

## Surah al-Mulk (67)

## سورة الملك

### 'The Dominion'

The surah derives its name from the prominence of the word *mulk*, meaning 'dominion'. Like the other Makkan surahs it deals with the principal articles of faith, including divinity, prophethood, and resurrection. As Surah al-Tahjīm concluded on the theme of family relations being neither of benefit nor of harm, but that it is actions which benefit and do harm, this surah opens on the theme of mankind being in a position of examination, for the obedient to be discerned from the disobedient.

*By the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*By the name of Allah ...* We begin by the name of Allah who is the First in existence, the Creator of all things, so that the beginning by His name accords to His being the point of origin and the First.

*...the Compassionate, the Merciful.* He bestows mercy on the servants in this world and in the hereafter; completing their shortcomings, forgiving their sins.

*Hallowed is He in whose hand is the dominion, and He is over all things powerful; (1)*

تَبْرَكَ الَّذِي يَدُهُ الْمَلَكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

*Hallowed is He ...* Hallowed is given for *tabaraka*, meaning to persist in goodness and be the source of goodness. From the same root is the word *barakah*, 'blessedness'.

*... in whose hand is the dominion, ...* His is the dominion for He is the Owner without condition of everything in existence; every owner besides Him has been granted possession by Him. 'In His hand' is an instance of likening the metaphysical to the physical.

*... and He is over all things powerful.* He is able to create a thing, able to destroy it, and able to dispose of it in whatever way He likes.

*He who created death and life so as to test ye – which of ye are the best in action; and He is the Mighty, the oft-Forgiving: (2)*

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

*He created death, ...* Death either exists in itself, or it is the absence of the blessing of life; both of these conditions are created, for the absence of life in a thing is a part of being, as is established in theology (*ilm al-kalam*).

*... and life so as to test ye – which of ye are the best in action; ...* He created life and death, O mankind, to test you, to evaluate you, as to which of you is better in actions than the other. For Allah, glory be to Him, is perfectly aware of the human being, the examination is solely for His knowledge to be realised in the objective world, for He does not need to try us and know us by experience. Giving death and life as being for the sake of examination is on account of how death calls us to good deeds and leads us to put no assurance in the transient world and its temporary pleasures, while life empowers the human being to perform the beautiful deeds.

*... and He is the Mighty, ...* He is the Mighty (*al-<sup>c</sup>aziz*), dominant in His authority,

*... the oft-Forgiver:* It is put for *al-Ghafur*. He forgives the sinner when he repents and returns; so you, O mankind, are in His grasp, for He is the Grand and Mighty; so seek His forgiveness and He will forgive you, for He is the Forgiver.

*Who created the seven skies in levels; thou see not in the creation of the Compassionate any incongruity; so redirect thy gaze: see thou any cracks? (3)*

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ

الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَنُّوتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ



**Who created the seven skies in levels; ...** The skies exist one above the other in perfect symmetry, with no incongruity or disharmony.

**... thou see not in the creation of the Compassionate ...** The address is in the singular to the listener as an individual.

**... any incongruity; ...** There is no disorder, in the creation of the Compassionate (al-Rahḥman), for the whole is created with precision, certitude and appropriate perfection.

**... so redirect thy gaze ...** Turn it once more to existence, after it was directed at it. It is as if the addressee had been looking but without attention, so it is said, 'Redirect your gaze', meaning 'scrutinize and examine'.

**... see thou any cracks?** Do you see any cracks, any fissures, as you would in a building that gives way to imperfection? Is there in the world of existence any disorder indicating weakness and inability, or is everything in its appropriate place according to a wisdom and beneficence?

**Then redirect thy gaze twice again; thy gaze will return to thee low, while it is weary. (4)**

ثُمَّ أَرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ

حَسِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾

**... Then redirect thy gaze twice again; ...** That is, once and then again, meaning again and again, for vision sometimes errs in looking once at a thing and does not see its faults, so that when a person looks again and again at a thing he perceives its faults. Thus the meaning is to take another look at the creation, again seeking to find disorder, you will not find it.

**... thy gaze will return to thee low, while it is weary ...** Your gaze will return to you low, unable to meet its objective and find what it was seeking; it will tire without finding any disorder or weakness – and what illness and suchlike it finds is for the purpose of examination and instruction, not due to a fault in the creation.

**And most surely We have adorned the world's sky with lamps, and We have made them launching-sites for the devils, and We have prepared for them the chastisement of the blaze. (5)**

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصْنُوعٍ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا  
لِّلشَّيَاطِينِ ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٥﴾

**And most surely We have adorned the world's sky with lamps, ...** The 'sky' (al-sama') nearest the earth has been adorned, beautified – which does not mean that the other skies are not beautiful; the distinction is made on account of how it is witnessed and perceived. 'Lamps' is put for *mashāḥib* plural of *misḥab* and what are meant are the stars, although for the naked eye planets are also 'seen' as lamps just as the stars are.

**... and We have made them launching-sites for the devils, ...** 'launching-sites' is given for *rujūm*, derivative of *rajm* or stoning, and what is meant is sites for launching missiles. As the devils approach the stations of the angels in the lofty skies to eavesdrop, they are stoned with flaming particles from the stars. For the stars are vantage points, from which the devils are kept under observation, so that when they approach they are stoned or fired upon, as was earlier discussed in previous surahs.

**... and We have prepared for them the chastisement of the blaze.** Prepared for these devils who eavesdrop is a fiery chastisement of the blaze (al-sa'ir); flaming, blazing, either with their being fired upon, or in the hereafter in the fire.

**And just as this is the punishment of the devils so it is the punishment of the disbelievers:**

**And for those who disbelieve in their Lord is the chastisement of Hell, and atrocious is the destination; (6)**

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَيَسَّ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٦﴾

For those who disbelieve by denying Him, or by attributing to Him what is not His, is the chastisement of Hell, an atrocious, vile place to return to.

*When they are cast therein they hear from it a braying as it boils, (7)*

إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورٌ ﴿٧﴾

*When they are cast therein ...* Those who cast them into the hell are the angels.

*... they hear from it a braying ...* As they are flung into it they hear its roar, like the braying of an ass. This sound accompanies the other terrors of hell so as to increase alarm and dread in the hearts.

*... as it boils, ...* Hell is boiling, and this too increases its dread.

*Almost bursting with rage – whenever a troop is hurled into it, its keepers ask them: 'Did there not come to ye a warner?' (8)*

تَكَادُ تَمَيِّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا  
أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾

*Almost bursting with rage ...* It will be as if the hell will be almost splitting apart with rage, such will be the severity of its flames. Man is such that when he is enraged he comes close to exploding and bursting his skin, and so will the fire come close to bursting under the pressure of its own flames.

*... whenever a troop is hurled into it, its keepers ...* Its keepers are the angels assigned to the fire.

*... ask them: 'Did there not come to ye a warner?'* They ask every band of disbelievers and sinners whether no one came to them to warn and frighten them of this fire. The questioning form is for reproach and censure.

*They say, 'For sure! A warner came to us but we belied and said 'Allah has not sent down a thing, ye are but in a great straying.' (9)*

قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَلَ اللَّهُ مِن  
شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ كَبِيرٍ ﴿٩﴾

*They say, ...* That is, the guilty will say in reply to the keepers of the fire.

*... 'For sure! A warner came to us ...* They admit that a Prophet or Messenger sent by Allah, glory be to Him, came to them.

*... but we belied and said 'Allah has not sent down a thing, ...* They will admit that they called this Day and all that the warners told them false; and said that no book or law had descended from Allah.

*... ye are but in a great straying.'* They had told their warners that they were in serious error for believing that they were Allah's messengers, and that Allah had sent down to them authority and a law.

*And they say, 'Had we but listened or reasoned, we would not be among the companions of the blaze.' (10)*

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١٠﴾

*Those for the fire acknowledge that they did not make use of their minds while in the world, and thus they are afflicted with the chastisement.*

*And they say, 'Had we but listened or reasoned, ...* Had we only listened to the words of the warners, they say, or had only we employed our reason so as to discern the true and the false by listening – for man is such that when he employs his reason he will of necessity perceive the truth in general terms, even though he hear not a thing.

*... we would not be among the companions of the blaze.'* Then, they say, we would not be here amongst the people of the blaze.

*So they acknowledge their sin, and so away with the companions of the blaze! (11)*

فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذَنبِهِمْ فَسُحِقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١١﴾

**So they acknowledge their sin, ...** Those who are being entered into the fire acknowledge their faults, at a time when confession is to no avail.

**... and so away with the companions of the blaze!** 'So away' is given for *suhḥan*, a supplication against them, meaning 'may Allah remove them far from salvation.'

*But as for the believer who acts righteousness, he is in goodness and felicity:*

**Indeed those who are in awe of their Lord though unseen, theirs is forgiveness and a large wage. (12)**

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿١٢﴾

**Indeed those who are in awe of their Lord though unseen, ...** Those who fear Him, glory be to Him, even though He is beyond their senses, fear to disobey Him and remain obedient.

**... theirs is forgiveness ...** For them is the forgiveness of the sins they have committed.

**... and a large wage.** A great reward.

*The thread then turns to explain the knowledge of Allah, glory be to Him, of everything the human being says, whether it is uttered in public or in private:*

**And be secretive with your word or be open with it, He is knower of what is in the breasts. (13)**

وَأَسِرُّوا قَوْلَكُمْ أَوِ اجْهَرُوا بِهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٣﴾



**And be secretive with your word ...** Speak, O people, the word that is in your breasts, privately and secretively.

**... or be open with it ...** Allah, glory be to Him, is aware of it before it leaves your lips.

**... He is knower of what holds the breasts.** He is aware of what is in your hearts. He knows what thoughts circulate in your very breasts. 'Breasts' (*shidur*) is mentioned as the breast is the location of the heart, and that is where thoughts are. So how can one be aware of what is in the heart and yet unaware of what leaves the lips?

*It is narrated that the polytheists would say foul things about the Messenger of Allah may Allah bless him and his family<sup>1</sup>, and that archangel Gabriel (Jabra'īl) peace be upon him<sup>2</sup>, informed him of what they said. So when one of them wanted to talk about him, they would tell each other to speak quietly so that Muhammad would not hear of it. And so this ayah was sent down:*

**Does He not know whom He created, while He is the all-Subtle, the well-Informed? (14)**

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾

**Does He not know whom He created ...** Does He not know the concealed and the open of whom He has created? The question form is to have the effect of denial. The meaning is: 'How can Allah not know about things while He is the creator?'

**... while He is the all-Subtle, ...** 'All-Subtle' is given for *latif*, for a *latif* thing is one that influences penetrates things with ease. His describing Himself, glory be to Him, as 'the Latif', is on account of the penetration of His knowledge and power.

**... and He is the well-informed?** 'Well-Informed', is given for 'Khabir' to indicate precise, and thorough knowledge about everything. 'Khabir' reflects a more detailed knowledge than 'Akim, 'knower'.

**(It is) He who put the earth lowly for ye, so walk among its uplands and eat of His**

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ ذُلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا

<sup>1</sup> *shallallah 'alayhi wa alih*, meaning may Allah bless him and his family. It is a mark of piety and devotion to use this salutation when mentioning the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

<sup>2</sup> *'alayhis-salam*, meaning peace be upon him. It is a mark of piety and devotion to use this salutation when mentioning the name of one of the prophets or one of the angels, or one of the *masum* Imams from (the Ahl al-Bayt) the household of the Holy Prophet.

**provision; and unto Him is the dispersal. (15)**

وَكُلُوا مِنْ زَرْقِهِ ۗ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ ﴿١٥﴾

**He it is who put the earth lowly for ye, ...** The earth has been made malleable for you, O mankind, subordinate, for buildings, agriculture, burying the dead, journeying, the passage of rivers and canals, and other things. 'Lowly' is given for *dhalukan*, from *dhalla*, meaning to be humble, to yield.

**... so walk among its uplands ...** 'Uplands' is a literal meaning of *manakib*, and what are meant are the earth's paths.

**... and eat of His provision; ...** We are to eat of His provision, which we acquire through agriculture and suchlike.

**... and unto Him is the dispersal.** We are raised and dispersed after death towards Him, glory be to Him, for He is the origin and the return. The meaning of the rising being to Him (*ilayhi*) is that it is to His reckoning and recompense.

*The thread then turns from mentioning the favours of Allah for man to be grateful, to warning them that by remaining in disbelief and disobedience they advance themselves towards the chastisement; and that the force driving man to the good can be ease or adversity.*

**Are ye secure that whoso is in the sky would not make the earth to swallow ye, when suddenly it is sliding? (16)**

ءَأْمِنْتُمْ مَّن فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ ﴿١٦﴾

'Are ye secure' is given for '*amintum*' which in this case means 'are you sure' or 'do you have guarantee'. 'Whoso is in the sky', *man fil-sama*, are the angels assigned to our affairs by Allah, glory be to Him. Do ye (O mankind) have guarantee that they will not make the earth slide about and envelop us, as they did with *Qarun* and the people of Lot? It is possible that 'whoso is in the sky' means Allah, glory be to Him, and His being in the sky means that His command for the earth issues from the sky, as He says, '*...it is He who is God in the sky and God in the earth.*' [43: 84]. And He says, '*And in the sky is your provision and that ye are promised ...*' [51: 22]

**Or are ye secure that whoso is in the sky would not send hails of pebbles, then ye will know how is My warning. (17)**

أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مَّن فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا ۗ فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ كَيْفَ نَذِيرِ ﴿١٧﴾

**Or are ye secure that whoso is in the sky would not send hails of pebbles, ...** Again, do they have security, if they remain in their disbelief and disobedience, that one of the above two meanings of *man fil-sama*, will not send against them torrents of stones, until they are stoned to death like earlier disobedient peoples?

**... then ye will know how is My warning.** They would then know that the warning of Allah about the chastisement is true.

*And such was not remote from the disbelievers; did they not know that when the previous peoples belied they were afflicted with such punishments?*

**And in fact those before them certainly belied, so how was My denial? (18)**

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿١٨﴾

**And in fact those before them certainly belied, ...** Previous peoples called the portents and Prophets of Allah false.

**... so how was My denial?** Allah's denial against them was His chastising them with various chastisements: by drowning, by being swallowed up by the ground, by being stoned from the sky, and suchlike.

*How could they deny the existence of Allah or His power, while they are witnesses to the signs of creation with their eyes?*

**See they not the bird above them: spreading and folding? None holds them but the Compassionate; indeed He is over all things an observer. (19)**

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَفَّتْ وَيَقْبِضْنَ مَا  
يُمَسِّكُهُنَّ إِلَّا الرَّحْمَنُ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

**See they not the bird above them: spreading and folding? ...** Do the disbelievers not use their eyes to see the bird and how it uses its wings; its wings outstretched as it flies through the sky above their heads, then contracting them. One moment its wings are aligned and extended, the next moment contracted, which is the flapping of its wings. By the bird is meant the species, and so it is spoken of in the plural.

**... None holds them but the Compassionate; truly He is over every thing an observer ...** They are not held up in the sky while gliding or flapping, save by the grace of the Compassionate, who bestows mercy on all things. Who has given the bird this ability, and given the sky the quality of bearing the bird, other than Allah, glory be to Him?

**... indeed He over all things He is an observer:** He knows what is appropriate for all things and what will benefit all things, and so He creates according to benefit and wisdom. And according to His vision, glory be to Him, He gave the bird this ability and the sky this quality. An observer (*basir*) in the ayah means being aware of affairs, rather than seeing.

**Or who is it that is an army for ye, succouring ye besides the Compassionate? Indeed the disbelievers are nought but in delusion. (20)**

أَمَّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ جُنْدٌ لَكُمْ يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ  
إِنَّ الْكَافِرُونَ إِلَّا فِي غُرُورٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

**Or who is it that is an army for ye, succouring ye besides the Compassionate? ...** The question form is for denial. The meaning is: who do you suppose will be an army for you to save you on the day of resurrection from the chastisement of Allah? You have no such army. It is as if it is said to the disbelievers: 'By what power do you rebel against Allah? Have you an army to defend you against Allah's chastisement, which you depend upon in disobeying Him?'

**... Indeed the disbelievers are nought but in delusion ...** The disbelievers have no such army, the life of the world has deceived them. For they are nothing but in delusion. The devil has deluded them into believing that there is no punishment and no chastisement, so let them depend on him in disbelief and disobedience.

**Or who is it that will provision ye should He withhold His provision? Nay, they persist in insolence and aversion. (21)**

أَمَّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي يَزُفُّكُمْ إِنْ أَمْسَكَ رِزْقَهُ بَلْ لَجُّوا فِي  
عَتُوٍّ وَنُفُورٍ ﴿٢١﴾

**Or who is it that will provision you should He withhold His provision? ...** If Allah withheld His provision would there be one to provision you? Could such a one take the place of Allah in providing for you? Since there is no provider other than Him, how do you disobey Him and not fear that He might withhold His provision of you so that you would remain without provision and without food?

**... Nay, they persist in insolence and aversion ...** Nay, they know full well that there is no provider other than Allah, yet they persist in their obstinacy and rebellion, in insolence (*utuw*) and aversion (*nufur*) to Islam and to the truth.

**Is he who walks crawling on his face more guided, or he who walks evenly on a straight road? (22)**

أَفَمَنْ يَمْشِي مُكَبِّاً عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَىٰ أَمَّنْ يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا  
عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

**Is he who walks crawling on his face more guided, ...** 'Crawling' is given for *mukibb*, meaning to walk along with one's face and belly on the ground, with utmost difficulty. Is such a person better and more knowledgeable to turn to for a path?

... **or he who walks evenly on a straight road?** ... That is, he who walks evenly and upright on his two feet. Is the former more guided, or he who is on the straight road, the road that leads most directly to salvation? The disbeliever is like someone who goes about upon his face and belly, and his path is rough and difficult, with him not knowing how to escape the problems and afflictions. The believer, by contrast, sees his path clearly and easily, walks along it and quickly arrives at his intended destination. For the straight path is the shortest distance to felicity and bliss.

**Say: He it is who produced ye, and He made for ye the ear and the eyes and the hearts; little are ye thankful. (23)**

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ  
وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

**Say:** ... The address is to the Messenger.

... **He it is who produced ye,** ... He was to say to those who denied Allah, glory be to Him, or assigned to Him partners, that Allah, One and Alone, caused them to exist.

... **and He made for ye the ear and the eyes and the hearts;** ... He made for our benefit the ear, the eyes and the hearts. It seems the singular is used for the ear and the plural for the eyes and the hearts for variety in expression.

... **little are ye thankful.** After these great gifts the appreciation is insignificant.

**Say: He it is who multiplied ye in the earth, and to Him ye will be mustered. (24)**

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

**Say:** ... The address is in the singular.

... **He it is who multiplied ye in the earth** ... It means: say, O Messenger of Allah, to your opponents: Allah, One and Alone, created you through procreation and birth throughout the earth, and settled you upon it.

... **and to Him ye will be mustered.** To Him is the final gathering – that is, to His reckoning and paradise we are to be raised and mustered together on the day of resurrection. From Him is the origin and to Him is the return.

**And they say: when is this promise, if ye be truthful? (25)**

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

**And they say** ... 'They' means the disbelievers.

... **when is this promise, if ye be truthful?** It is the question put by the deniers of the return: when will this rising take place, if you believers are truthful and there is to be a final mustering and recompense?

**Say: the knowledge is but with Allah, and I am but a clear warner. (26)**

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعْلَمُهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

**Say:** ... The address is to the Messenger.

... **the knowledge is but with Allah** ... The knowledge of the day of resurrection is held only by Allah.

... **and I am but a clear warner.** The Messenger of Allah was but a warner. He was to warn them and frighten them of the arrival of the day of resurrection when those who persist in disbelief and disobedience would be chastised. As a warner, the Messenger warned them with perfect clarity.

**So when they see it up close, awful will be the faces of those who disbelieved and it is said, 'This is what ye called for.' (27)**

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ زُلْفَةً سَيِّئَتْ وُجُوهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقِيلَ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَدْعُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

**So when they see it up close,** ... That is, when the disbelievers see the chastisement from nearby. 'They see it is given for *ra'awhu* which literally means 'they saw it' – the past tense is used to

portentify a definite future happening, as in the ayah, '*...the trumpet was blown...*' [lit: when *the trumpet is blown* in the future] ([69:13], and elsewhere).

... **awful will be the faces of those who disbelieved** ... Dejection shall cover their faces, and upon them sadness and fear shall appear.

... **and it is said**, ... As the disbelievers see the chastisement, the angels, the Messengers and the believers will say to them:

... **'This is what ye called for**. That is, 'This is the chastisement you called for.' The disbelievers had asked when the rising is to take place, urging its advancement, out of mockery.

**Say: have ye considered: were Allah to destroy me and those with me, or mercy us, who would shelter the disbelievers from a painful chastisement? (28)**

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكَنِیَ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ مَعِیَ أَوْ رَحِمَنَا فَمَنْ یُجِیْرُ  
الْكَافِرِیْنَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْیَمْرِ ﴿۲۸﴾

**Say: have ye considered** ... The Messenger was to ask the disbelievers whether they had 'looked' or considered the issue that:

... **were Allah to destroy** ... That is, cause to die.

... **me and those with me**, ... That is, the Messenger and those with him, the believers.

... **or mercy us**, ... That is, mercifully allow them to live to see the disbelievers' chastisement.

... **who would shelter the disbelievers from a painful chastisement?** In neither case would the disbelievers be benefited by a prevention of their chastisement. The disbelievers used to wish for the death of the Messenger and the believers, so as to enjoy their disbelief and idol-worship. So the ayah explains that the death of the Messenger would be of no benefit in protecting them from the chastisement of Allah that they deserved on account of their disbelief and sins.

**Say: He is the Compassionate. We believe in Him and upon Him we rely; soon ye shall know who is in a clear straying. (29)**

قُلْ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا فَسْتَعْمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ  
فِی ضَلَالٍ مُّبِیْنٍ ﴿۲۹﴾

**Say: ...** The command is to the Messenger for it is in the singular.

... **He is the Compassionate** ... It is 'the Compassionate' (*al-Rahman*) whom Muslims call upon and supplicate.

... **We believe in Him** ... Confirming His existence, His attributes, His commands and His promises.

... **and upon Him we rely;** ... In Him we rely in our affairs and to Him we entrust our needs.

... **soon ye shall know who is in a clear straying**. On the day of resurrection the disbelievers will know whose path was clearly deviated, theirs or that of the believers.

**Say: Have ye considered: if of a morning your water should have sunk into the earth, who then would bring ye visible water? (30)**

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ یَأْتِیْكُمْ بِمَآءٍ مُّعِیْنٍ  
﴿۳۰﴾

**Say: ...** The Messenger was to say to these disbelievers:

... **Have ye considered: if of a morning your water should have sunk into the earth**, ... That is: how do you disbelieve in Allah, when the water upon which you depend for your very lives is part of His affair and under His control? 'Have ye considered' means 'tell me': if one morning your water should have 'sunk into the earth' (given for *ghawran*) in such a way that you were unable to retrieve it,

... **who then would bring ye visible water?** 'Visible' is given for *ma'in*, meaning easily seen; easily digestible running water. Either way, is there any besides Allah who could recreate water?

And since there is none but Allah who could do that, how can anyone turn away from Him and disbelieve in Him?