

the same Message: belief in the Oneness of ٱAllâh, belief in the Hereafter, and brotherhood of all true believers.

The Message that came to Nûḥ, (Noah) was delivered to his people who said that he was in error; and to this he replied that he came to them with the Divine Message (I constantly proclaim to you the Messages of my Lord, and I sincerely advise you, and I know from ٱAllâh what you do not know) “The Battlements, ٱAl-ٱAḥrâf, 62”.

B- Hûd, the Messenger was entrusted with the same Message to ʿÂd, his people, who accused him of foolishness. So he said, “O my people! There is no foolishness in me; but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. I constantly proclaim to you the Messages of my Lord, and I am for you a trustworthy adviser). “The Battlements, ٱAl-ٱAḥrâf, 67 - 68”.

C- In similar words Ṣâliḥ addressed his people, Thamûd, saying, (O my people! Worship ٱAllâh! In no way do you have any god other than He.) But the chiefs among his people disobeyed him, and so the Commotion took them away, then he turned away from them, and said, (O my People! I have already proclaimed to you The Message of my Lord, and “sincerely” advised you; but you do not love sincere advisers) “The Battlements, ٱAl - ٱAḥrâf, 73, 79”.

Messengers are Mortals:

Although the Five Messengers of Resolve have been bounteously elevated over common human beings through Divine Revelation, they still suffered from normal human feelings, for which they received Divine warnings. Such warnings were addressed to Nûḥ (Noah) when he was distressed for the loss of his drowned son, who refused to go with his father on the ship (And Nûḥ called to his Lord saying, “Lord! Surely my son is of my family, and surely Your promise is the truth, and You are the most judicious of Judges. He, “ﷻAllâh” said, “O Nûḥ, surely he is not of your family; surely he is indeed not righteous; so do not ask of Me that whereof you have no knowledge. Surely I admonish you, lest you should be among the ignorant) “Hûd, 45, 46” .

Even ʾIbrâhîm “Abraham”, the eminent Messenger of Resolve, when he asked forgiveness for his father who was a disbeliever, had to ask forgiveness for this request, and he was reminded of this mistake in these words, (The Prophet and the ones who have believed should in no way ask forgiveness for the associators, even if they are near of kin, even after it had become evident to them that they will be companions in Hell - Fire - And ʾIbrâhîm’s asking forgiveness for his father was in no way for any reason except because of a com-

mitment he had promised "his father"; so as soon as it became evident to him that "his father" was an enemy of ٱAllâh, he declared himself quit of "his father"; surely ٱIbrâhîm was indeed most - plaintive, ever - forbearing) "ٱAt - Tawbah, Repentance, 113 - 114".

Again, the Qurٱân tells us that ٱIbrâhîm asked his Lord to show him how He gives life to the dead, and the Lord's answer came with this Divine rebuke, ("And have you not believed?" ٱIbrâhîm said, "Yes indeed, but that my heart be composed. ٱAllâh said, "so take four of the birds, then wring them to you, and thereafter set a portion of them on every mountain; thereafter call them, they will come up to you with hasty diligence, and know that ٱAllâh is Ever - Mighty, Ever - Wise".) "Al - Baqarah, the Cow 260".

But Mûsâ to whom (ٱAllâh spoke long eloquent speech) asked ٱAllâh this unusual request; (As soon as Mûsâ came to Our fixed time and his Lord spoke to him, Mûsâ said, "Lord, show me, that I may look at you! ٱAllâh said, "you shall never see me; but look at the mountain; so, in case it stays residing in its place, then you shall eventually see Me". Then, as soon as his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, He made it pounded into dust, and Mûsâ collapsed stunned. Then, as soon as he recovered, he said, "All Extolment be to

You! I repent to You and I am the first of the believers”) “^QAl - A^crâf, the Battlements, 143”.

The Qur^ʿanic narrative about ^CÎsâ “Jesus” is so short that it contains few details of his life before his being raised. His short life was dedicated to his emphasis that he is the son of Maryam “Mary”, and that he was enjoined to teach the Oneness of ^ʿAllâh to the Jews, and to tell the world of the advent of Muḥammad, the final Prophet and Messenger.

However, the verses about the Table “^QAl - Mâ^ʿidah” may indicate that ^CÎsâ was so keen on responding to the request by his Disciples for him to ask his Lord to send down upon them a Table from heaven, although ^CÎsâ’s first answer was a kind of rebuke to them, for he said to them (“Be pious to ^ʿAllâh, in case you be believers!”) “Al - Mâ^ʿidah. The Table 112”. That rebuke could have put an end to such a request, but they insisted on the descent of the table from heaven, saying, They = “The Disciples said”, we would like to eat of it and our hearts be composed, and that we may know that you have readily spoken to us sincerely and that thereof we may be among the witnesses”).

Had the Disciples not insisted on their request, it might have been possible that the Heavenly Answer would not have been so threateningly awful. For ^CÎsâ supplicated ^ʿAllâh to

send the table for a festival to all of them, then (Allâh said, "Surely I am sending it down upon you; so, whosoever of you thereafter disbelieves, then surely I shall torment him with a torment wherewith I do not torment anyone of the worlds")
"Al - Mâ'idah, The Table, 113 - 115".

Muhammad's life marks the actual beginning of modern history; and the Qur'ân tells us here of incidents where he is praised for his deep submission to ʿAllâh, as well as of incidents where he is directed to the straight path. For during the Makkan period of persecution before the Ascension, the Prophet felt anxious about the disbelief of the majority of his Makkan people; so he was advised in these words, (Surely he who ordained the Qur'ân upon you shall indeed revert you to a place of homing⁽¹⁾, Say, "My Lord knows best who comes with guidance, and who is in evident error". And in no way did you hope that the Book⁽²⁾ should be cast to you, except it be a mercy from your Lord; so definitely do not be a backer of the disbelievers. And definitely do not let them bar you from the Signs of ʿAllâh, after they have been sent down to you. And call to your Lord, and definitely do not be one of the associators. And do not invoke another god with ʿAllâh; there is no god except He. All things perish except His Face.

(1) I.e. Makkah, or Paradise.

(2) I.e. the Qur'ân.

To Him belongs the Judgment, and to Him you shall be returned) “Al - Qaṣaṣ, the Narrative 85 - 88”. Even after the Ascension, the Prophet was warned not to obey the disbelievers and the hypocrites in these words, (O you Prophet, be pious to ٱAllāh and do not obey the disbelievers and the hypocrites; surely ٱAllāh has been Ever - Knowing, Ever - Wise) “ٱAl - ٱAhzāb, The Allied Parties, 1”.

But, at the same time, even in the same Sûrah, the believers are enjoined to follow the example of the Prophet. (Indeed you have already had a fair example in the Messenger of ٱAllāh for whosoever hopes for ٱAllāh and the Last Day, and remembers ٱAllāh much) “ٱAl - ٱAhzāb - The Allied Parties, 21”.

On one occasion, the Makkan disbelievers are threatened and told that torment in Hell expects them if they do not believe in ٱAllāh and His Messenger, (Surely it, “the Qurʾān” is indeed the speech of an honorable Messenger. And it is in no way the speech of a poet - little is that you believe! Nor the speech of a soothsayer - little is that you be mindful of! A successive Revelation being sent down from the Lord of the worlds. And if he “Muḥammad” had talked up against us any false sayings, indeed We would have taken him by the right

hand. Thereafter indeed We would have cut off his life vein⁽¹⁾)
“^٢Al Hâqqah, the Inevitable Truth, 40 - 46”. Then we have
the whole Sûrah of ^٢Ad - Duhâ “The forenoon”.

- 1- And by the forenoon.
- 2- And by the night when it comes with its dark stillness!.
- 3- In no way has your Lord = “Muḥammad’s” disregarded you, and in no way has He disfavored you.
- 4- And indeed the Hereafter shall be more charitable for you than the first “the present life”.
- 5- And indeed your Lord will eventually give you, so that you will be satisfied.
- 6- Did he not find you an orphan, so He gave you an abode?
- 7- And He found you erring, so He guided you.
- 8- And He found you in want, so He enriched you.
- 9- Then, as for the orphan, then do not subdue him.
- 10- And as for the beggar, then do not scold him.
- 11- And as for your Lord’s favor, then discourse about it.

Finally, we come to the second. Revealed Sûrah, where the magnificent character of the Prophet is unequivocally expressed as the last Prophet and Messenger of ^٢Allâh. Sûrat Al - Qalam = The Pen:

(1) I. e. life - vein, aorta.

- 1- Nûn, and by the pen, and what they inscribe “with it”,
- 2- In no way are you, by the favor of your Lord, a mad-man.
- 3- And surely you shall have indeed a reward bountifully unfailing.
- 4- And surely you are indeed of a magnificent character.

The Ever - Glorious Qur^ʿân

Such is the Last Divine Message revealed by ʔAllâh, The One God of all creatures, upon His Last Prophet and Messenger: the only Message that has been kept by Divine Will uncorrupted and incorruptible.

ʔÂdam

1- The history of ʔÂdam is told in the Qur^ʿân in a way different from that narrated in any Book, the details of which are unquestionably true through Divine Revelation. ʔÂdam was not the first to be created; for before him were the Angels and the jinn. When ʔAllâh told the Angels that He would be creating ʔÂdam, they were surprised, since they have been happy by having full submission to their Lord, while some of the jinn did have their vicious acts. (And as your Lord said to the angles “Surely I am making in the earth a successor”⁽¹⁾).

(1) I.e. new creatures to succeed one another .

They said, "Will you make therein one who will corrupt in it and shed blood, while we are the ones who extol Your praise and call You Holy?" He said, "Surely I know whatsoever you do not know". And He taught ٱĀdam all the names and thereafter he set them⁽¹⁾ before the angles; so he said, "Inform me of the names of these, in case you be sincere) "ٱAl - Baqarah, The Cow, 30 - 31".

Herein the angels expressed their repentance for supposing that ٱĀdam and his children would corrupt in the earth. Then came the apology of the angels, (They said, "All Extolment be yours. We have no knowledge except that which You have taught us. Surely You, only You, are The Ever - Knowing The Ever - Wise). "ٱAl - Baqarah, the Cow, 32".

2- Then after ٱĀdam had been created, and his Lord taught him all the names, the angels were commanded to prostrate themselves in honor of ٱĀdam, and all of the angels submitted to the Divine Command and prostrated themselves except ٱIblīs, who said that he was superior to ٱĀdam, since he was created of clay, while ٱIblīs and the jinn in general were created of fire. The words of ٱAllāh against ٱIblīs were definitely condemning, for ٱAllāh said, "Then get out of it⁽²⁾; so,

(1) I.e the names.

(2) I.e. Heaven, the Garden.

surely you are outcast. And surely the curse shall be upon you, till the Day of Doom) “Al - Hîjr, Thamûd's Habitation, 34 - 35”. When ʔIblîs asked to be respited till the Day of Resurrection, his request was accepted by his Lord; and consequently ʔIblîs pronounced his threat to misguide human beings on earth; here the words of ʔAllâh came (Surely over My bondmen⁽¹⁾ you shall have no authority, except the ones who closely follow you of the misguided ones) “ʔAl - Hîjr, 42”.

When Eve was created from ʔÂdam, both were told to enjoy their life in the heavenly Garden, but were commanded to avoid a tree that brought their downfall to earth together with Satan. Satan's delusion came in the form of convincing ʔÂdam and Eve that the prohibited tree would make them two angels or enjoy eternity. (And Satan swore to both of them = ʔÂdam and Eve, “Surely I am indeed for you both, one of your honest advisers) “ʔAl - ʔA^Crâf, The Battlements, 21”.

So, on earth we have two cosmic creatures: men and jinn, besides the innumerable others. Both angels and jinn can see human beings, while man is unable to see them, except through Divine Revelations. However, man has been provided with inspiration which represents the ability for good and

(1) I.e. humanity and creatures.

evil; for man's "self" has that dual ability for obedience and disobedience, (and by the self and that which molded it. So he inspired⁽¹⁾ it with "her" impiety and "her" piety) "Ash - Shams, the Sun, 7".

3- The human self has been Divinely defined on various occasions in the Qur^ʿân. One of these definitions is its avarice. So on the occasion of differences among man and his wife, the human self has been described: (and avarice is made ever present to "human" selves) "ʿAn - Nisâ^ʿ, women"; So men and women are advised to do fair deeds and to be pious.

Again man is reminded that the human self is shortlived, for even in sleep, the self is taken up and is sent back again to the human body after waking up. (ʿAllâh takes the human selves at the time of their death, and those which have not died, in their sleeping. He holds back the ones against whom He has decreed death, and sends forth the others till a stated term. Surely in that are indeed signs for a people who meditate). "ʿAz - Zumar, The Hordes, 42". Here again we have to differentiate between wafâh "taking - up", and mawt "death" and that is why sleep is considered a kind of death, and is called wafâh. We are also told of the relationship between the seen world and the unobservable world like the angelic world

(1) I.e. Inspiration here is = ʿIlhâm, as distinct from Revelation = wahy .

entrusted with the Divine Command about **wafâh** = taking up, and death “**mawt**”.

The creation of the human self has been described in the Qur^ʿân in such illuminating detail that has never been surpassed, and will never be changed, for ^ʿAllâh, Exalted be He, tells us, (And indeed We already created man of an extraction of clay. Thereafter We made him a sperm - drop, in an established repository. Thereafter We created the sperm - drop into a clot, then We created the clot into a chewed - up morsel, then We created the chewed - up morsel into bones, then We dressed the bones in flesh; thereafter We brought him into being as another creation. So blessed be ^ʿAllâh, The Fairest of creators). “Al - Mu^ʿminûn, The Believers, 12, 13, 14”. The story of the Divine Act of creation goes on to tell us the development of human growth and life in the following words (and We make to repose in the wombs whatever We decide, till a stated term; and thereafter We bring you out as young children, and thereafter you reach full age. And among you, there is he who is taken up, and among you there is he who is reverted to the most decrepit age, so that even after “some” knowledge, he knows nothing). “^ʿAl-Hajj, The Pilgrimage, 5”.

4- Human beings have been Divinely provided by hearing, sight, and vision (fu^ʿâd), through which they can acquire

knowledge, according to which they make their choice for good and evil. To achieve these three capacities, the ear the eye, and the heart are to be used. The capacity for vision through the heart has suffered confusion by Western writers in the past and their modern followers, because the term vision has been replaced by the term mind. Actually, the word mind originally meant memory; and this historical change of its meaning was adopted by Muslim thinkers in Spain, through which it has kept this meaning till the present day. But the Qurʾānic meaning of ʿaql, as distinct from fuʿād = vision, more precisely means the power of the fuʿād to prevent man from committing evil, since the verb “ʿaqala” originally meant in Arabic “to confine” a camel or a person. The word “ʿaqala” in the Qurʾān is used as a verb, never as a noun, in the sense that, through “fuʿād”, a human being is impelled to abstain from evil.

Among the attributes of a human being in the Qurʾān are these: he is created as a weak individual “ʾAn - Nisāʾ = Women, 28”, his arch - enemy, is Satan “Yûsuf, 5” In spite of the fact that the human being has been created in the fairest stature “ʾAt - Tîn, The Fig. 4”. he has been most unjust, most disbelieving) “Ibrâhîm, Abraham 34”; (he has been endowed with vision through which he could see the various proofs of Divine Grace and Power. (And of His signs is that he created

you of dust; and thereafter, only then you are mortals, spreading widely. And of His signs is that he created for you of yourselves spouses, that you may find rest in them and He has made between you amity and mercy. Surely in that are indeed signs for a people who meditate. And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the differences of your tongues and colors. Surely in that are indeed Signs for knowledgeable people. And of His signs is your sleeping by night and day - time, and your seeking after his Grace. Surely in that are indeed signs for a people who hear. And of His signs is that he shows you lightning, for fear and longing from Him, and that He has been sending down from heaven water; so He gives life to the earth after its death. Surely in that are indeed signs for a people who consider) “^٢Ar - Rûm, the Romans, 20 - 24”.

5- Through hearing, sight and vision a human being has been enabled to acquire ‘ilm = human knowledge, through the Divine gift of the names of all things, since the real knowledge of the seen and the unseen is reserved only to ^٢Allâh, Exalted be He.

Thus human knowledge may be gained through piety and apprehension of the Lord of the worlds, (Surely only men of knowledge are the ones of the bondmen of ^٢Allâh who are

apprehensive of Him “³Allâh”; surely Allâh is Ever - Mighty, Ever - Forgiving) “Fâtir, Originator, 28”. Such Knowledge through vision is distinctly superior to all other forms of knowledge related to mundane life, as this type of know-ledge helps to achieve the differences between tongues and colors, referred to earlier is Sûrat ³Ar - Rûm = “The Romans”. Those knowledgeable who have piety and apprehension of ³Allâh are ⁶ulamâ³, while those who are only dealing with mundane knowledge are called = ⁶âlimîn.

Here, it is pertinent to distinguish between ⁶ilm = knowledge and ma⁶rifah = cognition. Such a distinction is necessary, since some of the formalistic proponents of ma⁶rifah, sometimes confuse true knowledge with just teaching formalities of devotional acts, ignoring the more basic aspects of knowledge and spreading the basic aspects of the teachings of ³Islâm. Individually and socially, such formalists are sometimes called **Sûfiyyah** = (literally wrapped in wool), who confuse knowledge and cognition. The word cognition or recognition is clearly defined in the Qur³ân, in the history of Yûsuf and his brothers whom he recognized (⁶arafahum, and they were denying him) “Yûsuf, Joseph, 58”.

6- Mankind as a whole falls into different categories. First there is the category of true believers, who are devoted fol-

lowers of the Prophets and Messengers and their Divine Messages; and these have been promised enjoyment of an eternal life in the Hereafter. The two other categories are: the disbelievers and the hypocrites; and these will be punished by eternal life in Hell, unless ٱAllâh, Exalted be He, relents on them, for (Surely ٱAllâh is indeed to mankind Ever - Compassionate, Ever - Merciful) “ٱAl - Hajj, The Pilgrimage 65”.

Thus, all through the history of mankind, the disbelievers and hypocrites have been the majority. Some of them take gods of their own (And of mankind are some who take to themselves, apart from ٱAllâh, false compeers⁽¹⁾: they love them as with the love due to ٱAllâh) “ٱAl - Baqarah, the Cow 165” Others are engulfed in their lusts (Adorned for mankind is the love of lusts for women and children and hoarded cantars of gold and silver, and horses of mark and cattle and tillage; that is the enjoyment of the present life; and ٱAllâh has in His Providence the fairest resorting) “ٱÂl- ٱImrân, The House of ٱImrân, 14”. All of these temptations have been a divisive factor among mankind, which was originally one nation. (And in no way were mankind anything except one nation, then they differed among themselves) “Yûnus, Jonah 19”.

Such temptations have resulted in confrontations and wars among mankind, in spite of the fact that believers are always

(1) I. e. gods.

a minority, for (had it not been for the repelling⁽¹⁾ by ٱAllâh of mankind, some by means of some others, indeed the earth would have been corrupted; but ٱAllâh is the Owner of Grace over the worlds) “ٱAl - Baqarah, The Cow, 25”.

Again such temptations have destroyed rulers and their entourage who were infatuated with worldly power. (And when We will to cause a town to perish, we command its luxuriant people, then they committed immorality therein; so the word came true against it and then we destroyed it an utter destruction) “ٱAl - ٱIsrâ, The Night Journey, 16”.

So, whether dictatorships or kingdoms or democracies, the ultimate fate is destruction through different forms of luxury and corruption. Here the only exceptions are the generations of the Prophets and Messengers, together with their true believers in ٱAllâh.

This applies to the nation of Muḥammad and his followers, who are addressed with these Words (And thus We have made you a middle nation to be witnesses over mankind, and for the Messenger to be a witness over you) “ٱAl - Baqarah, The Cow, 143”, for the history of this nation has shown that the threat of destruction is still there for the luxuriant corruptors.

(1) I. e. confrontations.