

After Prophet Noah (AS), his sons spread out to inhabit the Earth. His eldest surviving son Yafiz went northwest towards Europe and settled there. His descendents are known as the *Japhetic* race. His middle son Sam remained in the Middle East. His descendents are known as the *Semitic* race. The youngest son Ham went south west and settled in northern Africa. His descendents are called the *Hamitic* race. The next few *ayat* describe the events of one such Semitic nation i.e. the people of *Aad*, to whom Allah (SWT) sent one of His Messengers, Hud (AS).

(50) *"And to Aad their brother Hud (AS). He said, "O my people! Worship Allah (SWT)! You have no God other than He. You are but forgers!"* To the people of Aad, Allah (SWT) sent His Messenger Hud (AS) with the same Message that worship Him alone without any partners, for you have no God except Him and all these false deities that you worship are only names that you have fabricated.

(51) *"O my people I ask of you no reward for it. My reward is only from Him, Who created me. Do you not then understand?"* i.e. I do not ask you for any recompense for my preaching, for my reward is only with Allah (SWT), so why do you not understand.

(52) *"And O my people! Ask forgiveness of your Lord and then turn towards Him in repentance, He will send upon you plenty of rain, and add strength to your strength, so do not turn away as guilty ones."* Prophet Hud (AS) asked his people to invoke Allah (SWT) for His forgiveness and to turn towards Him in sincere repentance. If they do so, then He will send upon them plenty of rain and will add strength and power to what they already had. But if they turn away then they will surely be the guilty ones.

(53) *"They said: "O Hud (AS)! You have not brought us a clear proof, and we are not going to abandon our gods because of your saying so! And we are not believers in you."* The people of Hud (AS) then replied to him that as you have not brought us a clear miracle, we

are not going to forsake our gods because of your saying so and we are not going to believe in you.

(54) *"We say nothing, but that some of our gods have seized you with evil." He said: "I call Allah (SWT) to witness and you bear witness that I am free of what you associate."* They further said that what we think is that some of our gods have afflicted you with some evil, because you denying them. Then Hud (AS) replied that I call Allah (SWT) as a witness and you also remain witness to the fact that I have no fear of those false deities that you associate with Him.

(55) *"Besides Him. So scheme against me, all together, and give me no respite."* i.e. the false deities that you worship besides Allah (SWT), and devise and plot whatever you can against me and do not give me any respite whatsoever.

(56) *"Surely I put my trust in Allah (SWT), my Lord and your Lord! There is not a living creature but He holds by its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the Straight Path."* Hud (AS) said that surely I have all my trust in Allah (SWT), Who is my Lord as well as your Lord. And there is not a single living creature creeping on this earth but Allah (SWT) controls its destiny and surely He is on the straight path. One interpretation of His straight path can be that He deals with His creatures in a straight manner i.e. in all justice. While in another interpretation it has been said that it means that Allah can be approached by His creatures by following the straight path.

(57) *"So if you turn away, still I have conveyed to you with which I was sent to you. And my Lord will make another people your successors, and you cannot do Him any harm. Surely, my Lord is Guardian over all things."* And if you turn away then know that the proof has already been established against you as I have conveyed to you with which I was sent to you. Therefore, you all are going to be destroyed for your rejection and Allah (SWT) will replace you by other men as your successors and you cannot harm Him in the least with your disbelief, for surely, My Lord is watching over all things.

(58) *"And when Our Commandment came, We delivered Hud (AS) and those who believed with him by a Mercy from Us, and We delivered them from a harsh chastisement."* When Allah's (SWT) punishment came to the people of Aad, He delivered His Messenger and those who believed with him from the punishment through His Mercy. And surely Allah (SWT) saved them from a very harsh punishment.

(59) *"And such were Aad. They rejected the revelations of their Lord and disobeyed His Messengers, and followed the command of every powerful oppressor and obstinate."* Such was the fate of the people of Aad who denied Allah's (SWT) revelations and His signs, disobeyed His Messengers and followed the path and command of powerful rebellions reprobate i.e. their chiefs.

(60) *"And a curse was made to chase them in this world and on the Day of Judgment. Behold! Surely, Aad disbelieved in their Lord. So away with Aad, the people of Hud (AS)."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) said that a curse was made to chase the people of Aad in this world and so will they be chased on the *Day of Judgment*. And no doubt, they disbelieved in their Lord. Gone are Aad, the people of Hud (AS) i.e. they have been destroyed completely.

(61) *"And to Thamud their brother Salih (AS). He said: "O my people! Worship Allah (SWT), you have no God other than Him. He brought you forth from the earth and made you dwell in it, so ask forgiveness of Him and turn to Him in repentance. Certainly, my Lord is near at hand, Answering.""* From this *ayah* till the next few *ayat* begins the description of the people of *Thamud*. Allah (SWT) said that to the people of *Thamud* He sent His Messenger Salih (AS), who was one of them. Salih (AS) also gave the same Message to them to worship Allah (SWT) alone, for it is He, Who brought you forth when you did not exist and made you dwell in this earth. So you must turn to Him in repentance and ask for His forgiveness, for surely Allah (SWT) is very near and responds to all who call upon Him.

(62) *"They said: "O Salih (AS)! You have been a source of hope among us, before this! Do you forbid us to worship that which our fathers worshipped? And certainly, we are in disquieting doubt as to that to which you call us.""* The people of *Thamud* replied to Salih (AS) that before this we had placed all hopes on you, for we wished you to be our chief.

But now you want to forbid us from worshipping those deities which our forefather have been worshipping. Thus surely we are in perturbing doubt concerning that to which you are calling us.

(63) *"He said: "O my people! Just consider, if I was on Bayyinah (a clear proof) from my Lord, and He gave me a Mercy from Him,, who then shall help me against Allah (SWT), if I disobey Him? So you would add nothing for me except loss and disaster."* Again notice the use of the word *Bayyinah* i.e. self-evident truth, for Allah's Messengers. Prophet Salih (AS) told his people to consider that if I was on self-evident truth from my Lord and He granted me His Mercy i.e. chose me as His Messenger and revealed His revelations unto me. He invited the disbelievers to use their reason and realize why do they reject him and belie him when they had known him since his childhood and had always thought that he would rise to be a great reformer and leader of their people. Further Salih (AS) asked them that tell me if I disobey my Lord then who will help me against Him, and certainly you are adding nothing for me except my perdition.

(64) *"And O my people! This she-camel of Allah (SWT) is a sign for you, so leave her to graze on Allah's (SWT) earth, and do not touch her with an evil intention, lest a near chastisement will overtake you."* Then Prophet Salih (AS) showed to his people the she-camel of Allah (SWT) as a sign for them to believe, and asked them to leave her alone and let her graze on Allah's (SWT) earth. Further he warned them not to molest her best on instant scourge should fall upon them.

(65) *"But they killed her. So he said: "Enjoy yourselves in your dwellings for three days. This is a promise that will not be broken.""* The people of Salih (AS) disobeyed him and killed the she-camel. Thus he gave them the news of Allah's (SWT) punishment and told them that they can enjoy themselves in their homes for three days and certainly this is a promise which will not be belied.

(66) *"So when Our Commandment came, We delivered Salih (AS) and those who believed with him by a Mercy from Us, and from the humiliation of that Day. Verily, your Lord, He is the Strong, the Mighty."* When Allah's (SWT) punishment came upon the people of *Thamud*, Prophet Salih (AS) and those who believed with him were saved from

the punishment and the humiliation of that day by His Mercy. And verily Allah (SWT) is All-Strong and Mighty.

(67) *“And the evil-doers were seized by an awful cry, so they lay prostrated in their dwellings.”* i.e. the evil-doers were seized by an awful killing cry, thus they became dead and lay crouching in their homes.

(68) *“As if they had never dwelled there. Behold! Verily, Thamud disbelieved in their Lord. So away with Thamud!”* i.e. they became as if they had never lived there. And no doubt, these people of *Thamud* also disbelieved in their Lord and thus they were destroyed completely.

(69) *“And verily, there came Our Messengers to Abraham (AS) with glad tidings. They said, peace! He answered, peace! and made no delay to bring a roasted calf.”* After mentioning the stories of the three pre-Abrahamic Prophets and their people, here is a brief mention of an event relating to Prophet Abraham (AS). It also seems appropriate to point out here that there is a basic difference in the description of the stories of other Prophets and their people and the story of Prophet Abraham (AS), for there is no mention whatsoever regarding the people of Abraham (AS). This *ayah* relates to the event when Allah (SWT) sent His angels to Prophet Abraham (AS) to give him the good news of the birth of his son and grand son and also to inform him of the destruction of the cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* i.e. the dwellings of the people of Lot (AS). Thus Allah (SWT) said that He sent His Messengers i.e. angels to Abraham (AS) with glad tidings. They greeted him, and in reply he also greeted them and without any delay brought a roasted calf to entertain them.

(70) *“But when he saw their hands not reaching towards it, he was suspicious of them, and was afraid of them. They said: “Fear not, we have been sent to the people of Lot (AS).”*” When Prophet Abraham (AS) saw that his two guests were not reaching for the calf, he became suspicious of them and felt fear in his heart. This was because in those days if anyone visited someone’s house with an intention to kill or harm him then they would not eat from his house. But the angels asked him not to be afraid for they were angels sent against the people of Lot (AS).

(71) *“And his wife was standing, and she laughed. Then We gave her glad tidings of Isaac (AS), and after Isaac (AS), of Jacob (AS).”* At that time the wife of Prophet Abraham (AS), Sarah (AS) was listening to this conversation from behind a curtain and she laughed when she saw her husband being afraid of the angels. Then the angels gave her the good news of the birth of her son Isaac (AS) and her grandson Jacob (AS).

(72) *“She said: “Woe unto me! Shall I bear a child while I am an old woman, and here is my husband, an old man? Verily! This is a strange thing!”*” She became astonished at this news, for she said that how can I bear a child when I have become old and my husband is an old man. This is a strange thing indeed that you have said.

(73) *“They said: “Do you wonder at Allah’s (SWT) Command? The Mercy of Allah (SWT) and His Blessings be on you, O people of household. Surely, He is Praiseworthy, Glorious.”*” Then angels replied to them that O people of Abraham’s household, do you wonder at the Command of Allah (SWT), for He is able to do all things and be His Mercy and blessings upon you. Surely, He is Praiseworthy and Glorious. This *ayah* also refutes the claim of the *Shi’ites* that the word *Ahl Al-Bayt* does not include the Prophet’s (SAW) wives. Here the same word was used for the wife of Prophet Abraham (AS) as it is used in surah *Al-Ahzab* for the wives of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Thus we believe that the word *Ahl Al-Bayt* includes the wives of the Prophet (SAW) as well as Ali (RA), Fatima (RA) and their sons, Hassan (RA) and Hussain (RA).

(74) *“Then when the fear had departed from Abraham (AS), and the glad tidings came to him, he began to dispute with Us concerning the people of Lot (AS).”* Afterwards Abraham (AS) felt no more fear, for he came to know that they were angels sent by Allah (SWT). Then the angels gave him the good news of his child and grandchild and the news of the destruction of the people of Lot (AS). This made Prophet Abraham (AS) sad and it is narrated by Sa’id ibn Jubayr (RA) that Abraham (AS) asked the angels that *“Will you destroy a town that has three hundred believers in it?”* They said *“No”* He then said, *“Will you destroy a town with two hundred believers in it?”* They said *“No”* This continued until he said *“five?”* But they still replied *“No”*.¹ This is what this *ayah* refers to when it stated that Prophet Abraham (AS) disputed them concerning the people of Lot (AS).

(75) *"Verily, Abraham (AS) was forbearing, always invoking Allah (AS) and turning towards Him."* i.e. his being tender hearted and his kindness was the reason of his dispute concerning the people of Lot (AS).

(76) *"O Abraham (AS)! Leave this alone. Surely, the Commandment of your Lord has already come, and there will come a punishment for them which cannot be averted."* In the end of the dispute, it was said to Abraham (AS) turn away from the matter concerning the people of Lot (AS), for the Command of Allah (AS) had already come and now there will come upon them a punishment which will not be averted.

(77) *"And when Our Messengers came to Lot (AS), he was grieved on their account and distressed for them, and he said: "This is a distressful day.""* Now from this *ayah* begins the stories of the Prophets of the Post-Abrahamic era with the exception of Lot (AS), who was Abraham's (AS) nephew. After the angels left Prophet Abraham (AS), they came to Prophet Lot (AS). They came to him as handsome young men. Thus when Lot (AS) saw them, he grieved and felt distressed lest his people should approach them to commit sodomy with them. Thus he said that this indeed is a very woeful day.

(78) *"And his people came to him, running towards him, and before then they have been doing evil deeds, he said: "O my people! These are my daughters, they are purer for you. So fear Allah (SWT) and do not humiliate me regarding my guests! Is there not among you any right-minded man?""* When the news of the handsome boys reached the people of Lot (AS), they came running towards his house and they had been committing evil deeds before that. Then Prophet Lot (AS) tried to convince them and direct them towards his daughters i.e. through marriage, and told them that it is much more purer and lawful for them. Here his daughters may also mean the women of his nation, for verily a Prophet is like a father for all of his people. Then he asked them to fear Allah (SWT) and not humiliate him regarding his guests i.e. the angels. Is there not any right-minded man among you?

(79) *"They said: "Surely you know that we have no right to your daughters, and surely you know well what we want!""* They said to Lot (AS) that we have no need of your

daughters i.e. we do not desire them and you very well know what we are here for.

(80) *"He said: "Would that I had power against you, or might have some strong support for refuge.""* i.e. if I had power of men for myself then I would surely have overpowered you or that I might had strong support for refuge. In this regard, there is a hadith that the Prophet (SAW) said: *"May Allah's (SWT) Mercy be upon Lot (AS), for verily he betook himself to a powerful support"* i.e. Allah (SWT)². Therefore, he already had the support of All-Mighty Allah (SWT), but it was just because of his distress that he desired for physical strength and power.

(81) *"They said: "O Lot (AS)! Verily, we are the Messengers from your Lord! They shall not reach you! So travel with your family in a part of the night, and let not any of you turn around, except your wife, surely, whatsoever befalls them, will befall her. Verily, their appointed time is the morning. Is not the morning near?"*" The two angels told Lot (AS) that they are the Messengers of Allah (SWT) and that these people will never bring him any harm. They further told him to leave the city along with his family, before the end of the night and not to turn around and look back, except for his wife, for surely whatsoever will befall on these people will befall on her. And verily, the appointed time of their punishment is morning; therefore hasten and leave the place, for morning is very near.

(82) *"So when Our Commandment came, We turned it upside down, and rained on them stones of baked clay, one after the other."* When Allah's (SWT) Command came, He overturned the city upside down and rained on them stones of baked clay, one after the other which destroyed them completely. The word used here for baked clay is 'Sijjeel' which is a Persian word and it refers to the clay or sand which, when mixed with the droplets of rain and then dried in the heat of the sun, becomes hardened like small stones.

(83) *"Marked from your Lord, and they are not ever far from the evil-doers."* This refers to the disbelievers of *Quraysh* that Allah (SWT) has marked these places for them which are not far from them and they can visit them and see for their own eyes as to what happened to those who disbelieved in the past.

(84) *"And to the Madyan (We sent) their brother Shuaib (AS). He said: "O my people! Worship Allah (SWT), you have no God other than He, and do not give short measure and weight. Surely I see you in prosperity; and I fear for you the chastisement of a Day that will encircle you."* As mentioned earlier, the people of *Madyan* were the descendents of *Madyan*, the son of *Midyan*, the son of Prophet Abraham (AS). They were the tribe of Arabs who lived between the land of Hijaz and Syria and as it was on the crossroads of these two path ways, they benefited the most from trade of the passing by caravans and thus it made them a prosper and wealthy nation. Thus whenever the caravan of the *Quraysh* left *Makkah* for Syria, they would always pass through this area as well the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Prophet Shuaib (AS) was also from one of the tribes of *Madyan*, to whom he was sent by Allah (SWT) to proclaim His Message. Thus, he called them to the Oneness of Allah (SWT) like all other Prophets before him and commanded them not to diminish measure and weight. Then he said to them that I see you are in prosperity, but I fear for you the punishment of a Day that will encircle you i.e. you will not be able to escape it.

(85) *"And O my people! Give full measure and weight in justice and diminish not the goods of the people, and do not make mischief in the land."* He said to his people that they should give full measure and full weight in their dealings with people and should not diminish their good and that they should not go about making mischief on earth.

(86) *"What is left over by Allah (SWT) is better for you, if you are believers. And I am not a guardian over you."* i.e. take whatever Allah (SWT) has provided you of the profit, if you indeed are believers in Him and surely O my people I am not a guardian over you, for I have just been sent as a Warner.

(87) *"They said: "O Shuaib (AS)! Does your prayer command you that we abandon that which our fathers have worshipped, or that we should not do what we like with our goods? Surely, you are the forbearer, the right-minded!"*" The people of Shuaib (AS) asked him that does your prayer command ordains upon you that we should forsake and abandon the gods that our forefathers have worshipped and that we do not have any

right to spend our belongings and riches in a way that we like to do? This is actually the basic principle of Capitalism viz., the sacred right of ownership. In such a state a person is free to spend his riches and his wealth in a manner that suits his whim. Then, in the end they said to Shuaib (AS), in a way of mocking at him that it seems only you are the clement and the right-minded person amongst us all.

(88) *"He said: "O my people! Just consider, if I was on Bayyinah (self-evident truth) from my Lord, and He has provided me a good sustenance from Him. And I desire not to stop you and then myself do that which I forbid you. I desire nothing but reform so far as I am able. I draw strength and ability from none except Allah (SWT). In Him I have put my trust and to Him I repent.""* Prophet Shuaib (AS) said to his people to consider that if I was already on the self-evident truth from my Lord and He has provided me with a goodly sustenance i.e. His revelations, then how can I concede to your unlawful acts. Here the sustenance from Allah (SWT) may mean His revelations and guidance, which are indeed a source of provision and sustenance for ones soul. Prophet Shuaib (AS) further said to them that I do not desire that I stop you from something then I do the same thing myself and surely I do not intend anything but to reform you for your betterment as much as I can. Surely, I draw my strength and ability from none except Allah (SWT) and I have placed my trust in Him and to Him is my final return.

(89) *"And O my people! Let not my enmity incite you so that there befall you the like of that which befell the people of Noah (AS) or the people of Hud (AS) or the people of Salih (AS), and the people of Lot (AS) are not far off from you!"* Prophet Shuaib (AS) then said to his people that O my people beware that your enmity towards me because of my preaching to you, does not incite you to persist in your corruption and disbelief. For if you continue in your disbelief, you might also suffer the same torment and punishment which befell on the people of Noah (AS), Hud (AS) and Salih (AS) and also the people of Lot (AS) who are not far from you. This might be because the people of Shuaib (AS) were not located far off from where the people of Lot (AS) used to live or it could refer to the their relatively close period of time.

(90) *"And ask forgiveness of your Lord and turn unto Him in repentance. Verily, my Lord is Most Merciful, Most Loving."* Prophet Shuaib (AS) advised his people to invoke Allah (SWT) for His forgiveness, for surely He is the Most Merciful and the Most loving.

(91) *"They said: "O Shuaib (AS)! We do not understand much of what you say, and certainly we see you weak among us. Were it not for your family, we would have stoned you, for you are not strong against us.""* The people of Shuaib (AS) replied to him that O Shuaib (AS), we really do not understand what you are saying to us and surely we see that you are one of the weak amongst us. And had we not considered your family then we surely would have stoned you to death, for you are certainly not strong against us. This *ayah* was indirectly addressed to the *Quraysh* of *Makkah*, who also used to say to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that were it not for your clan and Abu Talib, we would have killed you long ago. After the death of Abu Talib, they even tried to kill him by sending their best men to assassinate the Prophet (SAW), but Allah (SWT) informed His Prophet (SAW) of their evil intentions and thus their plans were made unsuccessful.

(92) *"He said: "O my people! Is my family more esteemed by you than Allah (SWT)? And you put Him behind your backs. Verily, my Lord encircles all that you do."* Shuaib (AS) said to them that do you consider my family or clan as having more honor and esteem than Allah (SWT)? Then he said to them that you have forgotten about your Lord, thus you cast him away behind your backs. But you should know that Allah (SWT) encircles all that you do i.e. you cannot do anything without His permission.

(93) *"And O my people! Strive your utmost, and I too am striving. You will soon come to know on whom comes the punishment that will humiliate him, and who is a liar! And watch! I too am watching with you."* He said to them that you strive your utmost and do whatever you can against me, for certainly I will try my best against you, and that soon you will know on whom comes the humiliating punishment and who is a liar. Therefore, wait and watch, for I am also waiting with you.

(94) *"And when Our Commandment came, We saved Shuaib (AS) and those who believed with him by a Mercy from Us. And an awful cry seized the evil-doers, and they lay prostrate in their homes."* The fate of the people of Shuaib (AS) was similar to that of the previous

nations and they were seized by an awful blast that killed them all and they lay dead in their homes. But Allah (SWT) by His Mercy saved His Prophet and those who believed with Him.

(95) *“As if they had never dwelt there! So away with Madyan! As the Thamud had been done away.”* Thus they became as if they had never lived there, and they were destroyed completely, just like the people of *Thamud*.

(96) *“And indeed We sent Moses (AS) with Our signs and a clear authority.”* The next few ayat briefly mention Prophet Moses (AS) and the Pharaoh. Allah (SWT) said that He sent Moses (AS) with His signs and a clear authority from Him.

(97) *“To Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they followed the command of Pharaoh, and the command of Pharaoh was not rightly guided.”* Moses (AS) went to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Allah’s (SWT) signs, but they did not follow him and instead followed the misguided commands of Pharaoh.

(98) *“He will go ahead of his people on the Day of Resurrection, and will lead them into the Fire, and evil indeed is the place to which they are led.”* i.e. the Pharaoh will lead his people on the *Day of Judgment* to the Hellfire and surely it is an evil place to which they are led.

(99) *“A curse was made to chase them in this and on the Day of Resurrection. How bad is the gift offered.”* i.e. A curse is made to chase such people in this world and in the Hereafter, and what a bad gift and offering is to be received by them.

(100) *“These are some of the news of the towns which We relate unto you; some of them standing, and some were annihilated.”* i.e. these are some of the news of the townships that We relate to you O Muhammad (SAW). Some of these are still standing, while others have become like a reaped harvest i.e. they have completely vanished.

(101) *“We did not wronged them, but they wronged themselves. And their gods whom they called upon besides Allah (SWT), availed them nothing when the Command of your Lord came.”*

And they added to them nothing but ruin." i.e. Allah (SWT) did not wrong them, but they wronged themselves. They are themselves responsible for this punishment upon them. And when His Command came for their punishment, their false gods whom they used to call upon besides Him availed them naught and they added to them nothing but ruin.

(102) *"Such is the Seizure of your Lord when He seizes the townships while they are doing evil. Verily, His Seizing is painful, and severe."* Such is the seizing of Allah (SWT) when He decides to seize a town, while its inhabitants are none but evil-doers. Surely His seizing and punishment is stern and harrowing.

(103) *"Indeed in that is a lesson for those who fear the chastisement of the Hereafter. That is a Day mankind will be gathered, and that is a Day of presence."* In all these stories and news of the past nations, there is a lesson for those who fear the punishment of the Hereafter. Otherwise if a person is not concerned that he will be answerable in the Hereafter for all that he did in this life, then he will never come to believe. Then Allah (SWT) said that it will be the Day when all will be gathered together and present before their Lord.

(104) *"And We delay it but for a fixed term."* i.e. Allah (SWT) will not postpone it, but for an appointed term that has already been fixed.

(105) *"On the Day when it comes, no soul shall speak except by His permission. Some among them will be wretched and some blessed."* This *ayah* states that on that Day, no soul will be able to say anything, except with Allah's (SWT) permission, and among these people will be some who will be wretched and some who will be blessed.

(106) *As for those who are wretched, they will be in the Fire, wherein there shall be sighing and moaning for them."* i.e. those who are wretched and doomed will be placed in the Hellfire and therein they shall have nothing but groaning and wailing.

(107) *"They will dwell therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord wills. Verily, your Lord does what He wills."* i.e. they shall remain in the Hellfire as long as the heavens and the earth will endure, except what He wills, for surely

He does whatever He wills. Their remaining in the Hellfire till the enduring of the heavens and the earth means that they will remain therein for ever, for such sentences or phrases were common with the Arabs to describe something that would last forever. But there are also some Scholars who have deduced from this *ayah* that although the period for the existence of Hellfire is much more than we can even imagine, yet it is not eternal, and that all its inhabitants will be destroyed in the end. But most of the traditional scholars have not agreed with their views.³

(108) *“And those who are blessed, they will be in Paradise. They will dwell therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord wills, a gift without an end.”* But for those who are blessed, they will dwell in Paradise as long as the heavens and the earth remain, except for what Allah (SWT) decrees. Then in the end Allah (SWT) said that this Paradise is a gift for them which will never end. This *ayah* also indicates that the enduring of the heavens and the earth is used idiomatically to describe something that will last forever.

(109) *“So do not be in doubt concerning that which they worship. They worship nothing but what their fathers worshipped before. And verily, We shall repay them in full their portion undiminished.”* Although the *ayah* is addressed to the Prophet (SAW), but it includes all those who believe. Allah (SWT) said that O Muhammad (SAW) do not be in any doubt about that which these people worship, for they worship nothing but what their forefathers worshipped before them, and surely We shall pay them in full their portion i.e. their share of punishment.

(110) *“Indeed, We gave the Book to Moses (AS), but differences arose therein, and had not a Word gone forth from your Lord, it would have been decided between them, and they are surely in perturbing doubt about it.”* Allah (SWT) states that He gave the Book i.e. the Torah, to Moses (AS), but still people differed about it. Thus He said that if the punishment had not already been delayed till an appointed time, then He would certainly have decided the matter for them and punish them. And surely they are in disquieting doubt about it.

(111) *“And verily, to each one of them your Lord will pay them in full for their deeds. Surely, He is Aware of what they do.”* And surely Allah (SWT) will repay each one of them in full in the Hereafter, for all that they have done. And verily, He is aware of all that they do.

(112) *“So you stand firm as you have been commanded and those who turn in repentance with you, and do not exceed the limits. Verily, He is Seer of what you do.”* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAW) and the believers who turn to Him in repentance, to stand firm and always be upright according to His *Deen*. Further they were asked not to exceed the limits of Allah (SWT), even if it is directed against a disbeliever, and know that He sees all that they do, for nothing is hidden from Him.

(113) *“And incline not towards those who are evil-doers, lest the Fire should touch you, and you have no protectors other than Allah (SWT), and then you would not be helped.”* Further Allah (SWT) commands them not to incline towards or put trust in the evil-doers, whether they be their fathers or their relatives, lest the Fire will seize them i.e. in the Hereafter. But if they do so then know that their will be no protector other than Allah (SWT) who can save them, nor any helper who can remove punishment from them.

(114) *“And perform regular prayers at both ends of the day and in some parts of the night. Verily, the good deeds wash off the bad deeds. That is a reminder for the mindful.”* And establish regular prayers at the both ends of the day i.e. morning and evening. Before the five prayers were made obligatory at the event of Prophets ascension to the heaven, only two prayers, one in the morning and the other in the evening, were ordained for the believers. Then there are prayers in some parts of the night as Allah (SWT) said in another *ayah*: *“Prostrate before Him at night and glorify Him during the long hours of night.”*⁴ Then it was said that surely the performance of good deeds washes away the bad deeds. This is as the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: *“Do you think that if there was flowing river at the door of anyone of you and he bathed in it five times everyday, would there be any dirt left on him?”* They (Companions (RA)) said: *“No, O Messenger of Allah (SAW)”* He said: *“This is like the five daily prayers, for Allah (SWT) uses them to wipe*

away the sins and wrongdoings.”⁵ In the end Allah (SWT) said that this indeed is a reminder for those who are thoughtful.

(115) *“And be patient, for verily, Allah (SWT) will not waste the reward of the good-doers.”*

(116) *“If only there were among the generations before you, men possessing a remnant of wisdom, prohibiting from corruption in the earth, except only a few among them whom We delivered. But the evil-doers followed the luxuries they were given, and were guilty.”* Allah (SWT) said that why were not there any good and wise people among the previous generations before you, who would have prohibited them from making corruption and mischief in the earth, except for a few, whom We saved from the punishment. But the rest of them were evil-doers who only went for the luxuries of this material world provided for them and they definitely became guilty.

(117) *“And your Lord is not such that He would destroy the towns unjustly, while their people were righteous.”* i.e. Allah (SWT) does not destroy any town or city unjustly, while its inhabitants are righteous, for He never wrongs His creatures.

(118) *“And if your Lord had so willed, He could surely have made mankind one single community, but they will not cease to disagree.”* i.e. if Allah (SWT) wanted to make all mankind a single community, an Ummah, He would have done so. But they will never cease to disagree between themselves i.e. they will always differ in their religions, beliefs and opinions. But a question here arises as to why do these differences occur. The reason is that this world has been made a test by Allah (SWT) for all mankind, thus He does not compel anyone to do something. The very test necessitates that they be given the freedom of choice under which they could do whatever good or bad they wish to do. Then, we know that human temperaments differ and their ways differ. Thus there will always be a difference of opinion among different people.

(119) *“Except on whom your Lord has Mercy and for this did He create them. And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled that verily, I shall fill Hell with Jinns and men all together.”* i.e. mankind will never cease to differ except those on whom Allah (SWT) bestows His

Mercy and that very freedom of choice and action is the purpose of their creation. And the word of Allah (SWT) is going to be fulfilled that surely He will fill Hell with *Jinn* and men all together . After been given the freedom of choice and actions, the guilty will be punished while the righteous will be rewarded by their Lord.

(120) *"And all that We relate to you of the news of the Messengers is in order that We may strengthen your heart thereby. And in this has come to you the truth, the sermon and a reminder for the believers."* Allah (SWT) said to His Messenger (SAW) that all these news of the Messengers have been revealed to you so that to strengthen your heart. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Companions (RA) were severely tortured and persecuted by the disbelievers thus Allah (SWT) revealed these stories to them to comfort them and that they should know that all the Messengers and their companions before them were similarly persecuted and tortured. But eventually Allah (SWT) delivered them from their sufferings and it was they who became successful in the end. Then Allah (SWT) said that surely, in these news is the truth, a sermon and a reminder for those who believe.

(121) *"And say to those who do not believe: "Strive your utmost, We too are striving."* The Prophet (SAW) was asked to tell the disbelievers that you strive your utmost and do whatever you can against me and my followers, for certainly we will strive to the best of our abilities against you.

(122) *"And you wait ! We (too) are waiting."* i.e. for Allah's (SWT) decision.

(123) *"And to Allah (SWT) belongs the unseen of the heavens and the earth, and to Him return all affairs. So worship Him and put your trust in Him. And your Lord is not unaware of what you do."* i.e. all the unseen of the heavens and the earth only belongs to Allah (SWT) and all the matters are finally referred to Him for decision. Therefore, only He should be worshipped and His bondsmen should put all their trust in Him alone, for surely, He is aware of all their deeds.

Foot Notes

[1] Refer to At-Tabari 15:403 for complete text of this hadith.

[2] At-Tirmidhi no. 3116.

[3] There is a widespread misconception about Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) that he held that the Hellfire is going to end and is not eternal but what we find from his books is that all he said was that the punishment of Hellfire for some of its inhabitants will come to an end e.g. the disobedient among the people of Tawhid, and he never believed that the Hellfire itself will come to an end or that the punishment will cease for the unbelievers and polytheists. He said: “The Salaf of this nation, its Imams, and the whole Ahl As-Sunnah wa Al-Jama’ah are agreed that there are some things from the creation that will not come to an end in their entirety like Paradise, Hellfire, the Throne, and others. No one believed that all of the creation would come to an end except for a group from the People of innovated speech and those who agreed with them from amongst the Mu`tazila and their likes. This is an invalid opinion which contradicts the Book of Allah (SWT), the Sunnah of His Messenger (SAW) and the consensus of the nation and its Imams.” [Bayaan Talbees al-Jahmiyyah (1/851)]

[4] Surah Ad-Dahr(76): 26.

[5] Sahih Al-Bukhari no. 527.