore glory be to Him in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things, and to Him you shall be brought back.



Surah As-Saaffat

As I had studied and then wrote the review for Surah Yaseen, I had been thoroughly gripped by a feeling that this is it..... All has been said and explained in such clear strong words. So what else is there to say? But Allah created Man and He knows our weakness of forgetfulness, and He knows the dangers lurking around us. Therefore Quran reveals its reminders to us in waves upon waves. As soon as one recedes, the other one comes to take us in its effect. Thus, a person who holds on to this great book never goes astray. Even if he is at times deluded by the devil and his own self, he soon reverts back to this magnificent fort of faith and finds himself even more committed to Allah's obedience.

So let's step into the awesome world of Quran and discover the words of Allah in Surah *As-Saaffat*. The main theme of this Surah is *Tauheed*, (oneness of Allah) and *Akhirah* (the life of the hereafter). As in the following *Ayaat* (verses) Allah Himself testifies that "your God is one" and He is the *Rabb* of everything:

إِنَّ إِلَهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ {4}

Most surely your Allah is One:

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشَارِقِ {5}

The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and Lord of the sunrises.

Although the pagans of Makkah, to whom these verses were primarily addressed, believed in Allah; yet they had associated other partners with Him in the form of statues. When Prophet Muhammad

(s.a.w) called them to the true religion of One Allah, they did not accept his message because basically they were afraid to give up their reckless way of life which allowed them to do whatever they desired. Since they couldn't find fault with the Quran so they tried to ridicule the Prophet (s.a.w) and his followers. Even today we see this behaviour among so called Muslims who believe in Allah but do not consider it important to be obedient to Him. We have to understand that a mere declaration that **"there is no God but Allah"**, is not enough. To prove this statement we need to follow His commands as revealed in the Quran and the teachings of His Prophet (s.a.w).

So what happens when someone reminds them of their duty towards Allah? Instead of accepting the truth, they make fun of it:

وَإِذَا ذُكِّرُوا لَا يَذْكُرُونَ {13}

And when they are reminded, they pay no attention.

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا آيَةً يَسْتَسْخِرُونَ {14}

And when they see an Ayah (a sign, a proof or an evidence) from Allah they mock at it.

Today they hold long debates denying the Day of Judgement, but when they will have to face the reality on that appointed day, they will cry out in horror:

فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَإِذَا هُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ {19}

So it shall only be a single shout, and behold, they will be staring!

وَقَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا هَذَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ {20}

And they shall say: O woe to us! this is the day of recompense.

Then it will be said to them

إِنَّكُمْ لَذَائِقُوا الْعَذَابِ الْأَلِيمِ {38}

Most surely you will taste the painful punishment.

وَمَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ {39}

And you shall not be rewarded except (for) what you did.

So we see that a big factor which influences our daily existence is our belief in the day of recompense. If this is distorted or blurred in confusion then we cannot move on the right track. For surely, the desire to succeed, together with the fear of failure, provides the motivation to do well in any test, and what is this life except a test of our faith and obedience to the one Allah? Those who pass this test by remaining true to their commitment with their Lord, will be given great honour on the Day of Judgement:

أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ رِزْقٌ مَّعْلُومٌ {41}

For them will be a known provision,

فَوَاكِهُ وَهُمْ مُكْرَمُونَ {42}

Fruits, and they shall be highly honoured,

فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ {43}

In gardens of pleasure,

The question that used to baffle me the most, all through my school years, is that being Muslims, when we do have this belief that we are going to be held accountable for our actions, then why don't we avoid sins? If we believe in reward and punishment then why are we so casual about not fulfilling Allah's rights and people's rights? What makes us believe that it is good enough if we just pick and choose

bits and pieces from our religion and reject the things which are inconvenient for us to follow? Later on I realized that we learn these attitudes from our environment. Most of us are just following the trends. We don't really think for ourselves, nor do we have any direct communication with Allah through Quran. It is our families and friends who have a profound influence on our beliefs, especially if we ourselves are out of touch with the authentic sources of knowledge. So it becomes extremely important to find the right friends and the right company so that we might be positively inspired by their righteousness and build our lives on sound principles. I was reminded of all of this by reading the following Ayaat in which we see a scene from the Paradise where people are reminiscing about their former life and a person among them relates to the others how a companion of his used to put doubts in his mind regarding the resurrection. Now we should pay close attention to these verses because it is quite probable that we might be facing a similar situation, in which those who are far removed from the knowledge of Quran cannot accept anyone taking up religion seriously. So they give logics and all sorts of philosophies to dissuade us from our faith, using words like "extremism" and such. And sometimes the pressure becomes too much. That is why Allah has recorded this conversation in the Quran so that we can be reassured that one day the difficulties we sometimes face for the sake of Allah will seem very insignificant, and we will be grateful that we held on to the right way:

قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِي قَرِينٌ {51}

A speaker from among them shall say: Surely I had a companion (in the world)

يَقُولُ أَأَنْتَ لِمَنِ الْمُصَدِّقِينَ {52}

Who said: What! are you indeed of those who accept (the truth)?

أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَأَنْتَا لَمَدِينُونَ {53}

What! when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then be certainly brought to judgment?

Just as in this life we are curious about the outcome of our friends' results, so it will be offered to this person in Paradise, if he would like to see where his companion had ended up after going through the accountability of Judgement Day:

قَالَ هَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُطَّلِعُونَ {54}

He shall say: Would you (care to) look ?

فَاطْلِعْ فَارْأَهُ فِي سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ {55}

Then he will look down and see him in the midst of the Hellfire.

At once he realizes how fortunate it was that he had remained firm in his conviction about the day of recompense and had not faltered under his companion's negative influence. Imagine his relief at having been saved from a similar fate:

قَالَ تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كِدْتَ لَتُرْدِينِ {56}

He shall say: By Allah! you had nearly ruined me;

And look at this attitude---he knows that if he had followed his companion and given up his true beliefs then he could be burning along with him but he does not brag about his intelligence or piety, rather acknowledges the fact that it was Allah's mercy on him that He had kept him on the right track:

وَلَوْلَا نِعْمَةُ رَبِّي لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ {57}

And had it not been for the favour of my Lord, I would certainly have been among those brought forth (to Hell).

Truly, to be saved from all misconceptions and negative influences that might lead us to Hell and to be guided towards Paradise is the ultimate success:

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ {60}

Most surely this is the mighty achievement.

But the thing to understand is that guidance and success are not given away just at random, rather Allah reminds us that to attain this highest honour we all need to work hard. It will be foolishness to expect that we will be granted a free visa to paradise when we see that in this world where Allah is the provider of all our needs, He still has created a system in which we have to work for everything. Nothing comes easy.....not even a morsel of food just enters your mouth by itself....you have to move your hands to the food and then take it to your mouth!! So get your concepts straightened up and identify the things that really matter, define your goals and then go for it.....with all the talents, capabilities and energy Allah has given you. Remember that utmost struggle is the key to success:

لَمِثْلِ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ {61}

For the like of this (success) --those who work, should be working for.

Another hurdle in our way to Paradise is that we blindly follow the faith of our forefathers. In other words, for a large majority of people, Religion is just a set of traditions that is transferred from

one generation to the next. Allah puts this in such clear and direct words:

إِنَّهُمْ أَفْوُوا أَبَاءَهُمْ ضَالِّينَ {69}

Surely they found their fathers on the wrong path,

فَهُمْ عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِمْ يُهْرَعُونَ {70}

So they too hastened to follow in their footsteps!

Isn't it ironical that for every other aspect of life we have devised new ways of living, and consider it backwardness to follow the elders; yet when it comes to religion we are not bothered to analyse where we are headed to..... But then if ignorance and misconceptions are thus followed by generation after generation; what will be the fate of mankind? Obviously no one can save us except Allah, our Creator and Provider. The way He keeps giving us the means to fulfil all our physical, material needs; similarly He kept sending us His Messengers who guided people away from ignorance towards the light of guidance. Again it was left up to the free will of people whether they took heed of these warnings or not.....

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ {72}

And certainly We sent among them warners.

فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ {73}

Then see how was the end of those warned,

And now Allah tells us about His chosen Messengers who had committed their lives to the mission of bringing people to Allah's obedience. The first example is that of Prophet Nuh (a.s) who spent 950 years, preaching Allah's message to his nation. When after all

his efforts the people continued to reject him, He asked Allah for help. After that there was a great flood in which the whole nation was drowned and only the Prophet and His followers were saved:

وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ {76}

And We delivered him and his followers from the mighty distress.

وَجَعَلْنَا ذُرِّيَّتَهُ هُمُ الْبَاقِينَ {77}

And We made his offspring the survivors.

Although very few people accepted his teachings, yet the greatest acceptance and appreciation is from Allah Himself who honours him in the following words:

سَلَامٌ عَلَى نُوحٍ فِي الْعَالَمِينَ {79}

Peace and salutation to Nuh among the nations.

إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ {80}

Thus do We surely reward the doers of good.

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ {81}

Surely he was of Our believing servants.

The next Prophet, whom Allah honoured by calling him His friend, was Ibrahim (a.s).....what a supreme honour! But how did he get this title? His story is of extreme submission and selflessness. He was born into a society which had forgotten all about Tauheed and everywhere people were blindly worshipping idols made of wood and stone. His own father was an idolater and held an esteemed position in the king's court due to his craftsmanship. But Ibrahim (a.s) did not blindly follow the traditions. Instead he started questioning people about their beliefs:

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ {85}

When he said to his father and his people: What is it that you worship?

أَفَنُفَكَّا آلِهَةً دُونَ اللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ {86}

Is it falsehood (as) gods besides Allah-- do you desire?

Apparently no one listened to him in spite of all his reasoning with them. So one day when he was all alone while his people had gone to attend their national fair, Ibrahim (a.s) went into the temple of their gods and addressed them:

فَرَاغَ إِلَى آلِهَتِهِمْ فَقَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ {91}

Then he turned aside to their gods and said: "What! do you not eat (of the offerings before you)?"

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنْطِقُونَ {92}

"What is the matter with you that you do not speak?"

Then he began striking them one after the other and destroyed them. As soon as the people discovered what had befallen their idols, they came running to Ibrahim (a.s) because they were sure no one else could do such a thing. But instead of being afraid of what they might do to him, Ibrahim (a.s) faced them with courage:

قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْحِتُونَ {95}

He Said: "What! do you worship what you (yourself) carve out?"

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ {96}

"While Allah has created you and what you make."

It is quite often the case that when people can't put down somebody at logic and reasoning, then all they can think of, is to subdue their

opponent with force. So they decided to prepare a furnace for Ibrahim and to throw him into the blazing flames. But Allah saved him by His miracle that when he was thrown into the fire, it cooled down instantly. Even after seeing such a manifestation of Allah's greatness, the people refused to believe, so Ibrahim (a.s) left his country saying:

وَقَالَ إِنِّي ذَاهِبٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ {99}

And he said: Verily, I am going to my lord; He will guide me.

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ {100}

My Lord! grant me (offspring) from the righteous.

Allah listened to his prayers and blessed him with the good news of a son, even though at that time both Ibrahim (a.s) and his wife Hajarah (a.s) were quite old. Imagine how happy he must have been when his son Ismail (a.s) was born, who later on became a prophet too. But His trials had not ended there, as Allah had yet another test for him.....When his beloved son reached the age of about 13, Ibrahim saw in his dream that Allah was commanding him to sacrifice his son. As prophets' dreams are a kind of revelation so he knew he had to obey Allah's command, however painful it was to do so. He called Ismail and told him about his dream, asking him his opinion. Imagine a son being asked such a question.....what do you suppose would be the reply? The calm, unperturbed response of Ismail was so amazing that Allah recorded it in His Quran for eternity so that we might know the rewards of setting an excellent example for our children by our own actions. If the father is willing to sacrifice all his life, even the love for his sole child, for the sake of Allah then that child will also be following the same standard of patience and submission before Allah's decisions:

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ
مَاذَا تَرَى قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ
{102}

And when he (his son) was old enough to work with him, he (Ibrahim) said: O my son! surely I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you (offering you in sacrifice to Allah); So look what you think. He said: O my father! do what you are commanded; if Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones.

And so Ibrahim (a.s) laid down his son prostrate upon his forehead for sacrifice. As he was about to put the knife to his neck, Allah called out to him to stop!

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَنِ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ {104}

And We called out to him saying: O Ibrahim!

قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ {105}

You have indeed shown the truth of the vision; surely thus do We reward the doers of good:

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ {106}

Most surely that indeed was a manifest trial.

By narrating this event Allah has made it so clear to us that to sacrifice our own pleasures for the sake of His obedience, is the ultimate proof of a person's faith. Those who pass this test of love and submission are honoured by Allah in this world and also the next.

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ {108}

And We perpetuated (praise) to him among the later generations.

سَلَامٌ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ {109}

Peace and salutations be on Ibrahim.

كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ {110}

Thus do We reward the doers of good.

Next Allah reminds us of the trials faced by Prophet Musa (a.s) and his brother Haroon (a.s) who also became a prophet. They had been given the awesome task of delivering Allah's message of Tauheed to Pharaoh who had established himself as a god to his people. It was an uphill task all the way. Finally, after all their struggles, Allah saved them and their followers from the tortures of the evil forces of Pharaoh:

وَنَجَّيْنَاهُمَا وَقَوْمَهُمَا مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ {115}

And We delivered them both and their people from the mighty distress.

وَنَصَرْنَاهُمْ فَكَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ {116}

And We helped them, so that they became victors.

Not only this but they were blessed with the sacred book of Torah and were guided to the right way. Their good names have been preserved in the generations to come. This is really a great reward for all their sacrifices:

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا فِي الْآخِرِينَ {119}

And We perpetuated (praise) to them among the later generations.

سَلَامٌ عَلَى مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ {120}

Peace be on Musa and Haroun.

إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ {121}

Even thus do We reward the doers of good.

Ilyas (Elias) was also Allah's messenger who had been sent to a nation who worshipped their invented god named "baal". He told them that Allah is the only one who has the right to be worshipped. But they denied him. Apparently this was not a success story but when you work for Allah then the outcome of your efforts in this world do not matter. Look, how Allah appreciates his sincerity and hard work:

سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِيَّاسِينَ {130}

Peace be on Ilyas.

إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ {131}

Even thus do We reward the doers of good.

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ {132}

Surely he was one of Our believing servants.

Now Allah remembers Prophet Lut (a.s) who put up with an extremely difficult situation, trying to guide a whole nation of homosexuals into leaving their evil practices. But they would not listen to him so Allah destroyed them all and saved his messenger and a handful of his followers. Except his wife who used to take sides with the wrong doers.

إِذْ نَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ {134}

When We saved him and his followers, all--

إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي الْغَابِرِينَ {135}

Except an old woman (his wife) who was amongst those who remained behind.

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الْآخَرِينَ {136}

Then We destroyed the others.

An important lesson in this story is that everyone is responsible for his own actions. No matter how closely you might be related to a righteous person, it cannot save you unless your own deeds are in obedience to Allah. Some people have this misconception that since we are the followers of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) then we will surely go to Paradise. Or that we belong to this group or to that family so we are the chosen favourites of Allah. It is precisely to remove this wishful thinking that Allah has given us such a detailed picture of all these Prophets.....how they spent their lives and how they were rewarded for what they did.

The next story, which is of Prophet Yunus (a.s), is a remarkable example of Allah's mercy. Yunus (Jonah) called his people to the Oneness of Allah but was disheartened by the constant denial of his nation, and their unwavering rejection of Allah's message. When he felt that they were not going to change their ways, he thought it was time that he should leave them to their fate and so he went off in a fury, without realizing that he should first wait for Allah's command before taking such a step. Upon reaching the sea shore he boarded a crowded ship, which started to drown just as they reached the middle of the sea. When they began casting of lots to decide whom to overthrow to lighten the ship, Yunus's name came up and so He was thrown into the sea, where a big fish swallowed him whole.....

إِذْ أَبَقَ إِلَى الْفُلِّ الْمَشْحُونِ {140}

When he ran away to a ship completely laden,

فَسَاهَمَ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُدْحَضِينَ {141}

So he (agreed to) cast lots, and he was among the losers.

فَالْتَقَمَهُ الْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ {142}

So the fish swallowed him while he did that for which he blamed himself

Now imagine what a horrible situation it was for a person who was already heartbroken by the obvious failure of his efforts and struggles in the way of Allah. But now he had realized his mistake of taking a hasty decision and giving up on himself and his people too soon. So immediately he asks for forgiveness, glorifying Allah and admitting his error. Allah says:

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ {143}

had he not been of them who glorify Allah,

لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ {144}

He would certainly have remained in its belly till the day of resurrection.

So Allah saved him by causing the fish to throw him up on the desolate shore, where a plant grew by Allah's orders to give him shade and food. When he was restored to good health, Allah sent him to a nation which believed in him.....

وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى مِئَةِ أَلْفٍ أَوْ يَزِيدُونَ {147}

And We sent him to a hundred thousand (people), or even more.

فَآمَنُوا فَمَتَّعْنَاهُمْ إِلَى حِينٍ {148}

And they believed, so We gave them enjoyment for a while.

It is a clear reminder that even if Prophets, who are the chosen people of Allah, can be held accountable for their slight errors then who are we to think that paradise will be granted to us automatically. I simply love reading this story because it removes all hopelessness from my heart. It reassures me that while making mistakes, is a human weakness, but glorifying Allah and repenting for one's

mistakes is so much appreciated and rewarded by Allah. I have myself experienced it that every time I do sincere Tauba, I feel renewed and energized to start living again with a clean heart and soul. How merciful Allah is for giving us these practical solutions to problems that seem impossible to cure.

And so after this beautiful journey through time, in which we saw these perfect people whom Allah chose as His messengers, we have the following passage in which Allah puts an end to the mythology of the ancient Arabs, who used to believe that the angels were Allah's daughters. Thus they made statues in their likeness and worshipped them as gods believing that they brought them good luck and fortune. It was a pity that after all the teachings of Tauheed which the Messengers had delivered to them, they still couldn't come out of their distorted beliefs. So Allah is asking them, what's wrong with you? How can you make such tales? Is there any proof for your statements?

مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ {154}

What is the matter with you, how do you judge?

أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ {155}

Will you not then remember?

أَمْ لَكُمْ سُلْطَانٌ مُّبِينٌ {156}

Or have you a clear authority?

The angels know what their place is, in the order of the universe and they are aware of their responsibilities. They say:

وَمَا مِنَّا إِلَّا لَهُ مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُومٌ {164}

And there is not one of us (angels) but has his assigned place (or position),

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الصَّافُّونَ {165}

And most surely we are they who draw themselves out in ranks,

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْمُسَبِّحُونَ {166}

And we are most surely they who declare the glory (of Allah).

The people of Makkah used to say that had they been given a Divine revelation, then they would be the true believers. But as time and events proved later on, it was just an empty claim:

وَإِنْ كَانُوا لَيَقُولُونَ {167}

And surely they used to say:

لَوْ أَنَّ عِنْدَنَا ذِكْرًا مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ {168}

Had we a reminder from those of yore,

لَكُنَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ {169}

We would certainly have been the servants of Allah-- the purified ones.

فَكَفَرُوا بِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ {170}

But (now) they disbelieve in it, so they will come to know.

It is an attitude that is found among people even today. They boldly claim that when Allah wishes He will bring them to the true guidance. And they don't want to be reminded of the fact that they have to ask for this guidance and they have to pay the price, which is hard work and sincerity of purpose. It cannot be simply handed to them on a tray. And do they think that Islam depends on them? No it is Allah's true religion and He is enough to uphold it. So Allah reminded the disbelievers of Makkah that His Prophet(s.a.w) and his followers will definitely be victorious:

وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ {171}

And certainly Our word has already gone forth in respect of Our slaves, the messengers:

إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ {172}

Most surely they shall be the triumphant ones

وَأَنَّ جُنْدَنَا لَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ {173}

And most surely Our hosts alone shall be the victorious ones.

And all praise to Allah who is perfect and free from all that the disbelievers associate with Him:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ {180}

Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Honour and power, (He is free) from what they attribute unto Him.

وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ {181}

And peace be on the messengers.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ {181}

And all praise and thanks is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

What a glorious end to a magnificent Surah! I pray to Allah that He might make it easy for us to understand the truth of His message and to apply it in our lives. This is what really matters after all.



Surah Saad

Today when so much is being said and done against the religion of Allah, this Surah came to me as a powerful reminder of how important it is for us to open this great Book of Allah, understand it and convey it to others so that our hearts may find peace and we may follow Allah's commands with conviction and desire. We need to be fully convinced that even if some people are using every possible measure in trying to distort the image of Islam, it certainly is the true religion.

Surely, doubt is like a poison which eats away at our faith, making us lose our focus and sense of direction. Therefore Allah is assuring us here that this Noble Quran is full of goodness and guidance but the disbelievers are in sheer arrogance and are deliberately deviating from what is good:

ص وَالْقُرْآنِ ذِي الذِّكْرِ {1}

Saad, I swear by the Quran, which is full of admonition.

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي عِزَّةٍ وَشِقَاقٍ {2}

But those who disbelieve are in self-exaltation and opposition.

And then they ridicule the person who brings to them the message of Allah.....Just like the disbelievers said about the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.):

أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّنْ ذِكْرِي بَلْ لَّمَّا يَذُوقُوا
عَذَابٍ {8}

Has the message been revealed to him out of [all of] us?" Rather, they are in doubt about My message. Rather, they have not yet tasted My punishment.

What if we come across a similar situation? What should we do when someone makes fun of our religion or says negative things about our Prophet or the good people who are following His *Sunnah* (way of life) by conveying the message of Quran to others? Allah says: be patient, don't talk back, don't react in a negative way, rather make yourself knowledgeable, increase your awareness about the virtuous people who have come before you and learn from them how to live, how to face various situations:

اصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُودَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ {17}

Bear patiently what they say, and remember Our servant Daud (David), the possessor of power; surely he was frequent in returning (to Allah).

The Prophet Da'ud (David) was a magnificent King and Allah had given Him extraordinary voice so that when He sang praises of Allah, the mountains and the birds joined in this glorification of their Lord. And he was also blessed with a grand kingdom along with two most prized qualities of character:

وَشَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهُ وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصَّلَ الْخَطَابِ {20}

And We strengthened his kingdom and We gave him wisdom and a clear judgment in speech.

This shows that for a man to rule the land; or to lead any nation or organization; or even a household, the most important thing after

Allah consciousness is "Hikmat". This can best be defined as the ability to make the right decision at the right time. Such a person is not ruled by his emotions or desires; rather he speaks and acts with wisdom and sincerity. His second quality; that we need to develop too; is to communicate effectively. The most brilliant ideas or detailed instructions can turn useless if they are not communicated to others in the right manner. So Allah said to His Prophet, Da'ud (a.s)

يَا دَاوُودُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ {26}

O Da'ud! surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow your own desires, lest it should lead you astray from the path of Allah; (as for) those who go astray from the path of Allah, they shall surely have a severe punishment because they forgot the day of reckoning.

From the above Ayat it is obvious that the two things which cause misguidance and disaster is firstly to blindly follow one's desires and secondly to be forgetful of the Day of Judgement.

You look around and you see people living as if they are going to live here forever; going about their daily routine without any sense of accountability. Allah is focusing their attention to the fact that He has not created this world without a purpose:

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ذَلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ {27}

And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain; that is the opinion of those who disbelieve then woe to those who disbelieve on account of the fire.

It means that to deny the day of recompense is "Kufr" (disbelief). Allah asks them, how can they even think that the good and the bad will be treated alike?

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ
نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ {28}

Shall We treat those who believe and do well like the mischief-makers in the earth? Or shall We make those who guard (against evil) like the wicked?

The people who bring up such doubts about the Day of Judgement claim to have a lot of reasoning behind their philosophies and appear to be very knowledgeable and clever. But Allah challenges them that if they are so intelligent then they should contemplate over the verses of the Quran, if they really want to find the truth:

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ {29}

This Book which We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) is highly blessed, so that they may ponder upon its verses and the men of understanding may learn a lesson from it.

Da'ud (a.s) was granted a son, Suleiman (a.s) who also became a Prophet. Here Allah mentions his most superior quality.....that he was "*Awwab*"; which means that he used to turn to Allah in every situation:

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ نِعَمَ الْعَبْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ {30}

And to Daud We gave Suleiman, (Solomon) most excellent devotee! Surely he was frequent in returning (to Allah).

This attitude of humbleness before Allah was especially admirable in Prophet Suleiman (a.s) who had been blessed with all the powers of a grand kingdom and wide-spread authority not only over the land and people but also over Jinn and animals and birds- even on the air which used to flow at his command. But instead of being arrogant he always remembered that in reality everything belonged to Allah, so all that grandeur further increased his love for Allah.....as is apparent in the following incident:

إِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْعَشِيِّ الصَّافِنَاتُ الْجَيَادُ {31}

When one evening, excellent-bred horses were presented before him....

فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّي حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ {32}

Then he said: Surely I have adopted the love of these good things with a view to glorify my Lord-- until they disappeared from sight.

رُدُّوْهَا عَلَيَّ فطَفِقَ مَسْحًا بِالسُّوقِ وَالْأَعْنَاقِ {33}

(he said) Bring them back to me; so he began to pass his hand over their legs and necks (with affection)

These are one of my most favourite and delightful Ayaat, because I feel so liberated to know that Allah has allowed us to love and admire the "worldly" things (Halal things not Haram.....be careful!) on the condition that this love should increase our love for the Creator and it should not make us arrogant or negligent of our basic duty towards Allah. So Allah has not completely put a ban on our emotional needs.....they just have to be channelized into a proper direction. The main focus of our love should be Allah. And for His sake if something enables us to work more efficiently in Allah's way then there is no harm in loving that thing; be it wealth or material blessings, or love for the righteous people for the sake of Allah.

Such a person who remembers and admires Allah when he admires one of His creation; provided it's not something which Allah has forbidden; will actually be rewarded for it. That is why Allah says about Suleiman (a.s):

وَإِنَّ لَهُ عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَّآبٍ {40}

Surely he has a place of nearness to Us and will have an excellent place of final abode.

Learning about the righteous people of Allah, is a source of great inspiration for us, therefore Allah gives us another example of patience and perseverance from the life of His Prophet, Ayub (a.s). He was afflicted with a terrible skin disease which made it impossible for others to endure his presence, so all his family and friends left him one by one but even in his anguish and isolation he never complained and did not stop worshipping Allah. So as a reward for his patience, Allah granted him back his health and his family and a kingdom much more splendid than ever before. Thus Allah appreciates Him:

.....إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِّعَمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ {44}

.....Certainly We found him full of patience. He was an excellent devotee, who turned to Us over and over again.

The Quran is full of such brilliant examples:

وَإِذْ كُنَّا عِبَادَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ أُولِيَ الْأَيْدِي وَالْأَبْصَارِ {45}

And remember Our servants Ibrahim and Ishaq and Yaqoub, men of power and insight.

All these Prophets were given magnificent power and vision. What a great combination it is when a person has depth of insight and far

sightedness, and also has the power to bring his plans and ideas into action. Vision alone is nothing but dreams and to act without insight is mere foolishness. But the combination of both these faculties produces excellent results. Without doubt, it is a gift from Allah and here Allah tells us why he chose these people for this gift and also for the gift of Prophet-hood:

إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَاهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ ذِكْرَى الدَّارِ {46}

Surely, We chose them for their special quality of keeping in mind the abode of Hereafter

So this is the key: Remembrance of Akhirah, the hereafter. I often observe that Allah has made us in such a way that our natural abilities remain hidden unless there is a motivation to bring them out. When you are focused on a high target then your hidden powers come to surface to assist you in attaining those goals. So when you focus your sight on the hereafter, your vision is increased and when you decide to work for it then other physical powers come into action too. So I have learned that Allah gives to us according to our aspirations.

Then we see that Allah reminds us of some other Prophets too:

وَإِذْ كُرِّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ وَكُلٌّ مِّنَ الْأَخْيَارِ {48}

And remember Ismail and Al-Yasha and Zulkifl; and they were all of the best.

So many people try to read Quran like an ordinary book; not giving it its due recognition or importance; forgetting that it is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds. They don't understand that it is Allah's greatest favour on us that He enables us to understand His words. But this favour cannot be attained without proper respect for the

Message as well as the Messenger. So they leaf through its translations and criticize things which they don't understand.....One of their most common remarks is about the mention of earlier nations and the Prophets. It seems irrelevant to them.....the stories of the former people. The fact is that these lessons from the history of the world motivate us to assess ourselves and see how we can too, become the favourites of Allah and save ourselves from Allah's anger and punishment.

Nothing else can make us believe in the Hereafter, except the Quran, which portrays such beautiful and attractive pictures of the paradise that inspire us towards making ourselves entitled for this delightful place...

هَذَا ذِكْرٌ وَإِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسْنَ مَآبٍ {49}

This is a reminder; and most surely there is an excellent resort for those who guard (against evil),

جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ مُّفْتَحَةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَبْوَابُ {50}

The gardens of perpetuity, the doors are wide opened to receive them.

مُتَّكِئِينَ فِيهَا يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَشَرَابٍ {51}

Reclining therein, calling therein for abundant fruits and delicious drink.

وَعِنْدَهُمْ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ أَثَرَابٌ {52}

And with them shall be those (bashful virgins) restraining their eyes, (companions) equals in age.

هَذَا مَا تُوْعَدُونَ لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ {53}

This is what you are promised for the day of reckoning.

The best thing about Paradise is that with it will never end:

إِنَّ هَذَا لَرِزْقُنَا مَا لَهُ مِنْ نَفَادٍ {54}

Most surely this is Our sustenance; it shall never come to an end;

But Allah has created everything for a purpose and just as he created this beautiful paradise for his faithful slaves, He has also created Hell fire for those who deny His rights and those who disobey Him. What else can make us strong enough to give up our bad habits..... except the reminder of this terrible torture?

هَذَا وَإِنَّ لِلطَّاغِينَ لَشَرَّ مَأْبٍ {55}

This (shall be so); and most surely there is an evil resort for the rebellious ones;

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ {56}

Hell; they shall enter it, so evil is the resting-place.

هَذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَّاقٌ {57}

This (shall be so); so let them taste it, boiling water and festering blood (pus).

Next Allah describes how the companions of the Hell Fire will be fighting among themselves. It is natural for people to blame and curse one another when going through extremely painful times. But the one thing which caught my attention is that they will be surprised not to find among themselves the good people whom they ridiculed in the world for following the right way, whom they called names such as extremists and fundamentalists:

وَقَالُوا مَا لَنَا لَا نَرَى رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُمْ مِّنَ الْأَشْرَارِ {62}

Then they will say (to one another) "But why do we not see those who we deemed wicked-

أَتَّخَذْنَاهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا أَمْ زَاغَتْ عَنْهُمْ الْأَبْصَارُ {63}

And whom we used to ridicule? Or has our eye-sight failed to notice them?"

It is the final reward that counts; so it shouldn't bother us if people talk against us in this world for following Allah's religion. What harm can their comments do except to their own selves? In this life, too, the negative minded person keeps burning inside with hatred and fury and envy, and in the hereafter too they shall burn in a greater fire. May Allah save us all from such an end (Ameen)

Thus Allah comforts His Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) who was being severely pressurised by the opposition of the Disbelievers of Makkah:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنذِرٌ وَمَا مِنِّ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ {65}

O Prophet tell them, : I am only a Warner, and there is no god but Allah, the One, the Subduer (of all):

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ {66}

The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, the Mighty, the most Forgiving.

The absolute power and authority of Allah and the horrors of the Day of Judgement are the two realities which often remain hidden from our thoughts and this is the main reason for our casual attitude towards religion:

قُلْ هُوَ نَبَأٌ عَظِيمٌ {67}

Say: It is a message of importance,

أَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضُونَ {68}

(And) you are turning aside from it:

But a question arises that when there were so many Prophets coming to guide the people one after the other; and they all worked with so

much sincerity; then why did a majority of people not believe? What led them to their disbelief and ultimately their destruction? Even today when we have the Blessed Quran and the teachings of our Prophet Muhammad, (s.a.w).....why is it that so many people are not willing to accept this message? What stops them? We find the answer to this in the following story:

It all started from day one, when Allah created Man:

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ طِينٍ {71}

Behold when your Lord said to the angels; Surely I am going to create a man from clay:

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ {72}

So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down and prostrate yourselves before him.

So what happened was that they all prostrated except Iblees (the devil) who acted arrogantly and so he disobeyed. Allah asked him:

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيدِيَّ أَتَكْبَرُ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ {75}

Allah said: O Iblees! what prevented you from prostrating yourself to him whom I created with My two hands? Are you too proud or do you think that you are one of the exalted ones?

Look at his answer.....aren't the same words lurking in the back of our minds too? The sense of superiority.....

قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ {76}

He said: I am better than he; you have created me of fire, and you created him of dust.

What could have been the reward for such arrogance? That too before the Creator of the Worlds....

قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ {77}

Allah said: Then get out of here, for surely you are accursed:

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ لَعْنَتِي إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ {78}

And surely My curse shall be on you till the day of judgment.

But then Iblees asked for respite till the day of judgement which he was given. So he swore in his anger and frustration that he was going to mislead all men and take them along with him to the Hell except those who were sincere to Allah. Even he knew that he could not mislead the committed ones!

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ {82}

Iblees said: Then I swear by your honour, I will surely mislead them all

إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمْ الْمُخْلِصِينَ {83}

Except your chosen sincere devotees among them.

So this is our test: To recognize our enemy- Iblees and to make ourselves strong against his evil influence. Nothing can give us this strength except Allah's remembrance and His Quran. We need to familiarize ourselves with this great book by spending time with it regularly, consistently..... sometimes just reading its text, sometimes understanding it and sometimes conveying its message to others. But mostly we need to act upon it ourselves and also remind others about it too. It is the only way out. If we don't accept this truth now then surely the time is coming very close when we will all see the complete reality with our own eyes.

At the end we have this reminder which is the gist of this entire Surah:

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ {87}

This (Quran) is nothing but a reminder to all the nations;

وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ نَبَأَهُ بَعْدَ حِينٍ {88}

And before long you will certainly know its truth.



Surah Az-Zumar

Belief in the oneness of Allah is called "***Tauheed***". When we believe that only Allah is our Lord and only He himself is the Creator, the Owner, the Provider and the Master of our destiny, then all our worship will be purely for Allah, all our hopes will be associated only with Allah; consequently our major concern will be to win His pleasure and likewise our only fear will be of His anger or displeasure. This is the first and foremost pillar of Islam and we have to hold tight to it because to associate any partner with Allah completely overturns the whole structure of one's religion. Thus we see that in the Surahs which were revealed in Makkah, the principle of Tauheed was strengthened into the hearts of the believers, along with vivid descriptions of the life of the hereafter, so that they could clearly see the absurdity of the glamorous world of idols that the disbelievers had created around Ka'ba in the name of religion.

Surah Az-Zumar is also one of the Surahs of the Makkan period, and revolves around the main theme of Tauheed and openly challenges the disbelievers to face the fact that there is no substance in their false idols and if they don't accept the true religion they will face unending torment of Hell fire.

It begins with an open declaration from Allah:

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا
لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ {3}

Now, surely, sincere obedience is due to Allah (alone) and (as for) those who take guardians besides Him, (saying), We do not serve them save that they may make us nearer to Allah, surely Allah will judge between them in that in which they differ; surely Allah does not guide him aright who is a liar, ungrateful.

Although we believe in the unseen and have faith in Allah and the angels and the Heaven and Hell without having seen them but Allah has displayed numerous signs in the universe for us to feel His presence. So in the next verses Allah makes us ponder over His signs of "Tauheed":

خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ
عَلَى اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى أَلَا هُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ {5}

He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth; He makes the night cover the day and makes the day overtake the night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient; each one runs on to an assigned term; now surely He is the Mighty, the great Forgiver.

How could all of this be happening with such precision and harmony if there were more gods except Allah?

Then take a good look at your own self and see where have you come from? How can anyone be arrogant after reading this Ayat? Could anyone else design such creation other than Allah?

خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِنْ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَأَنَّى تُصْرَفُونَ
{6}

He has created you from a single being, then made its mate of the same (kind), and He has made for you eight of the cattle in pairs. He creates you in the wombs of your mothers-- a creation after a creation-- in triple darkness; that is Allah your Lord, His is the kingdom; there is no god but He; whence are you then turned away?

Although after such solid proofs there should be no doubt in the Absolute Oneness of Allah, however it is very common that some people continue to hold fast to their wrong beliefs simply because of their rebellious attitude. They don't want to accept the truth because then they will have to accept that they were not right. So this arrogance keeps them misguided. Allah is warning them that in such a case they will themselves be the losers:

إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ وَإِنْ تَشْكُرُوا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ
{7}

If you disbelieve, then verily, Allâh is not in need of you, He likes not disbelief for His slaves. And if you are grateful (by being believers), He is pleased therewith for you. No bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return, so He will inform you what you used to do. Verily, He is the All-Knower of that which is in the hearts.

It is very interesting to note that even those who stubbornly refuse to submit before Allah; call to Him when they face some calamity and know that no one can save them except Allah. However, as soon as they come out of that situation they act like they have completely

forgotten whom they were calling in time of distress. Who are they fooling except themselves?

وَإِذَا مَسَّ الْإِنْسَانَ ضُرٌّ دَعَا رَبَّهُ مُنِيبًا إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلَهُ نِعْمَةً مِّنْهُ نَسِيَ مَا
كَانَ يَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ مِن قَبْلُ وَجَعَلَ لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا لِّيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ قُلْ تَمَتَّعْ
بِكُفْرِكَ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ {8}

And when some hurt touches man, he cries to his Lord (Allâh Alone), turning to Him in repentance, but when He bestows a favour upon him from Himself, he forgets that for which he cried for before, and he sets up rivals to Allâh, in order to mislead others from His Path. Say: "Take pleasure in your disbelief for a while: surely, you are (one) of the dwellers of the Fire!"

Worship is not just a set of rituals to help you through difficult times, rather it is the expression of love and submission for the Creator at all times, especially in the quietness of night, when a true believer prostrates before the Lord of the universe, fearing the horrors of the day of recompense, yet at the same time hoping for Allah's mercy:

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانَتْ آَنَاءُ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ
قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا
الْأَلْبَابِ {9}

Is one who is obedient to Allâh, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)? Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allâh's Signs and Verses).

What has enabled these people to develop this kind of relationship with Allah that keeps them awake at night? It is their knowledge that makes all the difference. The awareness that Allah is to be feared is the greatest knowledge. That is why we see that at the

end of the above Ayat Allah honours these people by saying that those who know cannot be like the ones who do not know.

Some people have been misled into believing that the Allah-fearing people must necessarily be living a pathetic life, having no comforts of the world. Allah puts an end to this misconception:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمْ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ
وَأَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةٌ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ {10}

Say: O my servants who believe! be careful of (your duty to) your Lord; for those who do good in this world is good, and Allah's earth is spacious; only those who are patient will be paid back their reward in full without measure.

Still some people fear that if they adopt the true religion and abide by its teachings then maybe people will make negative comments and single them out for ridicule. So in the following verses it seems as if Allah is saying "Why should you fear anyone except Me? Just tell them that this is what I have been ordered by the Lord, to purely worship Him and no one else....."

قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ {11}

Say: I am commanded that I should serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience.

وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ {12}

And I am commanded that I shall be the first of those who submit.

If someone calls you a loser, tell them who the actual loser is.....

فَاعْبُدُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَلَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ {15}

Then serve (worship) what you like besides Him. Say: The losers surely are those who shall have lost themselves and their families on the day of resurrection; now surely that is the clear loss.

What a terrible punishment they will face:

لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ذَلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهَ بِهِ
عِبَادَهُ يَا عِبَادِ فَاتَّقُونِ {16}

They shall have coverings of fire above them and coverings beneath them; with that Allah makes His servants to fear, so be careful of (your duty to) Me, O My servants!

Sometimes we think that staying pure in this day and age is next to impossible and how can we give up certain things which have become so essential to us even though they lead us away from Allah's path? At such times we must remember that this life is just a test and maybe it takes a lot of struggle to give up things which displease Allah but then see how much reward there is for those who stay away from wrong ways:

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَنْ يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَى
فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ {17}

And (as for) those who keep off from the worship of the idols and turn to Allah, they shall have good news, therefore give good news to My servants,

How do these people manage to stay away from evil? Are they born lucky? Allah tells us that they have two qualities due to which they get guidance; one is that they listen carefully and then they act upon what is good....

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمْعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ {18}

Those who listen to the word, then follow the best of it; those are they whom Allah has guided, and those it is who are the men of understanding.

In this life we have a choice of action. We can do good or bad. But once this test is over then we cannot change the results and there is no chance of a re-test. On one side there will be people burning in the hell and on the other side is such luxury, such beautiful description of Paradise....a promise from Allah and we know that He doesn't go against His promises:

لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهَا غُرَفٌ مَّبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ الْمِيعَادَ {20}

But (as for) those who are careful of (their duty to) their Lord, they shall have high places, above them higher places, built (for them), beneath which flow rivers; (this is) the promise of Allah: Allah will not fail in (His) promise.

This Quran is full of these admonitions but then why don't people take it seriously? Maybe Arabic is not their language but then what about the vast Arabic speaking world? Are they all living according to the Quranic teachings? Is Hadith their guiding principle in their day to day life? If not, then why is it so? We have been told in the Quran that Allah has made Quran easy to understand; revealed it in a language that is easy to learn. So if language is not a problem then why is it that so many Muslims are not following the true way of life and are not exactly reflecting a good representation of Islam? Allah gives the answer in the next Ayat:

أَفَمَنْ شَرَحَ اللَّهُ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ فَهُوَ عَلَى نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَاسِيَةِ
قُلُوبِهِمْ مِّن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أُوْلَئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ {22}

What! is he whose heart Allah has opened for Islam so that he is in a light from his Lord (like the hard-hearted)? Nay, woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allah; those are in clear error.

This happens to be one of my most favourite Ayaat and fills me with a deep sense of gratitude to Allah. He has made us in such a beautiful way. We see and we hear and we receive information but the heart is the place where this information is processed. So if there is an acceptance in the heart for something then it is not only understood, rather its effect is circulated like blood in the whole body. On the other hand if the heart doesn't open up, then no matter how logical or valid the information might be, it just won't be understood or accepted by that person. This opening of the heart for truth is a special gift from Allah given to those who truly desire it, leaving aside their prejudices, willing to admit their mistakes, willing to take Allah as the most Superior-Being.....superior to their logic and their desires.....superior to their own sense of superiority. Otherwise we see people who become even more hard hearted if they are reminded about Allah or Islam, because Allah has put a seal on their hearts due to their rebellion and their bloated egos.

See how Allah describes the effect of His words on the "open hearted" people:

اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُّتَشَابِهًا مَّثَانِيَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ
يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ
يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ {23}

Allâh has sent down the best statement, a Book (this Qur'ân), its parts resembling each other in goodness and truth, oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or hear it). Then their skin and their heart soften to the remembrance of Allâh. That is the guidance of Allâh. He Guides therewith whom He pleases and whomever Allâh sends astray, for him there is no guide.

As for those who prefer to live by their own rules, here is a warning which makes my heart tremble in fear.....fear for the displeasure of Allah and His punishment:

كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَآتَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ {25}

Those before them rejected (prophets), therefore there came to them the chastisement from whence they perceived not.

فَآذَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ الْحَزْنَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلِ الْعَذَابِ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ {26}

So Allah made them taste the disgrace in this world's life, and certainly the punishment of the hereafter is greater; did they but know!

For us Muslims, who have this Quran, there is no excuse for being ignorant or unaware. Allah has told us the same thing in countless ways:

وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ {27}

And certainly We have set forth to men in this Quran similitudes of every sort in order that they may remember.

In the clear Arabic language which has no ambiguity:

قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ {28}

An Arabic Qur'ân, without any crookedness (therein) in order that they may avoid all evil (which Allâh has ordered them to avoid, fear Him and keep their duty to Him)

The people of Makkah who were the first recipients of this magnificent revelation, believed in Allah as the creator of the world but they had appointed various idols as partners of Allah, and believed them to be the masters of their destiny. They couldn't accept the message of Tauheed, even though it was being presented to them in Quran, which was their own language. Allah challenges their belief in the following Ayat:

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلْ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِيَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَاشِفَاتُ ضُرِّهِ أَوْ أَرَادَنِيَ بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَاتُ رَحْمَتِهِ قُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ {38}

And verily, if you ask them: "Who created the heavens and the earth?" Surely, they will say: "Allâh (has created them)." Say: "Tell me then, the things that you invoke besides Allâh, if Allâh intended some harm for me, could they remove His harm, or if He (Allâh) intended some mercy for me, could they withhold His Mercy?" Say : "Sufficient for me is Allâh; in Him those who trust (i.e. believers) must put their trust.

They also doubted the concept of resurrection. Allah says, don't they witness a death every night and then re-birth every morning of their lives? Who is the one who wakes them up when they lose all sense of their existence?

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي
قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ
لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ {42}

It is Allah who recalls the souls at the time of their death, and of the living during their sleep. then He withholds the souls of those on whom He has passed the decree of death and sends the others back till an appointed term; most surely there are signs in this for those who reflect.

There are so many beautiful verses and ideas in the Quran which I yearn to share with those who have kept themselves stubbornly isolated from everything related to Allah and His religion and I feel such pity for them for this senseless deprivation but the problem is that they are not willing to listen.....

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا
ذُكِرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ {45}

And when Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the hereafter shrink, and when those besides Him are mentioned, lo! they are joyful.

I wish they would know that this life is soon going to end and then we will all have to pay for all our sins.....but the payment there is nothing but punishment.....our bank balances and grand houses and luxurious automobiles won't have any worth at all....

وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهِ مِنْ
سُوءِ الْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَبَدَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ
{47}

If the wrongdoers possessed all the treasures of the earth and as much more besides it, they would gladly offer it to redeem themselves from the painful punishment on the Day of Resurrection. For there will become apparent to them from Allah what they would never have imagined.

And nobody would be able to deny anything because it will all be out in the open:

وَبَدَأَ لَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا كَسَبُوا وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ {48}

And the evils of that which they earned will become apparent to them, and they will be encircled by that which they used to mock at!

When we read the verses which describe the punishment of the day of Judgement, it is quite natural to feel a heavy burden on the heart; and of course that's what they are meant for in the first place, so that we might be persuaded to bring about a positive change in our attitude towards life. But Allah is so kind and merciful to us that He doesn't want us to lose hope. So here is good news for all of us and especially those who mistakenly believe that they have gone so far in their wrong ways that now there is no use in turning back to the straight path.....

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ {53}

Say: O my servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving the Merciful.

Some people stop here and think, ok this is great...we can live the way we want and of course it's only human to make mistakes, so Allah is telling in the Quran that don't be afraid and Allah will forgive us all our sins....?? No, it's not meant like this; You have to read further

to get the whole picture. Forgiveness is on condition that you repent to Allah and submit to His commands:

وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ
{54}

"And turn in repentance and in obedience with true Faith (Islâmic Monotheism) to your Lord and submit to Him, (in Islâm), before the torment comes upon you, then you will not be helped.

So that covers the past and the present. Repent for the past sins and make a decision now to submit before Allah and accept His religion; But, what to do in future? Islam is a complete religion so it takes care of all three phases of our lives:

وَاتَّبِعُوا أَحْسَنَ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ بَغْتَةً
وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ {55}

And follow the best that has been revealed to you from your Lord before there comes to you the punishment all of a sudden while you do not even perceive;

Allah is again warning us here that we should not let ourselves procrastinate about this decision of Tauba (Repentance) to Allah. Shaitan knows how powerful this treatment is to the soul of a believer. He knows how it will give him energy to move in life, all refreshed and clean; and hopeful and optimistic.....believing in Allah with an open heart and doing everything to Please His Lord.....so the devil spares no effort in making us delay this process until the time when the person will eventually lose his resolve and thus will plunge back into the devil's obedience instead of Allah's worship.

Thus Allah warns us:

أَنْ تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ يَا حَسْرَتِي عَلَى مَا فَرَّطْتُ فِي جَنْبِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُ لَمِنَ
السَّاحِرِينَ {56}

Lest a person should say: "Alas, my grief that I was undutiful to Allâh and I was indeed among those who mocked at the truth (the Qur'ân, and Muhammad SAW and at the faithful believers, etc.)

أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ هَدَانِي لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ {57}

Or (lest) he should say: "If only Allâh had guided me, I should indeed have been among the pious and righteous persons "

أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ تَرَى الْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ {58}

Or (lest) he should say when he sees the torment: "If only I had another chance (to return to the world) then I should indeed be among the excellent ones."

If someone neglects his duty in this world and goes to the next one without accepting Allah's guidance then no such excuse will be accepted from him. Rather it will be said:

بَلَى قَدْ جَاءْتُكَ آيَاتِي فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَاسْتَكْبَرْتَ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ
{59}

Aye! My communications came to you, but you rejected them, and you were proud and you were one of the unbelievers.

What a pity it is that we don't realize the greatness of Allah. Isn't that why we remain heedless in spite of all the warnings?

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ {67}

And they have not honoured Allah with the honour that is due to Him; and the whole earth shall be in His grip on the day of resurrection and the heavens rolled up in His right hand; glory be to Him, and may He be exalted above what they associate (with Him).

Have we ever visualized about the Day of Judgement? Have we ever been curious what is going to happen to us? Or is our imagination limited only to the petty affairs of this world?

وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ وَجِيءَ بِالنَّبِيِّينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ
وَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ {69}

And the earth shall shine with the light of its Lord, and the Book shall be laid down, and the prophets and the witnesses shall be brought up, and judgment shall be given between them with justice, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.

Imagine how everyone will be given their share according to their deeds. There will be no injustice....

وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ {70}

And every soul shall be paid back fully what it has done, and He (Allah) knows best what they do.

And when the wrong doers will be led to the doors of Hell, the guardians will ask them with surprise- had no one warned them of their end? Had no one read to them the verses of their Lord?

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاؤُوهَا فَتَحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا
وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمْ
وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنْ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ عَلَى
الْكَافِرِينَ {71}

And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups, till, when they reach it, the gates thereof will be opened (suddenly like a prison at the arrival of the

prisoners). And its keepers will say, "Did not the Messengers come to you from yourselves, reciting to you the Verses of your Lord, and warning you of the Meeting of this Day of yours?" They will say: "Yes, but the Word of torment has been justified against the disbelievers!

Just imagine how painful it will be to accept their mistake on that day in front of so many people and knowing that they are going to be thrown into the fire like useless rubbish..... How great will be the shame and regret..... (Astahgfirullah)

But this is not all; there is going to be another crowd, groups of honoured people who will be led to the Paradise. Look at the welcome they receive...

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ
أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ {73}

And those who are careful of (their duty to) their Lord shall be conveyed to the garden in companies; until when they come to it, and its doors shall be opened, and the keepers of it shall say to them: Peace be on you, you have done well; therefore enter it to abide.

Isn't it simply beautiful.....Such a glorious reward for such fine people, who lived their lives in complete obedience and submission to their Lord; Forever fearing his anger and striving for His pleasure.....all the while having an undying conviction in the promises of Allah.....Just feel their pleasure at having reached their final destination for which they had worked and prayed all their lives:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ
حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ {74}

And they will say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allâh Who has fulfilled His Promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell in Paradise where we will; how excellent a reward for the (pious good) workers!"

And thus the test and its judgement will come to an end. The angels will surround the throne of Allah and will glorify Him with His praises:

وَتَرَى الْمَلَائِكَةَ حَافِينَ مِنْ حَوْلِ الْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقُضِيَ
بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَقِيلَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ {75}

And you will see the angels surrounding the Throne (of Allâh) from all round, glorifying the praises of their Lord (Allâh). And they (all the creatures) will be judged with truth, and it will be said. All the praises and thanks be to Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinns and all that exists)."

With this the "picture" comes to an end. It's like Allah has just taken us on a tour of our future. We have seen the hell and the Paradise. The sad regrets of the people going into hell are resounding in my heart, just side by side with the joyous exclamations of the victorious ones.....The question is; Which group do I belong to?

And, what about you? Where do you see yourself? As the Prophet (s.a.w.) told us:

Al Mar'u Ma'a Man Ahabba

Meaning: A man will be with the one he loves

So it means that the company I keep in this world is most likely to be my companions in the next world too. So take a look at those you love to hang out with.....where do you see them in this picture of the hereafter?

And what about our own record of deeds? Take a good look at the journal of your life..... What have you accomplished so far? It's all being written down, recorded with the minutest details; With an irremovable ink. The only thing that can wipe its writing is Tauba.....a

sincere repentance. So take this decision while there is still time.
Before the bell rings to announce the end of the test.....

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ
اللَّهُ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ {68}

And the trumpet shall be blown, so all those that are in the heavens and all those that are in the earth shall swoon, except such as Allah please; then it shall be blown again, then lo! They shall stand up awaiting....



Surah Al-Mu'min

The Quran is a road map for us to follow in this journey of life, so that it can lead us to our final destination i.e. the Paradise. But to follow any set of directions one needs to have complete trust in its authenticity. The level of our trust will determine the degree of our attachment with this Book, which in turn will enable us to follow its teachings. Therefore Allah has sent us many reminders about the honourable status of Quran so that we can take its guidance with open eyes and an open heart.

The opening verse of Surah Al-Mu'min is also one such reminder in which Allah tells us that this is not just any ordinary book you are holding; rather it is a revelation from the All-mighty Allah who knows everything. There is no author of any other book who can make this claim that he knows everything, therefore no book on earth can tell you everything. No knowledge is complete except Allah's knowledge and therefore no book is complete except the Quran:

تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ {2}

The revelation of the Book is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing,

Allah has blessed each one of us with unique talents and capabilities and to attain the highest level of success we need to use these talents and live a productive wholesome life. But to be able to live fully one needs to have peace of mind, otherwise life just goes round and round in circles and we don't get to achieve even half of what we

could have done. Most of the people feel a burden on their hearts which takes away all their energy and initiative. It's just like running in a race carrying a sack of goods on your back.....can you imagine yourself winning the race in such a way? But what are the burdens we carry in our hearts which hinder our progress in life? It is the burden of sins; the guilt and regret of years of negligence; and the worries for an uncertain future. Apparently it seems that there is no way out of it; but Allah is so kind, He gives us the solution in the following verse:

غَافِرِ الذَّنْبِ وَقَابِلِ التَّوْبِ شَدِيدِ الْعِقَابِ ذِي الطَّوْلِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ إِلَيْهِ
الْمَصِيرُ {3}

The Forgiver of the faults and the Acceptor of repentance, Severe to punish, Lord of bounty; there is no god but He; to Him is the final return.

Just concentrate upon each of Allah's attributes mentioned here and see how simple it is to put everything before Him. The only thing we need to do is to submit to His obedience, make a sincere repentance for the past sins and negligence and then feel the assurance of His forgiveness. He accepts all our intentions for the future too; as "Tauba" is not complete without it. We make a commitment before Him that we will live according to His Book and the teachings of His Prophet (s.a.w) and immediately we feel the hope and energy inside our heart that Allah will help us to do it. But if we don't avail this opportunity of self purification, and think that we are fine just as we are and don't need to change our way of life, then not only Allah increases the burden on our heart but He is also swift in His punishment. There is no escape from recompense because we all have to return to Him. How awesome it is that all this has been revealed in just one verse.....the same thing for which I used so many words

and sentences.....what more proof do we need for the greatness of the Quran? But there are still a lot of people who cannot feel any significance for this great Book. Look at what Allah has to say about them:

مَا يُجَادِلُ فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَا يَغْرُرُكَ تَقَلُّبُهُمْ فِي الْبِلَادِ
{4}

None dispute concerning the communications of Allah but those who disbelieve, therefore let not their going to and fro in the cities deceive you.

Quran is full of the incidents of those people who denied its teachings and then see what punishments they faced.....

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَالْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ وَهَمَّتْ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ بِرَسُولِهِمْ
لِيَأْخُذُوهُ وَجَادَلُوا بِالْبَاطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُوا بِهِ الْحَقَّ فَأَخَذْتُهُمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ
عِقَابِ {5}

The people of Nûh (Noah) and the confederates after them denied (their Messengers) before these, and every (disbelieving) nation plotted against their Messenger to seize him, and disputed by means of falsehood to refute therewith the truth. So I seized them (with punishment), and how (terrible) was My punishment!

In all the nations which came one after the other since the creation of the world, Allah sent His messengers to guide the people to the truth but they all faced rejection from a majority of the people. Even those few who believed in the true guidance were made into an object of ridicule and hatred. This rejection from the society tends to depress the believers and they feel isolated and insecure. But Look at the inspirational verses that follow in which Allah assures the true believers that He is on their side, and His angels are constantly praying for all those who believe in Allah and make a true

commitment to follow the right way even if it's difficult at times to do so.....

الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ
وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَاغْفِرْ
لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ {7}

Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allâh) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh) (saying): "Our Lord! You comprehend all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who repent and follow Your Way, and save them from the torment of the blazing Fire!

How beautiful is this prayer! The angels know that the greatest pleasure for man is to share his pleasures with his family and friends. Even in paradise his happiness will be complete when he will be in the company of his beloved people. So they pray for the believers to be blessed with this delight in Paradise.....to enjoy the company of their beloved people:

رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدْتَهُمْ وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ
وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ {8}

"Our Lord! And make them enter the 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) which you have promised them, and to the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their offspring! Verily, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

This Ayat also gives us a sense of responsibility that while we are making any progress towards gaining Allah's pleasure and doing good deeds to enter paradise we should also take care of our families and friends that they should not be deprived of this guidance. We have to take them along with us to this path of success.

وَقِهِمُ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَمَنْ تَقِ السَّيِّئَاتِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمْتَهُ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ {9}

"And save them from (the punishment, because of what they did of) the sins, and whomsoever You save from (the punishment, because of what they did of) the sins (i.e. excuse them) that Day, him verily, You have taken into mercy." And that is the supreme success.

So next time if you feel like crying because of all the opposition you have to face in the way of Allah, remember these Ayaat and be happy on this wonderful support you have!! And if you feel pressurised by the environment to follow the trends then take a moment and revise your commitment with Allah:

فَادْعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ {14}

So, call you (O Muhammad SAW and the believers) upon (or invoke) Allâh making (your) worship pure for Him (Alone) (by worshipping none but Him and by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only and not to show-off and not to set up rivals with Him in worship). However much the disbelievers (in the Oneness of Allâh) may hate (it).

And don't worry about any loss of status or peoples' approval; remember that true status is with Allah:

رَفِيعُ الدَّرَجَاتِ ذُو الْعَرْشِ يُلْقِي الرُّوحَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ لِيُنْذِرَ يَوْمَ التَّلَاقِ {15}

(He is Allâh) Owner of High Ranks and Degrees, the Owner of the Throne. He sends the Inspiration by His Command to any of His slaves He wills, that he (the person who receives inspiration) may warn (men) of the Day of Mutual Meeting (i.e. The Day of Resurrection).

Mostly we let our desires govern our minds and that's why we have such a lethargic attitude towards religion. There is so much we don't know because of our self imposed ignorance but isn't it strange that

often we fail to follow even those things which we know are right and important. We keep putting them off because our concept about accountability is very blurred. Also we tend to avoid talking or thinking about our death or about the day when we will have to face the consequences of our actions. So the importance of Allah's obedience becomes more and more obscure from our minds. Thus to save mankind from utter loss and destruction, Allah ordered all His Messengers to warn the people about the day of recompense:

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْآزِفَةِ إِذِ الْقُلُوبُ لَدَى الْحَنَاجِرِ كَازِمِينَ مَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ يُطَاعُ {18}

And warn them of the day that draws near, when hearts shall rise up to the throats, grieving inwardly; the unjust shall not have any compassionate friend nor any intercessor who should be obeyed.

This fear of the day of Judgement is something which breaks our desire to do things which have been prohibited and motivates us into doing good deeds to please Allah who will be the one and only Master and Judge on that day:

وَاللَّهُ يَقْضِي بِالْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَقْضُونَ بِشَيْءٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ {20}

And Allah judges with the truth; and those whom they call upon besides Him cannot judge aught; surely Allah is the Hearing, the Seeing.

Now it so happens that when you act upon Allah's command and you decide to tell people about the reality of life, warning them of the horrible punishments that Allah has listed down in the Quran; most people don't like it at all and often turn nasty in their defensive attitude. It's quite similar to waking a person from deep sleep,

especially one who loves to sleep..... you will not expect him to thank you for reminding him that he is getting late for work....on the contrary there can be a lot of negative reaction.....so that is the case with warning people about the consequences of their disobedience to Allah's. It is never easy but it's the duty of every believer to spread this awareness.

Now Allah gives us an example of one such believer who took a stand to speak the truth even at the cost of putting his life at risk. The story begins when Musa (a.s) was sent to the Pharaoh and his people:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا وَسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ {23}

And certainly We sent Musa with Our communications and clear authority,

إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَقَارُونَ فَقَالُوا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ {24}

To Fir'aun (Pharaoh), Hâmân and Qârûn (Korah), but they called (him): "A sorcerer, a liar!"

But when Pharaoh saw that people were starting to believe in Musa's teachings, he threatened to kill Musa (a.s) to put an end to the Message along with the Messenger:

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُونِي أَقْتُلْ مُوسَىٰ وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ أَوْ أَنْ يُظْهِرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْفَسَادَ {26}

And Firon said: Let me alone that I may kill Musa and let him call upon his Lord; surely I fear that he will change your religion or that he will make mischief to appear in the land.

Normally such a threat from such a mighty force as Pharaoh would take the guts out of anyone, but look at the power of faith that is reflected in the words of Musa (a.s) who calmly replied:

وَقَالَ مُوسَى إِنِّي عُذْتُ بِرَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِيَوْمِ
الْحِسَابِ {27}

And Musa said: Surely I take refuge with my Lord and-- your Lord from every proud one who does not believe in the day of reckoning.

This is the beauty of Tauheed that when you fear Allah alone and take Him as your Lord, then all other forces will seem worthless as compared to Allah's power. Fear of Allah is the only fear that makes you brave!

So what happened next was that a person among the courtiers of Pharaoh who had not so far disclosed the fact that he had become a believer in Allah and His Messengers, stood up in support of Musa (a.s) and said:

وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُُّؤْمِنٌ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ إِيمَانَهُ أَتَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَقُولَ
رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ وَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَإِنْ يَكُ كَاذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُ
وَإِنْ يَكُ صَادِقًا يُصِيبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَعِدُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ
مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ {28}

And a believing man of Firon's people who hid his faith said: What! will you slay a man because he says: My Lord is Allah, and indeed he has brought to you clear arguments from your Lord? And if he be a liar, on him will be his lie, and if he be truthful, there will befall you some of that which he threatens you (with); surely Allah does not guide him who is extravagant, a liar:

The important thing to learn from his statement is that the courage of faith does not mean that we have to be loud and unnecessarily rude to prove our point; rather true courage should enable us to face the opponent with dignity and firm conviction, using logic and clear reasoning. This wisdom is also a gift from Allah to those who really

fear Him in all situations; and for whom the actual motive is not to proclaim their own greatness, but they seek to glorify Allah's honour at all times.

So this "Mu'min", this true believer reminds his people of their actual helplessness before Allah in case He sent His punishment, because they would not be able to save themselves from it, in spite of the fact that they were rulers and were dominant in the land. He then gives them examples of the perished nations:

وَقَالَ الَّذِي آمَنَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِثْلَ يَوْمِ الْأَحْزَابِ {30}

And he who believed said: "O my people! Verily, I fear for you a fate like that day (of disaster) of the Confederates (of old)!"

مِثْلَ دَابِّ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا
لِّلْعِبَادِ {31}

The like of what befell the people of Nuh and Ad and Samood and those after them, and Allah does not desire injustice for (His) servants;

Like every true believer, his real focus was on the Akhirah, so he warns them:

وَيَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّنَادِ {32}

And, O my people! I fear for you the day of calling out,

يَوْمَ تَوَلَّوْنَ مُدْبِرِينَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ
مِنْ هَادٍ {33}

A Day when you will turn your backs and flee having no protector from Allâh, And whomsoever Allâh sends astray, for him there is no guide.

The Pharaoh saw that what he was saying was true and he might succeed in influencing the people, so he tried to distract the

audience by his non serious remarks. What he did not know was that all his schemes will avail him nothing but destruction:

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا هَامَانَ ابْنِ لِي صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّي أَبْلُغُ الْأَسْبَابَ {36}

And Firon said: O Haman! build for me a tower that I may attain the means of access,

أَسْبَابَ السَّمَاوَاتِ فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَى إِلَهِ مُوسَى وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ كَاذِبًا وَكَذَلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِفِرْعَوْنَ سُوءَ عَمَلِهِ وَصَدَّ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا كَيْدُ فِرْعَوْنَ إِلَّا فِي تَبَابٍ {37}

The means of access to the heavens, then reach the god of Musa, and I surely think him to be a liar. And thus the evil of his deed was made fairseeming to Firon, and he was turned away from the Right Way; and the schemes of Firon led him to nothing but destruction.

The believer continues with his speech unwaveringly, as he is neither oppressed by the threats nor is he angered by the ridicule of Pharaoh. This is really true courage and determination.....to remain focused on one's own purpose and not let others disturb your emotional equilibrium:

وَقَالَ الَّذِي آمَنَ يَا قَوْمِ اتَّبِعُونِ أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ الرَّشَادِ {38}

And he who believed said: O my people! follow me; I will guide you to the right course;

يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ الْقَرَارِ {39}

O my people! this life of the world is only a (passing) enjoyment, and surely the hereafter is the abode to settle;

How well he understood and conveyed the reality of life. Surely it is a reflection of the fact that to be a believer doesn't mean that you shut off your intellect and blindly follow some group wherever they might lead you. The truth is that Allah wants us to use our senses to

understand His signs so that we can really absorb the spirit of the revelations. Just look at this person's clarity of thought and speech:

مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنشَى
وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ {40}

Whoever does an evil, he shall not be recompensed (with aught) but the like of it, and whoever does good, whether male or female, and he is a believer, these shall enter the garden, in which they shall be given sustenance without measure.

And at the end what inspires me greatly about this character is his absolute faith in Allah, his constant remembrance of Allah, which doesn't let him get carried away with any self projection. He doesn't care whether he scored any points with his audience rather he remembers that his actual judge is Allah and not people.....no wonder Allah refers to him as "Al-Mu'min" *The believer*:

فَسَتَذْكُرُونَ مَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ
{44}

So you shall remember what I say to you, and I entrust my affair to Allah, Surely Allah is the All-seer of His servants.

So Allah saved him from all those evil plots that Pharaoh and his people devised against him:

فَوَقَاهُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ {45}

So Allah protected him from the evil (consequences) of what they planned, and the most evil punishment overtook Firon's people:

There are many lessons to be learned from this story but the most important thing is that we should compare our attitude with this

believer and evaluate our level of faith.....because we also make claims of having faith in Allah and His message. But faith is something that should be etched deep in our heart and our actions should reflect it. Allah has promised to help all those who have true faith in Him, not only in this world but also the next:

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الشَّهَادُ
{51}

Most surely We help Our messengers, and those who believe, in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses shall stand

And what will be the fate of the wrongdoers? Ask anyone about why they don't obey Allah's commands and they will be full of excuses. But what will be the use of these excuses in the hereafter?

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعَذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ {52}

The day on which their excuses shall not benefit the unjust, and for them is curse and for them is the evil abode.

And if someone thinks that why should we worry about something that might happen after an infinite time, let them read the following verse carefully:

إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَآتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ {59}

Most surely the hour is coming, there is no doubt therein, but most people do not believe.

But people continue to deny these plain warnings from the Lord. Allah says, very soon they will know:

الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِالْكِتَابِ وَبِمَا أَرْسَلْنَا بِهِ رُسُلَنَا فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ {70}

Those who reject the Book and that with which We have sent Our Messenger;
but they shall soon come to know,

What will be the use of acknowledging the truth when a great torment will overcome all those who chose to deny it in this life?

إِذِ الْأَغْلَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلَاسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ {71}

When the fetters and the chains shall be on their necks; they shall be dragged

فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ {72}

Into boiling water, then in the fire shall they be burned;

As we read these verses we should imagine the probability of us being in such a condition and then we should pray for forgiveness. May Allah save us all from the fire. (Ameen) We should understand that Allah has made everything in this universe with a purpose and the creation of Man was not so that he could roam around in the land in an aimless pursuit of amusement, without caring whether he might be breaking his covenant with Allah. This is the attitude which angers Allah so much:

ذَلِكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَمْرَحُونَ {75}

That is because you exulted in the land unjustly and because you behaved insolently.

Another thing which invites Allah's punishment is to be proud of one's own knowledge and to make fun of the Messengers as well as the Message of Allah:

فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرِحُوا بِمَا عِنْدَهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ
مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ {83}

Then when their Messengers came to them with clear proofs, they were glad (and proud) with that which they had of the knowledge (of worldly things): And that at which they used to mock, surrounded them (i.e. the punishment).

It is human nature that no matter how arrogant someone might be; when he finds himself trapped in any calamity then he calls out to Allah:

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا بَأْسَنَا قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ وَكَفَرْنَا بِمَا كُنَّا بِهِ مُشْرِكِينَ
{84}

But when they saw Our punishment, they said: We believe in Allah alone and we deny what we used to associate with Him.

But there is a time limit for everything. The opportunity for Tauba is available to us only until we are alive and once the disbelievers will be facing their punishment then it will not matter whether they believe in Allah or not.....

فَلَمْ يَكُ يَنْفَعُهُمْ إِيمَانُهُمْ لَمَّا رَأَوْا بَأْسَنَا سُنَّتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ فِي
عِبَادِهِ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْكَافِرُونَ {85}

But after seeing our punishment, their professing the faith (Islam) was of no use to them; such was the practise of Allah in dealing with His servants in the past, and Thus the disbelievers were utterly lost.

We human beings are so perceptive of profit and loss in all areas of life. We don't do anything for free. Even a child evaluates what he will gain out of any situation. So how strange it is if we are not

bothered about gaining any benefit from our entire life? If we don't invest our time and energy to gain the rewards of the permanent life of the hereafter, then what are we doing here? What good is there in just working for this temporary life which is going to end anyway? What are we going to do after that? The time to think for that is now.....not tomorrow or the day after but nowthe time for Tauba is now, not next year or next Ramadan but now.....

Bismillahir Rahman-ir Rahim

Surah Ha-Meem As-Sajdah

The names, Al-Rahman and Al-Raheem, signify the extreme mercy and compassion of Allah and since the opening verse of this Surah tells us, that this Quran and this Surah is a revelation of the Al-Rahman and Al-Raheem, I feel as if the Quran is actually a gift of love from the Lord of the Universe to Man.....His best creation..... to whom He gave the power to think and the faculties to live a life of consciousness. It was due to His extreme love and mercy that He gave us this source of guidance, so that we might not get lost in the confusion of this world.....

تَزِيلٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ {2}

This is revealed by the Compassionate, the Merciful (*Allah*)

كِتَابٌ فَصَّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ {3}

a Book whose verses are well explained, a Qur'an in the Arabic language for people who understand.

The word "*Fussilat* " in the above Ayat is also the other name for this Surah; and it means "well-explained". Why do we need explanation? It is a fact that a lot of books fail to give any help to the readers in their lives because of their complex language and unrealistic ideas. When you read such a book you might admire it for its grand style but you cannot get any benefit out of it. But Allah made the Quran simple for everyone to understand because its purpose was to guide people out of darkness of ignorance into the light of awareness. Therefore each and every concept has been repeatedly explained in different ways so that it becomes vivid and clear to readers of all levels of intellect.

And thus, these clear words of Allah give good news to the righteous ones and they find peace and happiness in its reading; and also it gives a clear warning to the wrongdoers so that they should revert to the right way of life. But the majority of people don't want to accept their mistakes, so they ignore the Quran and even refuse to listen to it because they want to avoid the feeling of guilt it inspires in them.

بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا فَأَعْرَضَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ {4}

A giver of good news and admonition: yet most of the people turn their backs and do not listen.

If they are advised to pay attention to the Quran because it is the strongest link with Allah, they make many excuses:

وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا فِي أَكِنَّةٍ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ وَفِي آذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ وَمِنْ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ حِجَابٌ فَأَعْمَلْ إِنَّا عَامِلُونَ {5}

They say: "Our hearts are concealed in veils *from the faith* to which you call us, there is deafness in our ears and there is a barrier between you and us: so you work *your way* and we keep on working *our way*."

It is a fact that those who don't want to listen to the Quran and its truths create a barrier between themselves and the people who want to communicate its message to them. They might be living as a family under the same roof, or working together as colleagues but in their thinking they are poles apart. Therefore this barrier, although unseen, is so wide that even the simplest, straight forward things become impossible for them to understand. This attitude is very painful for the one who wants to save these misguided people from eternal loss. Like it was in the case of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) who was trying to communicate Allah's message to the people of Makkah, most of whom were defying the truth by their stubborn

refusal to listen to it. Thus Allah comforts His Messenger in the following Ayat:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَاسْتَقِيمُوا إِلَيْهِ
وَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ {6}

Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your Allah is one Allah, therefore follow the right way to Him and ask His forgiveness; and woe to the polytheists;

The people, who deny the true religion of Tauheed, should be made to realize that even if their excuses can be accepted, that they don't have time for the Quran, or they find it too difficult to understand, still they cannot say that they can't see any proof of it. Don't they look at the signs in the universe? If they just observe with open eyes, they will find the truth written all over the skies and the earth:

قُلْ أَنتَ كُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ أَندَادًا
ذَٰلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ {9}

Ask them: "Do you really deny the One Who created the earth in two periods and do you set up rivals in worship with Him while He is the Rabb of the worlds

وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِي مِّنْ فَوْقِهَا وَبَارَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَقْوَاتَهَا فِي أَرْبَعَةِ
أَيَّامٍ سَوَاءٌ لِّلسَّائِلِينَ {10}

He set upon it mountains towering high above its surface, He bestowed blessings upon it and in four periods provided it with sustenance according to the needs of all those who *live in* and ask for it.

Just imagine someone who has to prepare different types of food for different members of the family and also has a variety of pets to feed. How difficult it would be to plan and shop and cook and serve. But look at Allah's majestic powers and His superb planning.

Such an endless variety of living creatures on the land, in the air and under the oceans.....all requiring specific food at specific times and Allah provides for them all, day and night throughout their lives. What a miracle it is, if only we think! But if we ignore these signs then there is a clear warning:

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنْذَرْتُكُمْ صَاعِقَةً مِّثْلَ صَاعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ {13}

Now if they turn away, say to them: "I have given you warning of a thunderbolt, like the thunderbolt which struck 'Ad and Thamüd."

In the examples of '*Aad* and *Thamud*' who were the perished nations of ancient times, there was one common factor that they resembled the disbelievers of Makkah in making excuses:

إِذْ جَاءَتْهُمْ الرُّسُلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ قَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّنَا لَأَنْزَلَ مَلَائِكَةً فَإِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ {14}

When their Rasools came to them from before and from behind, saying: "Worship none but Allah." They replied: "If our Rabb wanted to send us a message, He would certainly have sent down angels, so we *categorically* deny the message with which you are sent."

Just as the leaders of Quraish thought it beneath their dignity to accept the Prophet (s.a.w), similarly, the people of '*Aad*' were also full of a false sense of superiority:

فَأَمَّا عَادُ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ {15}

As for 'Ad, they conducted themselves with arrogance in the land without any justification and said: "Who is stronger than us in might?" Could they not see that Allah Who created them, was mightier than them? Yet they continued to reject Our revelations.

Allah has strongly forbidden "takabbar" (feeling of superiority) because the only one who is superior is Allah himself. No one else has the right to assume that he is better than others. So Allah gave them a terrible punishment in which they were destroyed by a strong chilly wind. It was painful as well as humiliating for those tall powerful men to be tossed about by something as light and apparently powerless as wind:

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي أَيَّامٍ نَّحِسَاتٍ لَّنُذِيقَهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخِزْيِ
فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَخْزَىٰ وَهُمْ لَا يُنصَرُونَ {16}

So, over a few ill-omened days, We let loose on them a furious hurricane to make them taste a shameful scourge in this life, but more shameful still will be the punishment of the hereafter, and they shall have none to help them.

The people of *Thamud* were given guidance but like the disbelievers of Makkah they preferred to remain in darkness:

وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَىٰ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ صَاعِقَةٌ
الْعَذَابِ الْهُونَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ {17}

As for Thamüd, We offered them Our guidance, but they preferred to remain blind rather than to receive guidance *towards the Right Way*; so the thunderbolt of humiliating scourge seized them for their misdeeds,

How terrible is the punishment for those who think that they can bypass Allah's commands by making excuses, and are deluded into a false satisfaction that by finding fault with the religion and religious people, they can find justification for their own faults. (May Allah forgive us all) . Allah calls such people His enemies:

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ {19}

Imagine that Day when the enemies of Allah will be brought together and led to the hellfire in groups.

Sometimes when I listen to the objections raised by such people who don't want to surrender to the truth of Quran and Islam, I am baffled by their words and don't understand what to say in response to their strange remarks. The way they can find fault with everything and lead the discussion away from relevant facts to far-fetched theories and philosophies is too weird. But what will be the use of all this skill of dodging the truth when their own skin and bodies will testify against them?

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا مَا جَاؤُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ {20}

Finally when they reach there, their ears, their eyes, and their skins will testify to their deeds.

On that day they will be horrified at this unexpected turn of affairs, and will ask their skins, "Why did you testify against us?" Then their skins will give them a detailed reply, which will completely shatter the fool's paradise in which they had been living so far:

وَقَالُوا لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ {21}

And they will ask their skins: "Why did you testify against us?" Their skins will reply: "Allah Who gives the faculty of speech to everything, has made us speak. He is the One Who created you to begin with, and now to Him you are being brought back.

وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَتِرُونَ أَنْ يَشْهَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ سَمْعُكُمْ وَلَا أَبْصَارُكُمْ وَلَا جُلُودُكُمْ وَلَكِنْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَعْلَمُ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ {22}

During your life on earth you used to hide yourselves while committing crimes, you never thought that your own ears, your own eyes and your own skins would ever testify against you. Rather you thought that even Allah had no knowledge of many things that you do

وَذَلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِي ظَنَنْتُمْ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَاكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

{23}

This thought of yours, which you entertained concerning your Rabb, has brought you to destruction and now you have become of those who are utterly lost."

If we contemplate on these verses we see one word occurring three times and that is "**zann** " which means idea, assumption or concept about something. It is stated here that mainly their wrong ways were due to their misconception. They had been misled by the assumption that Allah will not hold them accountable for their deeds. And this fearlessness caused them to live a carefree life. But why do we assume certain things or have misguided ideas in the first place? Why don't we all accept the truth when we see it? Why do some people continue to hold fast to their wrong beliefs or mistaken ideas even though they don't have any clear proof? The fact is that most people are greatly influenced by their environment. More than families, it is our friends who we accept as our role models. We try to follow them and want to be one of them. This desire to be owned and accepted, leads us to borrow their ideas and concepts about life and religion etc. Thus it becomes extremely important to make good, righteous friends, because your friends will always encourage you on whatever way of life they themselves are following. They will not let you analyse or find fault with the way things are, and so you will keep on thinking and doing what you have been doing all along, regardless of the fact whether it is right or wrong.

And then of course it depends on your own choice, what sort of people you enjoy to be with; and somehow fate lands you in exactly the same sort of company you desire:

وَقَيَّضْنَا لَهُمْ قُرَنَاءَ فَزَيَّنُوا لَهُمْ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ
الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
خَاسِرِينَ {25}

We have assigned intimate companions, of like nature, for them Who make their past and present seem fair to them; and the same word (*sentence of punishment*) proved true against them, which overtook generations of jinn and men who have gone before them, that they shall surely be in loss.

In this world they were proud to be their friends and admired them like idols but in Akhirah when the reality will be exposed in front of them, they will have a complete change of heart and will wish to take revenge from those "friends" who led them to this destruction:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا رَبَّنَا أَرِنَا الَّذِينَ أَضَلَّانَا مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ نَجْعَلُهُمَا
تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِنَا لِيَكُونَا مِنَ الْأَسْفَلِينَ {29}

Wherein, the disbelievers will say: "Our Rabb! Show us those among jinns and mankind who misled us: we shall trample them under our feet so that they become utterly disgraced."

What a sad end for those who seem so carefree and cheerful in this world, among their group of friends. In any gathering you can see scores of them standing together and laughing and joking endlessly. As if they have no care nor worry in their life. While the pious, careful person, focused on his purpose of life, fearful of Allah's displeasure, forever alert and conscious about his actions, might be standing alone. After all who wants to hear about his concerns for the Akhirah? Who wants to be reminded that this world and its

pleasures are just an illusion? So the righteous ones, the Allah conscious people might at times be rejected and left alone and the onlooker might think of them as unlucky or have pity on them but Allah has put it into a completely different perspective. He has sent such marvellous good news for these lonely people, in the following verses that touch the very core of my soul every time I come across them. Together these verses (30 to 36) make up one of the most powerful reminders in the Quran which can lead you to unimaginable heights of success if you follow them consistently.

It begins with the core value of our religion- "An undying conviction in Allah":

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَنْزِلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا
وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ {30}

As for those who say: "Our God is Allah," and then stay firm on it, the angels will descend on them, saying: "Let nothing fear or grieve you. Rejoice for the good news of paradise that has been promised to you.

When we say "*Rabbunallah*" (Allah is our Lord) these are not simply a set of words, rather it is a declaration that for all times we have decided to put our faith in Allah, and that; our love, our trust, our devotion and our worship is only for Allah. If we love people it is because of His sake, if we give to someone, it is for His sake, we live for His sake and we die for His sake. This is our oath and we live by it..... ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا (then they are firm on it) means that it is not

just a tide of emotions coming one way and going the other way.....No, it should be an everlasting conviction.....like a rock..... which is not influenced by any other force. The angels descend on such people who have (or want to have) this kind of faith. This is a miracle they experience in their lives, when in times of extreme

distress some unseen hand puts a balm on their wounds, in times of hopelessness and discouragement, someone puts hope in their heart.....by whispering to them the good news of an everlasting paradise.....these are the unseen angels and they give assurance of their friendship in both the worlds:

نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُي
أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ {31}

We are your friends/protectors in this life and in the hereafter. There you shall find all that your souls desire and all that you can ask for:

نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ {32}

A hospitable gift from the All-Forgiving, All-Merciful."

You might be discouraged from calling other people to the right way, connecting them to their Lord, because then lots of people might turn against you, and you will be isolated, but Allah says that nothing can be better than this:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ {33}

Who is better in speech than the one who calls people towards Allah, does good deeds and says: "I am a Muslim?"

Although it's true that when you start on this journey of truth; conveying to people their real purpose of life, there are going to be several problems and obstructions on the way, You will win a few friends and a lot of enemies too, But the secret of success lies in the ability to respond kindly and politely to all unkindness. To the ordinary mind, it might seem impossible to politely ignore aggressive behaviour or to be kind and considerate for those who have openly insulted you, but for someone who began with "*Rabbunallah*" it isn't

impossible to replace this unpleasantness with goodness because he knows he is doing it for Allah and he has the assurance of a best reward from Allah:

وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ
وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ {34}

Good deeds are not equal to the evil ones. Repel other's evil deeds with your good deeds. You will see that he with whom you had enmity, will become your close friend.

It is so true that even enemies can become friends if you can control yourself and continue to be good to them even if they have done you harm. But unconditional and one-sided goodness is not easy, and it requires loads of stamina and patience. Not everybody can do that, rather it is a privilege enjoyed by those very few people who really and truly want to please Allah above everything else; so much so that their own ego or desires don't come in their way when they put up with insults with a smile on their face knowing that every such incident is raising their status in Allah's eyes even if people might think that they are being humiliated. That is why Allah says:

وَمَا يُلَاقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلَاقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ {35}

But none will attain this quality except those who patiently endure and none will attain this quality except those who are truly fortunate.

The greatest hurdle in this way is the Satan, who spares no effort in arousing negative feelings in us so that we might respond in an equally bad way to whatever discouragement we encounter. We need to be strong against this urge to take revenge and the only way to remain steadfast is to seek Allah's protection:

وَأِمَّا يَتَزَعَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ
{36}

If any time you are tempted by Shaitān, seek refuge with Allah. It is He Who hears all and knows all.

Thus a believer's life revolves around Allah, beginning with a strong faith in Him, doing everything for Allah's sake, keeping on the right path under all sorts of pressures, and seeking Allah's help all along the way because a believer knows that he himself is nothing unless he has Allah's support with Him. And he also has conviction that for Allah nothing is impossible.

In the next Ayat, Allah brings our attention to our ultimate end: that is resurrection and the permanent life of the hereafter. It is important to remain focused on our real purpose of life, which is to attain Allah's pleasure and to be saved from the punishment of Hell-fire. So that even after all our efforts, if we don't see any positive results in this life, we should still not lose hope. We must remember that Allah is recording every single act that we do for His sake, and we will see its reward in the hereafter.

The disbelievers of Makkah could not accept the concept of resurrection. They thought it was impossible that they would be born again when they had become dust and bones. So Allah has given a proof of it from the signs we observe in our daily lives:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْتَ تَرَى الْأَرْضَ خَاشِعَةً فَإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ
وَرَبَتْ إِنَّ الَّذِي أَحْيَاهَا لَمُحْيِي الْمَوْتِ إِنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ {39}

And among His other signs is the earth that you see barren; but when We send down rain upon it, it stirs to life and its yield increases. Surely He Who gives it life, will raise the dead to life. Surely He has power over all things.

Still they used to ask the Prophet (s.a.w) in a mocking way when will the Day of Recompense arrive? To this Allah has the answer in the following Ayat:

إِلَيْهِ يُرَدُّ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَمَا تَخْرُجُ مِنْ ثَمَرَاتٍ مِنْ أَكْمَامِهَا وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ
أَنْثَى وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ أَيْنَ شُرَكَائِيَ قَالُوا أَدْذَكَ مَا مِنَّا
مِنْ شَهِيدٍ {47}

To Him Alone is referred the knowledge of the Hour of Doom. No fruit comes out of its sheath, nor does a female conceive, nor she gives birth but with His knowledge. On the Day of Judgment when Allah will ask the unbelievers: "Where are those partners that you associated with Me?" They will answer: "We confess to you that none of us can vouch for them."

Even today some people are very fond of making predictions and assumptions about when the "*Qiyamat*" (Hour of Doom) is going to happen. But what we need to worry about is: how we are going to stand before Allah and answer for our deeds? As for the people who prefer to remain forgetful about the Akhirah, their punishment on earth is that they are overly conscious and sensitive about their gains and losses of this worldly life. Thus life for them becomes a never ending cycle of worries and tension:

لَا يَسْأَلُ الْإِنْسَانُ مِنْ دُعَاءِ الْخَيْرِ وَإِنْ مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ فَيَئُوسٌ قَنُوطٌ {49}

Man is never tired of praying for good, but when any evil befalls him, he loses hope and is in despair

It is ironical that normally they deny Allah's message and reject the need for religion but when it comes to their worldly interests they suddenly remember Allah:

وَإِذَا أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَأَى بِجَانِبِهِ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ فَذُو دُعَاءٍ عَرِيضٍ {51}

When We bestow favors on man, he turns away and drifts off to another side; and when an evil befalls him, he comes with lengthy supplications.

Making *duas* (supplications) is not being condemned here, but it is their attitude of remembering Allah only when they have a problem, which is not right. Our relationship with Allah should not be just for asking favours only, and then doing whatever we feel is okay, putting aside the clear instructions outlined in the Quran and Sunnah. Rather, it is mandatory upon us that we should pay attention to our responsibility too. What is the purpose of our life?

Is it just to follow where everybody else is going?

Is it just to follow the desires of our hearts?

Is it just to gain a lot of wealth and comforts to live in a grand style?

Is this life without an end?

Is it logical to think that the good people and the bad ones will have the same end, i.e. to become dust and bones and forgotten forever?

Don't we want to think?

The problem is that unless we connect ourselves with the greatest source of guidance, which is the Quran, we can never really grasp these realities. So the greatest loss for anybody is to be deprived of this connection with the Quran. How rightly Allah says:

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ كَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ مَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ هُوَ فِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ {52}

O Prophet, ask them: "Have you ever considered: if this Qur'an is really from Allah and you deny it, who can be more astray than you who have gone too far in defying Him?"

This confusion about Islam and Quran that has been caused today by negative propaganda as well as animosity among the Muslims due to their differences of opinion, has given a lot many people the lame excuse of saying goodbye to religion completely from their lives. They think that, since nothing is clear, so now they have no responsibility of finding the truth. But Allah says that soon there will come a time when they will have to admit that there was no confusion in the Quran, and it was, and is, and will remain, the greatest, most vivid truth on earth:

سُنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ {53}

Soon shall We show them Our signs in the universe and in their own souls, until it becomes clear to them that this Qur'an is indeed the truth. Is it not enough that your Rabb is a witness over everything?

The confusion is not in Islam or in the Quran but it is in their own minds..... and the heart of the matter is that they doubt their meeting with the Lord.

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ فِي مَرِئَةٍ مِّنْ لِّقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ أَلَّا إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطٌ {54}

Now surely they are in doubt about meeting their Rabb! Now surely it is He Who encompasses everything.

Anyone who has faith in Akhirah and accountability cannot sit purposelessly, but will do all he can to prepare to look good for that encounter with the Creator and King of the Worlds. The hope of being accepted into Allah's Mercy and the fear of possible rejection and humiliation in front of whole mankind on that decisive day has enough force to open our eyes. But how can we hope to achieve this level of conviction without reading about it in the Quran and Hadith? How can we hope to have any motivation to work for Akhirah without

getting the exact knowledge about it from these authentic sources?
The level of conviction depends upon our knowledge and constant remembrance. And this conviction will take us out of our confusion and will make our goals clear, and the path towards complete success will become easy to walk upon. InshaAllah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Ash-Shura

(Para- 25)

In today's world of chaos and confusion, poverty and inflation, hunger and war, lawlessness and terrorism, there is an ever growing need for peace above everything else. But the question is: who will bring this peace in our lives, on an individual as well as national and international level, and how and when is it going to happen? Why is it that people and nations are blaming each other for everything and nobody is doing anything constructive about it except for fighting more wars and killing people in the name of peace? And among Muslims the question arises that why doesn't Allah stop the oppressors and terrorists from destroying our lives? These days the newspapers and all news channels are busy in collecting horrifying statistics about how many people have been killed in which attack and how many suicide bombings have taken place in the last so many days or months. It seems as if a third of the mankind is busy killing and another third is just being killed and the remaining third is busy speculating or selling their newspapers because of all this sensationalism.

There seems to be no way out, but as always, I found that all the answers are there in the Quran. And as I was sitting at my study table, reading and absorbing the message of this Surah, it really opened my eyes, more than ever before, that complete peace and harmony in this world cannot be attained unless and until each and every one of us knows and implements the way of life that has been chosen by the Creator Himself for the whole mankind. This way of life is Islam, which means peace. It was for this purpose that since

the beginning of time Allah sent down His chosen Messengers, one after the other, and sent to them His revelations, according to which they called people to the way of their Creator and Master.....the one and only Allah.

كَذَلِكَ يُوحِي إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ {3}

Thus, Allah All-Mighty, the All-Wise sends His revelation to you, O Muhammad, as He sent to other Rasools before you.

Due to our ever increasing involvement with the world and its affairs, we fail to realize the true worth of Allah. So He reminds us that He is the owner of everything. To understand this, think for a moment that you encounter someone at a gathering whom you don't recognize, and just as you are trying to guess who he is, some mutual friend introduces him to you as being the owner of a couple of factories or some multinational companies.....and imagine the shift in your attitude towards that person. Similarly, we would be overwhelmed if we got a direct order from the King or head of state.....and now think who Allah is.....Owner, King, Ruler....not of one company or one country or one world but the entire universe!! Who can be bigger or more important than Him but do we feel His greatness in our hearts?

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ {4}

To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. He is the Supreme, the Great.

If we truly grasp this reality and act accordingly, there will be no arrogance. We will know just how tiny and powerless we are, so how can we oppress anybody else when we know that the All-Mighty King is watching us. Naturally we will fulfill all of His rights as well as

people's rights because we would always be conscious that we have to report back to Him and we would be so eager to please Allah because we would have this complete trust that all our provision is coming from Him. This sort of Allah-oriented life will definitely bring peace in this world and ultimate success in the permanent life of the hereafter. And we all want that, don't we?.....to live happily ever after.....But to spoil the happy end of this story, we have one big enemy, the shaitan, Satan or devil.....He doesn't want us to succeed at all, or be at peace, so he constantly attacks our hearts with his evil whispers. He plays with our eyesight, our perception, so that we view things with an inverted image.....the good seems impossible and the bad becomes irresistible....The true revelations become doubtful and the fantasies and man-made philosophies appear mesmerizingly beautiful. What happens then? Our focus is shifted away from Allah and we become more and more self centred, running day and night after our desires, pleasing false deities, trying to maintain a false image of perfection, until the time when we are spiritually drained and feel totally alone and helpless. Naturally its man's need to find a support somewhere and since shaitan has already put so many doubts in his heart about Allah, so he starts seeking other gods:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهُ حَفِظٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
بَوَكِيلٍ {6}

Those who take others as their guardians besides Him, Allah Himself is watching them; and O Prophet, you are not the disposer of their affairs

The fact is that no matter how many different gods or theories we might invent in this world, and create countless groups on their basis; there are going to be only two groups in the hereafter: one in Paradise and the other in Hell-Fire. That is why Allah sent the

Quran to our Holy Prophet, Muhammad (May peace be upon Him), so that He might warn us about the day of recompense, when all of us will be gathered and our reports will be handed out to us, according to which it will be decided which group we belong to:

وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا تُنْذِرُ أُمَّ الْقُرَى وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَتُنْذِرُ
يَوْمَ الْجَمْعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ فَرِيقٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِي السَّعِيرِ {7}

Thus have We revealed to you this Qur'an in Arabic, so that you may warn the residents of the Mother City (*Makkah*) and its suburbs, and forewarn them of the Day of assembly about which there is no doubt: when some will go to paradise and others to the blazing fire.

Some people ask, "Is Allah so cruel that He will throw people in hell?"

"Isn't he merciful and kind?"

"So if He wanted to save us why did he not make us all into perfect Muslims?"

Allah knew we would ask such questions so He has already answered it:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَهُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ
وَالظَّالِمُونَ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ {8}

If Allah wanted, He could have made all of them a single nation; but He admits to His mercy whom He pleases; as for the wrongdoers, they will have no protector nor helper.

It was not any problem for Allah to have created us as perfect angels. He could have done it so easily.....but He made us Human.....full of imperfections as well as having a great potential for goodness. Now He left it to us, to decide which way we want to go and how strong is our desire of following the right path. This is the

test.....to see how we use our power of choice. If someone decides to find the truth and really wants true guidance then Allah gives it to him but He never guides the one who denies the truth. For such people there will be no help.

The main thing is that our focus should remain on Allah and we should never think of associating partners with Him:

أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ فَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْوَلِيُّ وَهُوَ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ {9}

Have they set up other guardians beside Him, while Allah Alone is the Guardian? It is He Who gives life to the dead and it is He Who has power over all things.

Look at the universe; is there anyone beside Allah who could have this power of creativity? Allah says there is no one like Him:

فَاطْرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ {11}

the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you mates from among yourselves and also mates among the cattle *from their own kind*; by this means does He multiply you. There is no one like Him. He Alone hears all and sees all.

Why should we not commit ourselves to Allah? Are we afraid that we would lose out on our worldly interests? Allah assures us: Don't be afraid.....you can never lose in Allah's friendship because He has the keys of the heavens and the earth.....what other support, what other friend can give you, that can measure up to Allah's bounties?

لَهُ مَقَالِيدُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ {12}

To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth. He gives abundantly to whom He pleases and sparingly to whom He wills. He is the Knower of everything

Allah has provided for us all of our needs and desires. Our whole life from beginning to end is one long series of Allah's blessings, which He showers on us day and night.....But often we forget that the biggest blessing is the religion of Islam that He made so perfect and chose specially for us to live by. And Allah reminds us in the next Ayat that it is the same religion that He revealed to the all the Prophets:

شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَن يُنِيبُ {13}

He has ordained for you the same Deen (*way of life - Islam*) which He enjoined on Nūh - and which We have revealed to you O Muhammad - and which We enjoined on Ibrāhīm and Musa (*Moses*) and Isa (*Jesus*): "Establish the Deen of *Al-Islam* and make no division (*sects*) in it." Intolerable for the mushrikīn is that to which you O Muhammad call them. Allah chooses for His service whom He wills, and guides to His Way only those who turn to Him in repentance.

All the Prophets had come to this world with the same message of *Tauheed* and the above Ayat clearly states that the spirit of our religion is to submit ourselves to the will of one Allah. Not just rituals, not just discussions and talk shows, but a complete, unconditional submission to Allah and to live according to His commands in all aspects of our lives, not just in the Masjid, not just

in Ramadan, not just in Ka'ba, not just in hard times.....No, you cannot compartmentalise Islam.....It has to be internalised.

And the other command from Allah is that do not be divided. But He created us and He knows we have all have a different way of looking at things and our evaluation and perception cannot be identical. So then how is it possible to avoid conflict? We must understand that difference of opinion is a natural thing and Allah had not meant us to be identically programmed robots. That is why he created so much variety. But He wants us to be united in spite of our differences.....united in the worship of one Allah. So the only thing, on which we should never compromise, is the way of life chosen by Allah-- the religion of Islam, but within its limits we have a choice to think for ourselves and serve Allah according to our own unique characteristics and personalities that we were born with.

Yet we see that people have not acted on this guidance, and have even waged wars against one another on the basis of different opinions. The biggest loss is to the religion. When our children see so many sects within the same religion they are confused and wonder who is on the right path. And, since everybody is busy fighting, and proving themselves to be the only righteous ones, there is a general mistrust about religion as a whole and most of our youth has even given up the quest for the straightway. As a result they have started finding emotional satisfaction in a mad race for material things, to make up for the spiritual deprivation in their hearts.

So Allah reminds us again in the next Ayat that these were the true heirs of the Book i.e. the Quran, and they could have conquered the whole world with the blessing of its guidance, but they are in doubts about it and so it just rests on the highest shelves of their closets, to be taken out only on specific occasions.....

وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ
 مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى لَّقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُورِثُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ
 بَعْدِهِمْ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُّريبٍ {14}

The people did not become divided into sects until after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. Had your Rabb not issued the word to defer their punishment till an appointed time, the matter would have already been settled between them. The fact is that those who were made to inherit the Book after them, are surely in disquieting doubt concerning it.

What a sad situation it is, enough to depress me and put me in serious doubts about my own inadequate efforts to spread its message. What can I hope to achieve? I cannot change the whole system or clean up this disgusting mess we are in.....so what's the use.....But Allah doesn't want us to give up hope. So here's a magnificent Ayat that really defines our role as the inheritors of this Book:

فَلِذَلِكَ فَادُعْ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَقُلْ آمَنْتُ بِمَا
 أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا
 وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ
 {15}

Therefore, call them to the true Deen, stay firm on the Right Way as you are commanded and do not follow their vain desires. Tell them: "I believe in whatever Allah has revealed from the Book and I am commanded to do justice between you. Allah is Our Rabb and your Rabb. We are responsible for our deeds and you for yours. Let there be no dispute among us. Allah will bring us all together on the Day of Judgment and decide as to who is right and who is wrong, and to Him is the final return.

The first thing we need to do is to call people to the Quran. We need to understand it ourselves and we need to convey it to others.

This is where all of us can get first-hand knowledge about Allah and the religion of Islam. The next thing is that we should stand firm against all other influences. Only one time belief is not enough, we need to strengthen it with constantly reminding ourselves that we are not going to bow down to any other force except Allah. Those who deny Allah will want us to go along with them and ignore the teachings of Quran but Allah says do not follow their desires. And then the bottom line is that whether anyone believes or not, their Lord and our Lord is Allah, so don't indulge in any purposeless debates with those who don't want to believe. What a wonderful lesson it is, to leave aside useless fights and spend our energies and resources in spreading the teaching of the Quran because nothing else can replace its effectiveness. Allah also reminds us that our time is limited:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ
{17}

It is Allah Who has revealed this Book (Al-Qur'an) with the truth, and the Balance (to distinguish between right and wrong). What will make you realize that perhaps the hour of doom may be fast approaching.

Now it's our own choice. We can live a self centred life and preserve our tiny little worlds or we can shift our focus to the whole world and think about what responsibility we have as Muslims to spread the message of Quran to each and every person. Do you think this can be achieved without making any sacrifice? Has anything ever been done or achieved without organized efforts and sacrifice? So are we prepared to give up at least a portion of our time and resources to this cause? Allah says there is no compulsion; you can choose which of the two you desire: The interests of this world or the Hereafter.....

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ
الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ {20}

He who desires the harvest of the hereafter, shall be given a *many fold* increase in his harvest; and he who desires the harvest of this world, a share of it shall be given to him: but in the hereafter he shall have no share at all.

The amazing thing about this Ayat is that it says if you choose the rewards of the hereafter Allah will increase it, meaning that your life in this world will also become peaceful and wholesome. But if your focus is primarily on this world then you will lose out on Akhirah. It's as simple as that.....so choose what you wish.

But Allah warns us about the day when we will all wish we had obeyed Allah and not our desires:

تَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا وَهُمْ وَقَعُ بِهِمْ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ فِي رَوْضَاتِ الْجَنَّاتِ لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ذَلِكَ هُوَ
الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ {22}

You will see that the wrongdoers will be fearing the bad consequences of their deeds which will surely befall them. While those who believe and do good deeds shall dwell in the luxurious gardens of *paradise*, and shall receive from their Rabb all that they wish for; that will surely be the magnificent blessing.

Paradise is the place in which all our dreams will come true and all our wishes will be granted. It is foolishness to expect this world to become a paradise. Most people keep mourning about all that they have been deprived of. The more they have, the more is their dissatisfaction. So you will see them running after things, the latest dresses, the latest houses, the most stylish furniture, but something or the other is still out of place, not quite the right colour or the right tone, enough to keep them forever tense and worried.

But leave aside this small percentage of the elites and take a look at the majority of people. They spend their whole lives in the pursuit of things but still something or the other is always out of reach. It must have crossed your minds at some point in your life, that if Allah owns everything then why doesn't He give to everybody what they desire? Here is the answer in the next Ayat:

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنْ يُنْزِلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَا يَشَاءُ
إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ {27}

Had Allah bestowed abundance upon His servants, they would have transgressed beyond bounds in the earth; *that's why* He sends down in due measure as He pleases; He is well aware and observant of His servants.

How true it is that if all of us had been wealthy enough to live in palaces, then who would be willing to build those palaces? So Allah knows just how much we should be given and at what time. Of course Allah doesn't stop us from wanting things or fulfilling our needs, it's just that we should not expect everything to be according to what we desire. Have trust in Allah that He knows better than us, what is best for us to have. And often you must have experienced that just when you were getting totally hopeless about something, Allah blessed you with happiness:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُنْزِلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا وَيَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُ وَهُوَ الْوَلِيُّ
الْحَمِيدُ {28}

It is He Who sends down rain even after they have lost all hope, and spreads His Mercy. He Alone is the Praiseworthy Guardian.

So the most important lesson is not to lose hope. Everything happens by the will of Allah. Even the biggest inventions of Man cannot work without the help of Allah. Think of the huge ships floating on the

surface of the mighty oceans..... they reach their destinations only if Allah wills:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ الْجَوَارِ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ {32}

Among His signs are the ships which look like mountains upon the ocean.

إِنْ يَشَأْ يُسْكِنِ الرِّيحَ فَيَظْلَلْنَ رَوَاكِدَ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ
لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ {33}

If He wants, He can cause the wind to become still and leave them motionless on their backs - surely in this example there are signs for every such person who patiently endures and is grateful.

أَوْ يُوبِقْهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا وَيَعْفُ عَنْ كَثِيرٍ {34}

- Or He may cause them to drown in consequence of even a few of their misdeeds, though He forgives many of their misdeeds.

Again the Quran exposes the ultimate truth which otherwise remains hidden from us, that these worldly things are just the need of this life and they cannot give us the everlasting peace and security that we desire. The most satisfying rewards are with Allah for those who believed in Him and had *tawakkul* in Him.

فَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ {36}

Whatever you are given is nothing but a provision for the transitory life of this world, better and everlasting is the reward which Allah has for those who believe, put their trust in their Rabb,

Now *tawakkul* is a word of such profound meaning that it cannot be translated simply into "trust". It has a deeper meaning and it implies that a believer should have this complete conviction that all of his affairs are in Allah's control. So *tawakkul* is to depend on Allah, after doing everything you can, that He will give you the outcome of

your efforts, whether in this world or the hereafter. *Tawakkal* is to hand over all your worries, anxieties, plans, desires to Allah and believe that He will take care of you. When you have *tawakkal*, your focus is on how best you can work to please Allah, you plan, you struggle, you pray to Allah, you put in your best but then you leave the results to Him..... This is Tawakkal. Not as some people have been misled into believing that we can just sit and do nothing and Allah will make everything happen.

Islam is a practical religion. It is essential that the beliefs you have, should be reflected in how you conduct yourselves. Merely saying the words that okay I have belief in Allah and I have tawakkul in him is not going to take me to Jannat. Our deeds must prove our words. That is why Allah says that Paradise is for those whose faith enables them to stay away from all major sins as well as indecencies of all kinds. And they are brave enough to conquer their anger by forgiveness.

Believe it or not, this is the most difficult, to suppress your anger when you are angry and to forgive instead of reacting. This is where our belief and Tawakkul is most tested...

وَالَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ
{37}

And those who avoid major sins and shameful deeds, forgive even when they are angry;

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ
{38}

And the ones who answer the call of their Rabb, establish Salah, conduct their affairs with mutual consultation, spend out of the sustenance which We have given them,

To answer the call of the Rabb is to obey Him in all matters especially in the way we answer the Call to Prayer five times a day. This is the biggest demonstration of how much we value Allah in our lives. And then these Allah conscious people share with others, whatever Allah has given them. But in between Prayer and Spending, Allah has mentioned another act which I found so amazing, that these believers make decisions on important matters through mutual consultation. Why is this so important in Allah's eyes that He will grant paradise because of it? Mutual consultation is a reflection of your humbleness and sense of responsibility. For those decisions which might affect a lot of people, we should seek opinion of all concerned, and settle things accordingly. Thus we will be saved from selfishness, false pride in our own judgement and dictatorship, which are the main causes of mistrust and division among people. And Allah wants us to be united, with mutual understanding and goodwill.

In this way of life, there are sure to arise several problems, because after all life is not a bed of roses, but a test, so how can you expect it to go all safe and smooth. Mostly the problem is from other people who might be rude or even hostile. What should we do? Allah tells us:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ {39}

and when they are oppressed, help and defend themselves.

But remember, that although you have been given permission to take revenge, you should not lose your control and don't exceed the limits set by Allah:

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الظَّالِمِينَ {40}

The recompense for an injury is an injury proportionate to it; but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation he shall be rewarded by Allah; He does not like the wrongdoers

That is why it is far better to have patience and to forgive but it is not so easy after all:

وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ {43}

And those who endure with fortitude and forgive others, surely exhibit great courage in conducting their affairs.

After everything has been so clearly explained in the Quran, if someone persists in denying its truth then Allah will not guide that person. Surely whom Allah leaves to go astray, cannot hope to find any other support.

وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ مِّنْ بَعْدِهِ وَتَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأَوْا
الْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَى مَرَدٍّ مِّنْ سَبِيلٍ {44}

He whom Allah lets go astray has no protector after Him. When they will face the punishment, you will see the wrongdoers exclaim: "Is there any way back to the world?"

In the illusion of this world and its glitter and glamour, it might be hard to imagine the hereafter but see how clearly Allah portrays for us the scene in which people, who have done wrong to themselves, will be so afraid of the Hell-fire that they will not be able to even look at it:

وَتَرَاهُمْ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا خَاشِعِينَ مِنَ الذُّلِّ يَنْظُرُونَ مِنْ طَرْفٍ خَفِيٍّ
وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيَهُمْ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ أَلَا إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ مُّقِيمٍ {45}

You will see them brought before Us awed and humiliated, looking at it with stealthy glances. The true believers will say: "The real losers indeed are those who have lost themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection." Beware! Surely the wrongdoers shall suffer everlasting punishment.

So what are we waiting for? Allah is calling us to Himself.....do we not hear?

اسْتَجِيبُوا لِرَبِّكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ
مَلْجَأٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ نَكِيرٍ {47}

Answer the call of your Rabb before that Day arrives which cannot be averted against the will of Allah. There shall be no refuge for you on that Day, nor shall you be able to deny your sins.

Imagine such powerful revelations were coming to the Prophet (s.a.w) in Makkah and He was warning the disbelievers through these clear words in their own language yet they chose to ignore this reality. Allah assured him that he should not worry about their rejection because his responsibility was just to convey the message:

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا إِنَّ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَإِنَّا إِذَا
أَذَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً فَرَحَ بِهَا وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ
فَإِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ كَفُورٌ {48}

Now if they give no heed, they should know that We have not sent you, O Muhammad, to be their keeper. Your only duty is to convey My message. Man is such that when We give him a taste of Our Mercy, he is very happy about it; but when, through his own fault, an evil afflicts him, he becomes utterly ungrateful."

The disbelievers constantly used to blame the Prophet (s.a.w) that he was a liar or a magician and challenged him that how could Quran be a message from Allah. What they failed to realise was that if Allah could create this whole universe and create such a variety of living creatures, created man and inspired it with life, then why could He not inspire his words to his Messenger:

وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا
الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَن نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي
إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ {52} صِرَاطِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ أَلَا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَصِيرُ الْأُمُورُ {53}

Thus, have We revealed to you O Muhammad, a Spirit (*inspired Book - The Qur'an*) by Our command: while you did not know what is The Book and what is the Imān (faith). But We have made it (*The Qur'an*) a light whereby We guide those of Our servants whom We please; and surely you are guiding mankind to the Right Way- the Way of Allah - to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. Beware! All affairs will eventually return to Allah for a decision.

What a beautiful reminder it is.....How beautifully it portrays the picture of our beloved Prophet (s.a.w) who was born into a noble family and lived a pious life, not worshipping the idols, not getting involved into any of the evil practices of his fellow men. Going about with truth and honesty, earning an honest living, worshipping in the cave of Hira, He never knew that He was a chosen Messenger, He didn't anticipate receiving the revelation.....but Allah chose Him and gave Him this great treasure in the form of Quran.

For us too, it's Allah's extreme mercy that He guided us to this Book. Allah's words seem to speak out to me.....Where were you before this? Did you know there was this great Book lying in your house? Did you know what a treasure it was? Had you ever realised that faith was something other than just being born into a Muslim

family? No, I had no idea.....So can any of us ever be arrogant and think how pious or knowledgeable we are? Or look at others with contempt? It is simply Allah's blessing that He brought us out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of His guidance and we should just be concerned with the responsibility attached with it. Now that we have known the Quran, we have to absorb its spirit into our character by acting upon it in all aspects of our lives, and secondly we have been entrusted with the assignment of spreading its message to the whole world, as far as our resources allow us, according to whatever talents and capabilities Allah has given us. May Allah guide us all towards this light, Ameen.

Islam ensures that everybody gets his rights; that is why it makes us so conscious of other's rights. Whereas all other ideologies lay stress on striving for your own rights, Islam has the beautiful concept that if everyone is conscious of one's duty then no one will be deprived of his right. Islam teaches us to give unconditionally because the reward is believed to come from Allah and not people. This lets us focus completely on our own attitude and actions. We are not worried if people don't appreciate or reciprocate our goodwill and sincerity because we are all the time focused on whether Allah is pleased with us or not. His appreciation and His pleasure is our goal.

Difference of opinion is a natural thing because every individual has a different way of perceiving things. But everything will be judged according to what Allah has commanded.....

Surah Az-Zukhruf

(Para-25)

In the last Surah we learned that if we want to save our lives from total loss, then the only thing that can help us, is the Book of Allah. The Quran is the key to enlightenment, therefore, to strengthen our belief, this Surah also begins with an introduction to the Quran. That it is a clear Book....an open invitation to peace and success. Its message is so vivid that you just have to open it and see it with your own eyes.....like the bright sun shining in the sky doesn't need any proof for its existence; similarly the glorious Quran is a testimony to its own truth. And Allah has chosen the beautiful Arabic language, for His Book, so that we might use our intellect:

وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ {2}

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ {3}

By the Glorious Book.[2] We have revealed this Qur'an in the Arabic language so that you may understand *its meanings*. [3]

The word *Ta'qiloon* in the above Ayat refers to basic understanding of the Quran as well as to ponder on its deeper meanings and interpretations. It is a speciality of the Arabic language that it is easy to learn and to understand for all sorts of people and on the other hand has such literary depth which stimulates even the highly intellectual ones. But we have failed to recognize its true worth because we have created for ourselves other ideals and objectives. The fact is that Quran holds the most prestigious place in Allah's record:

وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيَّ حَكِيمٌ {4}

And indeed it (The Quran) is, in the Mother of the Book with Us, exalted and full of wisdom.

We all know that Allah is our Rabb. He created us and everything else too.....in this we have no doubt, no objection.....even the idol worshippers of Makkah believed in it:

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ
{9}

If you ask them: "Who has created the heavens and the earth?" They will surely say: "They have been created by the All-Mighty, the All-Knowledgeable."[9]

Allah has made this amazing earth which revolves around itself and also orbits around the sun; each movement has unimaginable speed, yet we do not feel it, and continue to live in it undisturbed. And through its different landscapes Allah created paths for us to follow so that we might travel from one part of the earth to the other and reach our destinations:

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ
{10}

(Allah is) The One Who has made the earth a resting place for you and traced out routes upon it so that you may find your ways.[10]

To make these journeys, Allah provided us with animals and other means of transport, so that we are grateful to Him and acknowledge His blessings:

وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الْفُلْكِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ
{12}

The One Who has created all living things in pairs and made for you the ships and cattle on which you ride[12]

And remember when you step on your vehicle that it is Allah who provided it and gave to you its control.....therefore it is not for us to be arrogant but to be humble in appreciation of Allah:

لَتَسْتَوُوا عَلَى ظُهُورِهِ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا
سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ {13}

so that you may firmly sit on their backs, then as you mount, recall the goodness of your Rabb and say: "Glory be to Him Who has subjected these to Our use, otherwise We could not have brought them under our control,[13]

So Allah reminds us that we are all on a journey through life, and day by day we are getting closer to our death, which is not an end but a doorway to the permanent life of the Hereafter. So while we go about in this fast paced world we should keep that destination in mind too:

وَإِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ {14}

and to our Rabb we shall all return."[14]

For any worldly journey, however small, we all ask the purpose and the direction. Then why is it, that most people spend their journey of life without asking its purpose or the right direction for it? It's because they don't want to disrupt their comfort zones and so prefer to remain in ignorance. Shaitan makes them believe that they are already the best of men and don't need to change at all. It is a kind of superiority complex, a self delusion that keeps them away from the truth. To justify this attitude they make up certain hypothesis and theories which they use as shields whenever they have to face the reality. This is what caused the Disbelievers of Makkah, to come up with this falsehood that Angels were daughters

of Allah and so they should worship them too, like they had seen their forefathers do it:

وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنَاثًا أَشَهِدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ سَتُكْتَبُ
شَهَادَتُهُمْ وَيُسْأَلُونَ {19}

They regard the angels, who are themselves servants of the Compassionate, as female *divinities*. Did they witness their creation? They should know that their testimony shall be noted down and they shall be called to account for it.[19]

The sad truth is that while for worldly matters they use their intellect and ensure that all their efforts are in the right direction, but for Akhirah they are least bothered and say that Allah will guide them if He wills and it doesn't matter how they worship Him, or where they have placed Akhirah in the list of their priorities. The following Ayat depicts their attitude and Allah's answer to that as well:

وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُمْ مَّا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا
يَخْرُصُونَ {20}

They say: "Had it been the will of the Compassionate, We should never have worshipped them." They have no knowledge about that; they are merely guessing.[20]

What will be the result of this stubborn refusal to accept the truth? Allah reminds us:

فَانتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ {25}

Consequently, We inflicted Our retribution on them; then see what was the end of those who disbelieved?[25]

The majority of people are basically just followers by nature. They cannot rise above their petty interests and desires. And so they

worship whatever they see others worshipping. But there are others among that tide of people who feel that they are not moving in the right direction but they lack the courage to stand apart from the rest or to choose the opposite direction because they fear that they will be cast aside by the crowd. Their faith is weak and so it doesn't enable them to take this bold decision. Therefore Allah is telling us here in the following verses that we should not worry about the majority, but should take a stand, and believe in Allah's help, just as He helped His Prophet and friend, Ibrahim (a.s), who was born into a society of idol worshippers but he rejected it:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ {26}
إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِينِ {27}

Behold! Ibrāhīm said to his father and his people: "I renounce the gods you worship,[26] except Him Who created me, for He will surely guide me."[27]

So what happened? Did Allah leave him to be crushed by the flow of people? No Allah even saved him from the pit of fire in which his people threw him. What can be greater or more powerful than Allah's friendship and His approval? But most people are forever dazzled by the glamour of wealth and status. Thus the disbelievers in Makkah used to say:

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ {31}

They also say: "Why is this Qur'an not revealed to a man of great importance in the two towns (Makkah and Ta'if)"?[31]

They believed that a prophet should have been a wealthy, influential person, but Allah says that the treasures of gold and silver don't have any value in His eyes.....it is just the adornment of this world:

وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ
سُقْفًا مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ {33} وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُورًا
عَلَيْهَا يَتَكَوَّنُونَ {34} وَزُخْرُفًا وَإِن كُلُّ ذَلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ {35}

And were it not that all mankind might become one nation of unbelievers, We would have given those who disbelieve in the Compassionate (*Allah*), such houses whose roofs, stairways by which they go to upper chambers all made with silver,[33] and also the doors of their houses and couches on which they recline,[34] along with ornaments of gold - for all these are nothing but merely comforts of this worldly life. It is *the life of the hereafter* which your Rabb has reserved for the righteous.[35]

It has all been said in the above verses; the message is so clear that even if we have palaces of silver and gold, the everlasting success of the Hereafter is only for the Allah conscious people. Why then are we so heedless of this message? Why don't we change our priorities? Why have made the success of this world our only goal in life? The reason to all these questions is that we have become alienated from the Quran and so have become easy targets for the Shaitan:

وَمَن يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ {36}

He who turns away from the remembrance (*Reminder*) of the Compassionate (*Allah*), We assign a shaitān for him, who becomes his intimate companion.[36]

The most dangerous thing about shaitan is that he stops us from following the way of success, and at the same time he traps us in a false sense of security that we are the rightly guided ones:

وَأَنَّهُمْ لَيَصْدُوْنَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ {37}

and indeed the devils turns such people away from the Right Path, while they think that they are the rightly guided.[37]

Those who don't appreciate the guidance of Allah face a terrible end. Allah gives us the example of Pharaoh who made fun of Musa (a.s) when he presented to him the message of Allah. Pharaoh's biggest hurdle that prevented him from accepting the truth was his arrogance which is so evident in the following words:

أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ {52}

Am I not better than this insignificant one, who can hardly express himself clearly?[52]

But that pride in his status did not help him when he faced the great punishment:

فَلَمَّا آسَفُونَا انتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ {55}

At last when they provoked Us, We inflicted retribution on them and drowned them all,[55]

All these negative emotions like pride, arrogance and contempt for others is a trap of our enemy, the shaitan, therefore Allah warns us:

وَلَا يَصُدَّتْكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ {62}

Let not shaitān mislead you, for he is your open enemy.[62]

Next Allah tells us about the Prophet, Isa (Jesus Christ), who came to the people of Bani Israel, with the same message of Tauheed that they should submit to the worship of one Allah:

وَلَمَّا جَاءَ عِيسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلَفُونَ فِيهِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا {63} إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ {64}

When Isa (Jesus) came with clear signs, he stated: "I have brought you wisdom, and to clarify some of those things about which you have disputes: so fear Allah and obey me.[63] Surely it is Allah Who is my Rabb and your Rabb, so worship Him. This is the Right Way."[64]

But various groups formed their own versions of the one true religion. Thus they lost the true guidance and fell into eternal destruction:

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ
{65}

In spite of these teachings, the factions disagreed among themselves; so woe to the wrongdoers from the punishment of a painful Day.[65]

It is clear from verse-64 that Isa (a.s) told his people that Allah is his Lord and their Lord too, and that they should only worship Allah. But later on they ignored the teachings of their Prophet and claimed that he was the son of Allah. This false claim is being challenged by Allah in the following verses:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَابِدِينَ {81}
سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ {82}

(O Prophet tell the Christians) Say: "If the Compassionate (Allah) had a son, I would be the first to worship him." [81] Glory be to the Rabb of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne, He is above what they ascribe to Him.[82]

But if people don't agree with you or don't accept the truth then what should you do? Allah says:

فَذَرَهُمْ يَخْوْضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّى يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ {83}

So let them blunder and play until they face their Day, which has been promised to them.[83]

People's opinions cannot change the fact that Allah is only one.....He does not have any partner, or son, or daughters:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ {84}

It is He (Allah) Who is God in the heavens and God on earth; He is the All-Wise, the All-Knowledgeable.[84]

May Allah help us all to absorb this message of Quran and to spread its light to the whole world. Ameen

Surah Ad-Dukhan

(Para-25)

Bismillahir-Rahman-ir-Rahim

Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) sent to us this clear, glorious book in a blessed night. In Surah Al-Qadr, Allah refers to this night as the Layla-tul-Qadr, meaning the night of power or the night of destiny, in which Allah revealed His ultimate guidance to mankind through His angel Jibraeel who conveyed the verses of Quran to the messenger of Allah, Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w):

وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ {2}
إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنْذِرِينَ {3}

We swear by the Glorious Book [2] that We revealed this Qur'an in a blessed night (Layla-tul Qadr); for We wanted to forewarn mankind

The objective of this revelation was to warn people that no one has the right to be worshipped except Allah. There is none beside Him because only He is the Lord who created everything in this universe:

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ {7}

The Rabb of the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them, mark this, if you are true believers

If we think about it, the awareness of our life and death is a great force that shakes us from within and makes us turn to Allah. Look at yourself and say Allah made me, and one day He will make me die and just feel the tremors of consciousness ripple through your whole being:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ {8}

There is no god but Him. He gives life and death. He is your Rabb and the Rabb of your forefathers.

But if someone reminds us of death, what is our response?

"Oh come on! don't be such a bore....."

So basically we all just want to have a good time. Either we are too busy in our jobs or schools or we are planning for some entertainment. Apart from that we don't want to think at all, and the idea of the hereafter seems too remote and improbable:

بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ يَلْعَبُونَ {9}

Yet they play about in doubt.

Only when something terrible happens to us then we remember Allah. That is why Allah says that if these non-serious people don't listen to your warnings then let them have fun until the day when they will see the beginning of their end:

فَارْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِدُحَانٍ مُّبِينٍ {10}

Well! Wait for the Day when the sky will pour down visible smoke

What will be this smoke? Clearly it could be one of the signs of the approaching Qiyamah, the hour of doom:

يَغْشَى النَّاسَ هَذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ {11}

Enveloping all mankind; this will be a painful punishment.

And look what people will say:

رَبَّنَا اكْشِفْ عَنَّا الْعَذَابَ إِنَّا مُؤْمِنُونَ {12}

Then the mankind will say: "Our Rabb! Remove from us this punishment, surely we have become real believers."

But Allah says that even if they are given a little respite they will again turn back on their previous way of life.....their spirituality is only temporary:

إِنَّا كَاشِفُو الْعَذَابِ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمْ عَائِدُونَ {15}

We shall remove the affliction for a while, but you will revert to the same old ways

But they should not forget that Allah is giving them a chance here until the day they die. He wants them to turn back to Him but if they don't care and die without submitting their will to His obedience then there won't be anyone to save them from His punishment:

يَوْمَ نَبْطِشُ الْبَطْشَةَ الْكُبْرَى إِنَّا مُنتَقِمُونَ {16}

One day We shall seize you with a mighty onslaught to exact Our retribution

The arrogant people think that they are free to do whatever they think is right, because apparently there is no one to stop them. They are trapped in this illusion of being the masters of their own lives. Here Allah shows us the example of Pharaoh who denied the Prophet Musa (a.s) and rejected the message of Allah. So Allah told Musa (a.s) to lead the people of Bani-Israel out of Egypt, during the night, and He warned him that the people of Pharaoh will try to capture them but he (Musa) should not worry because Allah had decided to drown them all. This is exactly what happened; Allah destroyed Pharaoh along with all his armies, and there was no one left to inherit all that grandeur which they left behind:

كَمْ تَرَكُوا مِنْ جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ {25} وَزُرُوعٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ {26}
وَنَعْمَةٍ كَانُوا فِيهَا فَاكِهِينَ {27}

How many gardens and springs they left behind! [25] And agriculture and grand palaces! [26] And means of luxury and comfort which they used to enjoy! [27]

Just imagine how heart-breaking it would be to witness even one such house where all the people get killed or die in some accident.....how strange it is that the things which we love and are

proud of, cannot save us.....how terrible if a whole nation is gone simultaneously leaving behind all their belongings and then someone else takes over. In our life we are at times so reluctant to share even a small thing of ours due to possessiveness, or privacy but as soon as we die, we have no control and the same things are open for whoever happens to get hold of it.....

كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا قَوْمًا آخَرِينَ {28}

Thus was their end! And We let other people inherit *what was once theirs*. [28]

But for the cruel people there is no one to grieve:

فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنْظَرِينَ {29}

Neither Heaven nor earth sheds tears for them; nor were they given a respite. [29]

The fact is that Allah created this universe with a purpose, so we need to find it, understand it and then live accordingly:

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَاعِبِينَ {38}

It was not for a sport that We created the heavens the earth and all that lies between them. [38]

We keep on disagreeing and arguing about our philosophies of life, about what is right and what is wrong, but Allah says:

إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ مِيقَاتُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ {40}

Surely the Day of sorting out is the time appointed for the resurrection of them all. [40]

In this world many wrong doers go scot free because they have their intercessors to back them up. But on that ultimate day of recompense no one will help them:

يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِي مَوْلًى عَنْ مَوْلًى شَيْئًا وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ {41}

On that Day no one shall be able to protect his friend, nor shall they receive any help

The only thing that can save us on that day will be Allah's mercy:

إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ {42}

Except those to whom Allah will show His Mercy: for it is He Who is the All-Mighty, the All Merciful. [42]

This is a very important thing to remember that even the people who are trying to follow the right way, cannot do any deeds which could earn them the splendid rewards of paradise. Why? Because the paradise is too grand and expensive to be given at the price of these small little deeds we do to please Allah. We can never be perfect. Look at how many times we do and say things which we know to be wrong but we cannot control ourselves. To make mistakes is human but only those who keep repenting to Allah and keep asking for his forgiveness will be blessed with Allah's mercy. Otherwise the arrogance of being "religious" is also a dangerous thing that can lead to Allah's displeasure.

Next Allah has given us a description of the two options we have about the hereafter.....one is the extreme torture of the Hell fire and the other is the extreme pleasure of Paradise.....there is nowhere else to hide.....so make up your mind now.

Here is the Hell....in which people will be given to eat the tree of *Zaqqum* (a poisonous plant); it will be like the residue of oil and boil in their stomachs like the boiling water:

كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ {45}

كَغَلِي الْحَمِيمِ {46}

It will be like the dregs of oil. Which shall boil in the belly [45] like the boiling of scalding water. [46]

Then the angels of Hell will be ordered to take these criminals to the scalding waters and they will be tortured and humiliated because they used to be arrogantly cruel to people in the world:

خُذُوهُ فَاعْتَلُوهُ إِلَىٰ سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ {47}
ثُمَّ صَبُّوا فَوْقَ رَأْسِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْحَمِيمِ {48}

A voice will be heard: "Seize him and drag him into the depth of the hell, [47] then pour scalding water over his head, [48]

Of course all those criminals are in doubt about such things to happen to them. Most of us haven't even heard about these details and even those who hear it; dismiss it like some rumour circulated by "fundamentalist" preachers of Islam. That is why Allah will remind them on that day:

ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ {49}
إِنَّ هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَمْتَرُونَ {50}

Then the voice will say: "Taste it; you were such a powerful noble! [49] This is the punishment which you use to doubt." [50]

And now have a look at the other end of the Hereafter.....the beautiful, splendid Paradise, the final abode for the Allah conscious:

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي مَقَامٍ أَمِينٍ {51}
فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ {52}

As for the righteous, they will be in a secure place; [51] among gardens and springs, [52]

They were thankful for whatever Allah gave them in this world and focused their attention on their responsibility towards Allah; often sacrificing their small little pleasures.....So Allah will give them fantastic compensations:

يَلْبَسُونَ مِنْ سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَقَابِلِينَ {53}

Dressed in fine silk and rich brocade, sitting face to face. [53]

يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِكُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ آمِنِينَ {55}

There, in full peace, they shall call for every kind of fruit; [55]

And the greatest thing about these pleasures is that they will be forever and ever:

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتَةَ الْأُولَىٰ وَوَقَاهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ {56}

And after having prior death in the world, they shall taste death no more; and He (Allah) will protect them from the torment of hell [56]

Truly this is the most glorious success, to be saved from Hell fire.

فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكَ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ {57}

As a grace from your Rabb, and that will be the supreme achievement. [57]

How easy and simple Allah has made this Quran for us to understand:

فَإِنَّمَا يَسِّرْنَاهُ لِبَلْسَانِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ {58}

Surely We have made this *Qur'an* easy by revealing in your own language so that they may take heed. [58]

So we should be extremely grateful to Allah for opening up our eyes to this truth and giving us this miraculous gift of Quran. If we keep our bond with it, Insha'Allah we will never forget the way. May Allah help us all. Ameen

Surah Al-Jathiya

Para - 25

Bismillahir-Rahman-ir-Rahim

Surah Al-Jathiya is another great reminder for the mankind that Allah is their Lord, and He has sent them to this world with a purpose. In many of its verses, Allah has focused our attention on the miracles of His creation so that we should remember that this world has been created for us but we have been created for a far superior thing, which is Allah's worship and obedience. Therefore, while we have been given permission to use the blessings of Allah, we must do it with a consciousness that the only being worthy of our ultimate feelings of love and adoration, is Allah, and nothing else should come between us and Allah's remembrance and obedience.

This is not the theory of any individual or group but a revelation from the one who is All-Mighty, All-Wise:

تَزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ {2}

This Book is revealed from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Allah is All-Mighty, so it means that He could have forced us into submission, He has all the power to do that, but He is All-Wise and gave us a free will to choose between right and wrong. Thus he has given us intellect and spread His signs all around us so that we should contemplate on His creation and understand that He is surely the only one who has the right to be worshipped and obeyed:

وَإِخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ رِزْقٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ آيَاتٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ {5}

And in the alternation of night and day, in the sustenance that Allah sends down from heaven with which He revives the earth after its death and in the changing of the winds, there are signs for those who use their common sense.

Not only the universe, but this Quran; which is the word of Allah, is also a proof of Allah's existence, but if we don't believe in it then what else will bring us to the right way?

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ
{6}

These are the revelations of Allah, which We are reciting to you in all truth. Then, in what report will they believe if not that of Allah and His revelations?

But there are some who don't want to change themselves. Because they think that they are perfect people; and so they listen to the Quran only half heartedly, not caring what is being said to them. Thus they persist in their wrong ways, even after listening to the truth:

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ {7} يَسْمَعُ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ يُصِرُّ مُسْتَكْبِرًا
كَأَن لَّمْ يَسْمَعْهَا فَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ {8}

Woe to each lying sinner. Before whom the revelations of Allah are recited: he hears them, yet he arrogantly persists as though he never heard them; announce to him a painful punishment.

Therefore when we listen to the Quran we should have a sincere intention to act upon its guidance because it is our ultimate guide in this world:

هَذَا هُدًى وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّن رَّجْزٍ أَلِيمٍ {11}

This *Qur'an* is the true Guidance. As for those who deny the revelations of their Rabb, there will be a terribly painful punishment.

Allah doesn't order us to leave everything and just sit in a cave and read Quran....no Islam doesn't encourage any unnatural self deprivation. Nor is it just a set of rituals, rather all the acts of

worship which Allah has made compulsory for us, are meant to teach us how to live in this world with justice and peace. And all the blessings from Allah are for us to be grateful and to remember Him:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْبَحْرَ لَتَجْرِيَ الْفُلُ فِيهِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ {12}

It is Allah Who has subjected the sea to you, so that ships may sail upon it by His command, and that you may seek His bounty and be grateful to Him.

Not only the great oceans but the whole world has been made for us, and is filled with the signs of Allah, but only those benefit from these underlying messages and get to the truth who are not deluded by the apparent glitter of things but go beyond the appearances and think deeply:

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ
لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ {13}

He also subjected to you whatever is between the heavens and the earth; all from Himself. Surely there are signs in this for those who think.

And whether we take heed of these verses or dismiss them with a shrug, the fact remains that we are going to be paid for all that we do, whether good or bad:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ {15}

He that does a righteous deed, does it for his own good; and he that commits an evil, does so at his own peril. In the end, you all will be brought back to your Rabb

Do people think that they can continue to ignore the message of Allah and still reach the same paradise which He has created for the righteous ones?

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً مَحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ {21}

Do the evil doers think that We shall hold them equal with those who believe and do good deeds, and that their lives and deaths shall be alike? Worst is the judgment that they make!

How can they be so misguided? The fact is that when a person blindly follows the desires of his inner self then everything that suits him becomes right in his eyes.....Such people are no longer able to judge right from wrong:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَى سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَى بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ {23}

Have you considered the case of such an individual who has made his own desires as his god, and Allah having knowledge let him go astray, and sealed his hearing and heart and drew a veil over his sight? Who is there to guide him after Allah has withdrawn His guidance? Will you not learn a lesson?

If they are reminded of the truth of their existence they have ready-made excuses, by which they fool themselves:

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ {24}

The disbelievers say: "There is nothing but our life of this world. We live and die; nothing but time destroys us." In fact, they have no knowledge concerning this. They are merely guessing.

Allah says: tell them, that they cannot change the reality so they had better wake up and accept it before it's too late:

قُلِ اللَّهُ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يَجْمَعُكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ {26}

O Prophet tell them: "It is Allah Who gives you life and later causes you to die; then it is He Who will gather you all on the Day of Resurrection, about which there is no doubt, yet most people do not understand."

And what a painful day it will be when all of us will be standing before Allah.....all our arrogance will come to an end:

وَتَرَى كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَى إِلَى كِتَابِهَا الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ {28}

You shall see every nation on its knees. Every nation shall be summoned to its book of record, and Allah will say: "Today you shall be rewarded for your deeds.

I must say that if someone comes and tells me that he has recorded all that I have said and done in one day and wants to play the recording just for me and my family, I won't be able to stand it..... So can we bear to have all our life being exposed in front of all the people? Just imagine the fear, the apprehension that has brought all these people down on their knees. It is enough to make us Allah conscious, when we know that each and every thought word and action of ours is being recorded:

هَذَا كِتَابُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنسِخُ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ {29}

This book of Ours speaks about you with the truth. Surely We have recorded all your deeds."

The people who believed in these warnings and who tried to live a life of purity and Allah consciousness; will get a glorious reward:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ {30}

As for those who believed and did righteous deeds, their Rabb will admit them into His mercy. That will be a glorious achievement.

But all those who denied the open truth will be asked if they had never been warned:

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَفَلَمْ تَكُنْ آيَاتِي تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا
مُّجْرِمِينَ {31}

But as to those who disbelieved, *Allah will say*: "Were My revelations not recited to you? But you showed arrogance and became a people of criminals."

And their biggest crime against their own selves was that they had never believed in the Day of *Qiyamah* (the hour of doom): If someone doesn't believe in the day of recompense then that person cannot be expected to sacrifice the desires of this world for a day in which he has no belief:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَالسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُمْ مَا نَدْرِي مَا السَّاعَةُ
إِنْ نَّظُنُّ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُتَّقِينَ {32}

When it was said, "the promise of Allah is true and the Hour of Judgment is sure to come. You used to say, 'We don't know what the Hour of Judgment is: we think it is just a conjecture, we are not convinced.'"

So on that day it will be said to them:

وَقِيلَ الْيَوْمَ نَنْسَاكُمْ كَمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم
مِّنْ تَاصِرِينَ {34}

It will be said: "Today We will forget you as you forgot the meeting of this Day of yours! Hellfire will be your home and none will be there to help you."

Their problem was that the love of this world had deluded them so much that they took the warnings of Allah as a joke and hardly cared what was being revealed by Allah:

ذَلِكُمْ بِأَنَّكُمْ اتَّخَذْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فَلَا يَمْلِكُ
يُخْرِجُونَ مِنْهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ {35}

This is because you used to take Allah's revelations as a joke and you let the worldly life deceive you." Therefore, on this Day neither shall they be taken out

of hell, nor shall they be given a chance for amending *their ways to please their Rabb*.

Therefore enjoy the blessings of Allah but don't get trapped into the beauty and glamour of this world.....remember the one who Created it all.....the Creator and Lord of all the worlds:

فَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبِّ الْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ {36}

So, praise be to Allah, the Rabb of the heavens, the Rabb of the earth and the Rabb of the worlds.

And none is mightier than Him, who is the All- Mighty, the All- Wise:

وَلَهُ الْكِبْرِيَاءُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ {37}

To Him belongs greatness throughout the heavens and the earth, and He Alone is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.