

Sura 27 - The Ant

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THE CHAPTER OF THE ANT

(XXVII. Mecca.)

IN the name of the merciful and compassionate God. TA SIN. Those are the signs of the Koran and the perspicuous Book; a guidance and glad tidings to the believers, who are steadfast at prayer, and give alms, and of the hereafter are sure; verily, those who believe not in the hereafter we have made seemly for them their works, and they shall wander blindly on! These are they who shall have an evil torment, and they in the hereafter shall be those who most lose! Verily, thou dost meet with this Koran from the wise, the knowing One! When Moses said to his people, 'Verily, I perceive a fire, I will bring you therefrom news; or I will bring you a burning brand; haply ye may be warmed.' But when he came to it he was called to, 'Blessed be He who is in the fire, and he who is about it! and celebrated be the praises of God, the Lord of the worlds! O Moses! verily, I am God, the mighty, wise; throw down thy staff!' and when he saw it quivering, as though it were a snake, he turned back fleeing, and did not return. 'O Moses! fear not; verily, as for me-apostles fear not with me; save only those who have done wrong and then substitute good for evil; for, verily, I am forgiving, merciful! but put thy hand in thy bosom, it shall come forth white without hurt;-one of nine signs to Pharaoh and his people; verily, they are a people who act abominably.' And when our signs came to them visibly, they said, 'This is obvious sorcery!' and they gainsaid them-though their souls made sure of them unjustly, haughtily; but, behold what was the end of the evildoers!

And we gave David and Solomon knowledge; and they both said, 'Praise belongs to God, who hath preferred us over many of His servants who believe!'

And Solomon was David's heir; and said, 'O ye folk! we have been taught the speech of birds, and we have been given everything; verily, this is an obvious grace!'

And assembled for Solomon were his hosts of the jinns, and men, and birds, and they were marshalled; until they came upon the valley of the ants. Said an ant, 'O ye ants! go into your dwellings, that Solomon and his hosts crush you not while they do not perceive.' And he smiled, laughing at her speech, and said, 'O Lord! excite me to be thankful for Thy favour, wherewith Thou hast favoured me and my parents, and to do righteousness which may please Thee; and make me enter into Thy mercy amongst Thy righteous servants!' And he reviewed the birds, and said, 'How is it I see not the hoopoe? is he then amongst the absent? I will surely torment him with a severe torment; or I will surely slaughter him; or he shall bring me obvious authority.'

And he tarried not long, and said, 'I have compassed what ye compassed not; for I bring you from Seba a sure information: verily, I found a woman ruling over them, and she was given all things, and she had a mighty throne; and I found her and her people adoring the sun instead of God, for Satan had made seemly to them their works, and turned them from the path, so that they are not guided.'

Will they not adore God who brings forth the secrets in the heavens, and knows what they hide and what they manifest?— God, there is no god but He, the Lord of the mighty throne!

Said he, 'We will see whether thou hast told the truth, or whether thou art of those who lie. Go with this my letter and throw it before them, then turn back away from them, and see what they return.' Said she, 'O ye chiefs! verily, a noble letter has been thrown before me. It is from Solomon, and, verily, it is, "In the name of the merciful and compassionate God. Do not rise up against me, but come to me resigned!"' She said, ye chiefs! pronounce sentence for me in my affair. I never decide an affair until ye testify for me.' They said, 'We are endowed with strength, and endowed with keen violence; but the bidding is thine, see then what it is that thou wilt bid.'

She said, 'Verily, kings when they enter a city despoil it, and make the mighty ones of its people the meanest; thus it is they do! So, verily, I am going to send to them a gift, and will wait to see with what the messengers return.'

And when he came to Solomon, he said, 'Do ye proffer me wealth, when what God has given me is better than what He has given you? nay, ye in your gifts rejoice! return to them, for we will surely come to them with hosts which they cannot confront; and we will surely drive them out therefrom mean and made small!'

Said he, 'O ye chiefs! which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me resigned?'

Said a demon of the ginn, 'I will bring thee it before thou canst rise up from thy place, for I therein am strong and faithful.' He who had the knowledge of the Book said, 'I will bring it to thee before thy glance can turn.' And when he saw it settled down beside him, he said, 'This is of my Lord's grace, that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful, and he who is grateful is only grateful for his own soul, and he who is ungrateful,— verily, my Lord is rich and generous.'

Said he, 'Disguise for her her throne; let us see whether she is guided, or whether she is of those who are not guided.' And when she came it was said, 'Was thy throne like this?' She said, 'It might be it;' and we were given knowledge before her, but we were resigned. But that which she served beside God turned her away; verily, she was of the unbelieving people. And it was said to her, 'Enter the court;' and when she saw it, she reckoned it to be an abyss of water, and she uncovered her legs. Said he, 'Verily, it is a court paved with glass!' Said she, 'My Lord! verily, I have wronged myself, but I am resigned with Solomon to God the Lord of the worlds!' And we sent unto Thamud their brother Zali'h, 'Serve God;' but behold, they were two parties who contended! Said he, 'O my people! why do ye hasten on evil acts before good deeds? why do ye not ask forgiveness of God? haply ye may obtain mercy.' They said, 'We have taken an augury concerning thee and those who are with thee. Said he, 'Your augury is in God's hands; nay, but ye are a people who are tried!'

And there were in the city nine persons who despoiled the land and did not right. Said they, 'Swear to each other by God, we will surely fall on him by night and on his people; then we will surely say unto his next of kin, "We

witnessed not the destruction of his people, and we do surely tell the truth!'"

And they plotted a plot, and we plotted a plot, but they did not perceive.

Behold, how was the end of their plot, that we destroyed them and their people all together! Thus are their houses overturned, for that they were unjust; verily, in that is a sign to people who do know!

But we saved those who believed and who did fear. And Lot when he said to his people, 'Do ye approach an abominable sin while ye can see? do ye indeed approach men lustfully rather than women? nay! ye are a people who are ignorant.' But the answer of his people was only to say, 'Drive out Lot's family from your city! verily, they are a folk who would keep pure.'

But we saved him and his family except his wife, her we destined to be of those who lingered; and we rained down upon them rain, and evil was the rain of those who were warned.

Say, 'Praise belongs to God; and peace be upon His servants whom He has chosen!

Is God best, or what they associate with Him?' He who created the heavens and the earth; and sends down upon you from the heaven water; and we cause to grow therewith gardens fraught with beauty; ye could not cause the trees thereof to grow! Is there a god with God? nay, but they are a people who make peers with Him! He who made the earth, settled, and placed amongst it rivers; and placed upon it firm mountains; and placed between the two seas a barrier; is there a god with God? nay, but most of them know not! He who answers the distressed when he calls upon Him and removes the evil; and makes you successors in the earth; is there a god with God? little is it that ye are mindful. He who guides you in the darkness, of the land and of the sea; and who sends winds as glad tidings before His mercy; is there a god with God? exalted be God above what they associate with Him! He who began the creation and then will make it return again; and who provides you from the heaven and the earth; is there a god with God? so bring your proofs if ye do speak the truth! Say, 'None in the heavens or the earth know the unseen save only God; but they perceive not when they shall be raised!'-nay, but their knowledge attains to somewhat of the hereafter; nay, but they are in doubt concerning it! nay, but they are blind!

And those who disbelieved said, 'What! when we have become dust and our fathers too, shall we indeed be brought forth? We were promised this, we and our fathers before us, this is nothing but old folks' tales!'

Say, 'Journey on through the land and see how was the end of the sinners! and grieve not for them, and be not straitened at what they plot.'

They say, 'When shall this threat be if ye do tell the truth?' Say; 'It may be that there is pressing close behind you a part of what ye would hasten on! But, verily, thy Lord is full of grace to men, but most of them will not be thankful; and, verily, thy Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest; and there is no secret thing in the heaven or the earth, save that it is in the perspicuous Book!

Verily, this Koran relates to the people of Israel most of that whereon they do dispute; and, verily, it is a guidance and a mercy to the believers. Verily, thy Lord decides between them by His judgment, for He is mighty, knowing. Rely thou then upon God, verily, thou art standing on obvious truth. Verily, thou canst not make the dead to hear, and thou canst not make the deaf to hear the

call when they turn their backs on thee; nor art thou a guide to the blind, out of their error: thou canst only make to hear such as believe in our signs, and such as are resigned.

And when the sentence falls upon them we will bring forth a beast out of the earth that shall speak to them, (and say) that, 'Men of our signs would not be sure.'

And the day when we will gather from every nation a troop of those who said our signs were lies; and they shall be marshalled; until they come, and He will say, 'Did ye say my signs were lies, when ye had compassed no knowledge thereof? or what is it that ye were doing?' and the sentence shall fall upon them for that they did wrong, and they shall not have speech.

Did they not see that we have made the night for them to rest in, and the day to see by? verily, in that are signs to people who believe.

And the day when the trumpet shall be blown and all who are in the heavens and the earth shall be startled, save whom God pleases! and all shall come abjectly to Him. And thou shalt see the mountains, which thou dost deem solid, pass away like the passing of the clouds;-the work of God who orders all things; verily, He is well aware of what ye do!

He who brings a good deed shall have better than it; and from the alarm of that day they shall be safe: but those who bring an evil deed shall be thrown down upon their faces in the fire. Shall ye be rewarded save for what ye have done?

I am bidden to serve the Lord of this country who has made it sacred, and whose are all things; and I am bidden to be of those who are resigned, and to recite the Koran; A an; and he who is guided he is only guided for himself; and he who errs, say, 'I am only of those who warn!'

And say, 'Praise be to God, He will show you His signs, and ye shall recognise them; for thy Lord is not heedless of what ye do!'