



## CHAPTER 28

### *Al-Qaṣaṣ: The Narrative*

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 9 sections; 88 verses)

This chapter known as *The Narrative* is devoted chiefly to Moses' story and draws attention pointedly to Moses' prophecy regarding the Prophet's advent. It is said by some to have been revealed to the Holy Prophet when fleeing from Makkah on his way to Madinah, at a place known as Jahfah (I'Ab-AH). According to others, however, only v. 85, which predicted a triumphal return of the Holy Prophet to Makkah, was revealed there (AH). The latter seems to be the correct view. See introductory note on the 26th chapter.

The Prophet's likeness to Moses is the chief theme of this chapter, and the revelation of Moses is here spoken of as clear evidence of the truth of the revelation of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. The first four sections of the chapter are taken up with a recital of the chief incidents of the life of Moses from the time of his birth to the time that he successfully led the Israelites out of Egypt, together with the drowning of the hosts of Egypt. Here we find many of the details of this period not given elsewhere. Moses' narrative is followed by showing in the fifth section that a prophet like him had now appeared, to whose truth the revelation of Moses bore a clear testimony. The sixth section upholds the truth of the revelation of the Qur'ān, while the seventh shows that its opponents will be humbled. The eighth instances Korah, whose very wealth led to his ruin, and is a warning to the opponents against placing too great faith upon earthly possessions, or it may be a warning to the Muslims against the time when they will grow rich and powerful. The chapter ends with a declaration of the ultimate triumph of the Holy Prophet, and of his triumphal entry into the very city from whence he was now being expelled.

## SECTION 1: History of Moses

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ١

1 Benignant, Hearing, Knowing God!<sup>a</sup>

طَسَمَ ١

2 These are the verses of the Book that makes manifest.

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ٢

3 We recite to thee the story of Moses and Pharaoh with truth, for a people who believe.

تَنزِيلًا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ  
بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ٣

4 Surely Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into parties, weakening one party from among them;<sup>a</sup> he slaughtered their sons and let their women live. Surely he was one of the mischief-makers.

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ  
أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ  
يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ  
إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ٤

5 And We desired to bestow a favour upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and to make them the leaders, and to make them the heirs,<sup>a</sup>

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا  
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ  
الْوَارِثِينَ ٥

6 And to grant them power in the land, and to make Pharaoh and Hāmān and their hosts see from them what they feared.<sup>a</sup>

وَنُمَكِّنْ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ  
وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا  
يَحْذَرُونَ ٦

1a. See 26:1a.

4a. The two parties were the Israelites and the Egyptians, the latter being made the taskmasters of the former. This refers no doubt to the persecutions of the Muslims. The Quraish, the stronger party, wanted to crush the weaker party of the Muslims.

5a. By making them heirs is not meant that they would be made heirs to Pharaoh's possession, but heirs to a kingdom in the promised land of Canaan. And this refers also to the establishment of the kingdom of Islām and the vanquishment of its persecutors.

6a. Hāmān seems to have been a minister of Pharaoh. He is spoken of again in v. 8 and v. 38, and also in 29:39 and 40:24, 36. The Hāmān spoken of in Esther 3:1 is a different person. Pharaoh and his counsellors feared that the Israelites, who were aliens in the land of Egypt, might one day become powerful and supreme in the land. Hence they oppressed and persecuted them in various ways. Yet the Divine intention was to bring about what Pharaoh feared. Even such was the Divine intention with regard to the persecuted Muslims.

7 And We revealed to Moses' mother, saying: Give him suck; then when thou fearest for him, cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve; surely We shall bring him back to thee and make him one of the messengers.

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ  
فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ  
وَلَا تَحْزَانِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي ۗ إِنَّا سَرَّادُوهُ  
إِلَيْكَ وَجَاعَلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾

8 So Pharaoh's people took him up that he might be an enemy and a grief for them.<sup>a</sup> Surely Pharaoh and Hāmān and their hosts were wrongdoers.

فَالْتَقَطَهُ آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا  
وَّحَرَكًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ  
وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِبِينَ ﴿٨﴾

9 And Pharaoh's wife said: A refreshment of the eye to me and to thee — slay him not; maybe he will be useful to us, or we may take him for a son. And they perceived not.

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قَرَّتْ عَيْنِي  
لِي ۚ وَكَذَلِكَ تَقْتُلُوهُ ۗ عَلَيَّ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنِي  
أَوْ يَنْتَفِعَنِي ۚ وَكَذَلِكَ هُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10 And the heart of Moses' mother was free (from anxiety).<sup>a</sup> She would almost have disclosed it, had We not strengthened her heart, so that she might be of the believers.

وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَرِحًا ۗ إِنَّ  
كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِ لَوْلَا أَنْ رَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ  
قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And she said to his sister: Follow him up. So she watched him from a distance, while they perceived not.

وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ ۖ ذَبَرْتِ بِهٖ  
عَنْ جُنُبٍ ۗ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And We did not allow him to suck before, so she said: Shall I point out to you the people of a house who will bring him up for you, and they will wish him well?

وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِنْ قَبْلُ  
فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ  
يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 So We gave him back to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that

فَرَدَدْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ أُمِّهِ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا  
وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۗ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ

8a. It was not the object of Pharaoh's people that the child should be their enemy, but this ultimately happened. *Lām* ("that") used in this sense is called *lām al-ʿāqibah*.

10a. Her heart became free from anxiety on account of the assurance which she had received through Divine revelation; the words that follow show that her heart had been strengthened with patience, so it cannot be said to have become devoid of patience. In fact, *fāriḡh* often, used elliptically, signifies *free from care or anxiety or disquietude* (LL).

the promise of Allāh is true. But most of them know not.<sup>a</sup> حَقٌّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

## SECTION 2: History of Moses

14 And when he attained his maturity and became full-grown, We granted him wisdom and knowledge. And thus do We reward those who do good (to others).

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَاسْتَوَىٰ آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And he went into the city at a time of carelessness on the part of its people, so he found therein two men fighting — one being of his party and the other of his foes; and he who was of his party cried out to him for help against him who was of his enemies, so Moses struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: This is on account of the devil's doing; surely he is an enemy, openly leading astray.<sup>a</sup>

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينٍ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ وَهَٰذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَاسْتَعَاذَ الَّذِي مِّنْ شِيعَتِهِ عَلَىٰ الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَّزَهُ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ هَٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16 He said: My Lord, surely I have done harm to myself, so do Thou protect me; so He protected him.<sup>a</sup> Surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَ لَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦﴾

17 He said: My Lord, because Thou hast bestowed a favour on me, I shall never be a backer of the guilty.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّمَا أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَاهِرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

13a. The reference is clearly to the opponents of the Holy Prophet, who did not know that the promise of Allāh, as given to the faithful, would prove true.

15a. The word "this", in Moses' statement, refers to the punishment which he had given to the Egyptian, the meaning being that it was on account of his devilish deed that the Egyptian had been so punished. The Rabbinical explanation of Exod. 2:12, which mentions Moses' slaying the Egyptian, is that the Egyptian merited death "because he had forced an Israelitish woman to commit adultery with him" (Jewish En., vol. ix, p. 48). The Qur'ān does not name the offence, but there is no doubt that it calls his offence a *devilish deed*. For the meaning of *ghafr*, see 2:286a. V. 17 shows clearly that Moses did not consider himself as one who had done an unjust deed or helped a guilty person. See also 26:14a.

16a. Moses' prayer is not evidence of his being guilty, for the words *zalamtu nafsī* mean *I have caused detriment to myself*, the primary significance of *zulum* being *naqṣ* (T), or *making to suffer loss or detriment* (LL), and this is the meaning adopted in 7:160 and

18 And he was in the city, fearing, awaiting, when lo, he who had asked his assistance the day before was crying out to him for help. Moses said to him: Thou art surely one erring man-ifestly.<sup>a</sup>

19 So when he desired to seize him who was an enemy to them both, he said: O Moses, dost thou intend to kill me as thou didst kill a person yesterday? Thou only desirest to be a tyrant in the land, and thou desirest not to be of those who act aright.

20 And a man came running from the remotest part of the city. He said: O Moses, the chiefs are consulting together to slay thee, so depart (at once); surely I am of those who wish thee well.

21 So he went forth therefrom, fearing, awaiting. He said: My Lord, deliver me from the iniquitous people.

فَأَصْبَحَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ  
فَإِذَا الَّذِي اسْتَنْصَرَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ  
يَسْتَصْرِحُهُ ط قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَى إِنَّكَ  
لَعَوِيُّ مُّبِينٌ ۝

فَلَمَّا أَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَنْبِطِشَ بِالَّذِي  
هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَهُمَا قَالَ يُمُوسَى أَتُرِيدُ  
أَنْ تَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا بِالْأَمْسِ  
إِنْ تُرِيدُ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِي  
الْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَنْ تَكُونَ  
مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ ۝

وَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ  
يَسْتَلِي نَقَالَ يُمُوسَى إِنَّ الْمَلَكَ  
يَأْتِيكَ وَنَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَآخْرُجْ  
إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ ۝  
فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ قَالَ رَبِّ  
نَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

### SECTION 3: History of Moses

22 And when he turned his face towards Midian, he said: Maybe my Lord will guide me in the right path.

23 And when he came to the water of Midian, he found there a group of men watering, and he found besides them two women keeping back (their flocks). He said: What is the matter with you? They said: We cannot water until the shepherds take away

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تَلْقَاءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَى  
رَأَيْتُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ۝  
وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ  
أُمَّةً مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ هُ  
وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ  
تَذُدْنِ قَالَ مَا حَطَبُكُمَا قَالَتَا لَا  
نَسْقِي حَتَّى يُصْدِرَ الرِّعَاءُ وَأَبُونَا

18:33. *Zalama-hū* also signifies *he imposed upon him a burden that was above his power or ability*. The meaning here is that he had risked his own life in giving help to another.

18a. Moses had helped the man on the first occasion because he was oppressed, but now this very man was oppressing another. Therefore he refused to help him.

(their sheep) from the water; and our father is a very old man.

شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾

24 So he watered (their sheep) for them, then went back to the shade, and said: My Lord, I stand in need of whatever good Thou mayest send to me.

فَسَقَى لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ﴿١٨﴾

25 Then one of the two women came to him walking bashfully. She said: My father<sup>a</sup> invites thee that he may reward thee for having watered for us. So when he came to him and related to him the story, he said: Fear not, thou art secure from the iniquitous people.

فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَسْتَشِيرُهُ عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ ۗ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ الْقِصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ ۗ نَجَوْتَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

26 One of them said: O my father, employ him; surely the best of those that thou canst employ is the strong, the faithful one.

قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ ۗ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ ﴿٢٠﴾

27 He said: I desire to marry one of these two daughters of mine to thee on condition that thou serve me for eight years; but, if thou complete ten, it will be of thy own free will, and I wish not to be hard on thee. If Allāh please, thou wilt find me one of the righteous.<sup>a</sup>

قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ نُكَحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي سِتْنِي حَجِيمٌ ۗ فَإِنْ أَسْمَدْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ ۗ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ ۗ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

25a. According to Exod. 2:18, the old man was Reuel, but in Exod. 3:1 he is called Jethro and he is said to have had seven daughters. The Qur'ān does not state how many daughters the man had; it only speaks of two of them being in charge of their father's flock. Hence the alleged confusion of this story with that of Laban's two daughters is itself due to a confusion. The commentators say this man was Shu'aib, and Shu'aib is mentioned by the name of Jethro in the Bible.

27a. Christian critical opinion discovers here another confusion. Because Jacob had made an agreement with Laban to serve him for seven years as a condition of marrying one of his daughters (Gen. 29:18), it is alleged that this fact must have been present in the Prophet's mind in a confused state, giving rise to the story relating to Moses' serving Jethro for eight or ten years. According to Rabbinical accounts, Moses lived with Jethro for ten years, which corroborates the Quranic story in substance (see *Jewish En.*), and there is nothing improbable in the circumstance that he may have served him during that period and married one of his daughters. But what is stated here has really a deeper significance beneath it. In Moses' stay at Midian for ten years, there is a prophetic reference to the ten years of the Prophet's life at Madinah. The mention of eight years has another underlying significance, for it was after eight years that the Prophet came back to Makkah as a conqueror, a clear reference to which is contained further on in v. 85: *He Who has made the Qur'ān binding on thee will surely bring thee back to the Place of*

28 He said: That is (agreed) between me and thee; whichever of the two terms I fulfil, there will be no injustice to me; and Allāh is surety over what we say.

قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ أَيَّمَا الْأَجَلَيْنِ  
تَضَيِّتُ فَلَا عُدْوَانَ عَلَيَّ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى  
مَا نَقُولُ وَكَفِيلٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

#### SECTION 4: History of Moses

29 Then when Moses had completed the term, and was travelling with his family, he perceived a fire on the side of the mountain. He said to his family: Wait, I see a fire; maybe I will bring to you from it some news or a brand of fire, so that you may warm yourselves.

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ  
أُنْسَ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ نَارًا قَالَ  
لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنستُ نَارًا لَعَلِّي  
آتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ مِّنَ  
النَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And when he came to it, he was called from the right side of the valley in the blessed spot of the bush: O Moses, surely I am Allāh, the Lord of the worlds:

فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِنْ شَاطِئِئِ النَّوَادِ  
الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ مِنَ  
الشَّجَرَةِ أَنْ يُّمُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ  
رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And cast down thy rod. So when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent, he turned away retreating, and looked not back. O Moses, come forward and fear not; surely thou art of those who are secure.

وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ  
كَأَنَّهُهَا جَانٌّ وَالِيٌّ مُدْبِرٌ أَوَّلَم يَعْقِبُ  
يُمُوسَىٰ أَنْ يُّقُلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ إِنَّا نَاكَ  
مِنَ الْأَمِينِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Insert thy hand into thy bosom, it will come forth white without evil, and remain calm in fear. These two are two arguments from thy Lord to

أَسْلَمَكَ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجُ بَيْضًا  
مِّنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ وَأَصْمَرُ إِلَيْكَ جَنَاحَكَ  
مِنَ الرَّهْبِ فَذٰلِكَ بُرْهَانُنِ مِنْ

*Return.* This occurred exactly eight years after his Flight. That such is the real significance of relating this narrative is made clear by the Qur'ān itself further on in v. 45, where the Prophet is thus addressed: *And thou wast not dwelling among the people of Midian, reciting to them Our messages.* It is, as it were, to say that it was Moses that lived among the people of Midian, but his episode really conveys the news of what will happen to thee.

It may be added here that Moses was paid his wages, and the condition of his staying in Midian for eight or ten years was as much in his own interest as in the interest of Jethro, for as the Bible narrative shows, Pharaoh had died by the time that Moses' stay in Midian had come to an end.

Pharaoh and his chiefs. Surely they are a transgressing people.<sup>a</sup>

**33** He said: My Lord, I killed one of them, so I fear lest they slay me.

**34** And my brother, Aaron, he is more eloquent in speech than I, so send him with me as a helper to confirm me. Surely I fear that they would reject me.

**35** He said: We will strengthen thine arm with thy brother, and We will give you both an authority, so that they shall not reach you.<sup>a</sup> With Our signs, you two and those who follow you, will triumph.

**36** So when Moses came to them with Our clear signs, they said: This is nothing but forged enchantment, and we never heard of it among our fathers of old!

**37** And Moses said: My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from Him, and whose shall be the good end of the abode. Surely the wrongdoers will not be successful.

**38** And Pharaoh said: O chiefs, I know no god for you besides myself; so kindle a fire for me, O Hāmān, on (bricks of) clay, then prepare for me a lofty building, so that I may obtain knowledge of Moses' God, and surely I think him a liar.<sup>a</sup>

رَّبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَسِيقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

قَالَ سَرَيْتَ إِنِّي تَتَكَبَّرُ مِنْهُمْ نَفْسًا فَكَفَاهُ أَنْ يُفْتَلُوهٖ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَآخِي هَارُونَ هُوَ أَفْضَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا فَأَرْسَلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءًا يُصَدِّقُنِي ۚ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾

قَالَ سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلْطٰنًا ۖ فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا بِآيٰتِنَا ۚ أَنْتُمْ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمْ أَوَّلُ الْغٰلِبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِآيٰتِنَا بَيِّنٰتٍ قَالُوا مَا هٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَمَا سَمِعْنَا بِهٰذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّيَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ جَاءَ بِآلِهٰدِي مِنْ عِنْدِهِ وَمَنْ تَكُونُ لَهُ عَآقِبَةُ الدَّآرِ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأَمَا عَلِمْتُمْ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلٰهِ غَيْرِي ۚ فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يٰهَامٰنُ عَلَى الطَّيْرِ فَاجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ إِلَىٰ إِلٰهِ مُوسَىٰ ۖ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

32a. See 7:108a, 20:20a, 22a.

35a. The meaning is, so that they will not be able to injure you.

38a. Pharaoh mocks at the idea of the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and derisively commands one of his ministers to prepare bricks — such being the significance of *kindling a fire on clay* — and to erect a lofty building so that he may have a peep into the heavens to discover the Lord of the heavens and the earth.



39 And he was unjustly proud in the land, he and his hosts, and they deemed that they would not be brought back to Us.

وَاسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ وَجُنُودُهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
يَعِيرُ الْحَقَّ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمُ الْيَسَارُ  
لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 So We caught hold of him and his hosts, then We cast them into the sea, and see what was the end of the iniquitous.

فَأَخَذْنَاهُ وَجُنُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ  
فَأَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And We made them leaders who call to the Fire, and on the day of Resurrection they will not be helped.<sup>a</sup>

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ آيَةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى التَّارِكِ  
وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And We made a curse to follow them in this world, and on the day of Resurrection they will be hideous.

وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً  
وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُمْ مِنَ الْمَقْبُوحِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

#### SECTION 5: A Prophet like Moses

43 And certainly We gave Moses the Book after We had destroyed the former generations — clear arguments for men and a guidance and a mercy, that they may be mindful.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ  
مَا أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الْأُولَى بَصَائِرَ  
لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And thou wast not on the western side when We revealed to Moses the commandment, nor wast thou among those present;<sup>a</sup>

وَمَا كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الْعَرَبِ إِذْ قَضَيْنَا  
إِلَى مُوسَى الْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنْتَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 But We raised up generations, then life became prolonged to them. And thou wast not dwelling among

وَلَكِنَّا أَسْبَغْنَا فُرُوقًا فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ  
الْعُمُرُ وَمَا كُنْتَ قَائِمًا فِي أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ

41a. Pharaoh is thus made a prototype of evil, and the opponents of the Holy Prophet are warned that by walking in Pharaoh's footsteps they will meet a similar fate.

44a. Moses' prophecy about the advent of the Prophet — of a prophet like him from among the Ishmaelites, the brethren of the Israelites — was so clear that one would think that the Prophet was there at the side of the mountain and Moses saw him with his own eyes. Hence the words, *thou wast not on the western side (of the mountain), nor wast thou among those present*. The opening words of the next verse show that a very long time had elapsed between these two prophets. The clear prophecy of Moses of the appearance of a prophet like unto him was fulfilled after about two thousand years, and yet none of the prophets who followed Moses one after another had ever claimed to be a prophet like Moses, not even Jesus Christ, the last of the line of the Israelite prophets.

the people of Midian,<sup>a</sup> reciting to them Our messages, but We are the Sender (of messengers).

تَشَلُّوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰیٰتِنَا وَلٰكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِيْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

**46** And thou wast not at the side of the mountain when We called, but a mercy from thy Lord that thou mayest warn a people to whom no warner came before thee, that they may be mindful.<sup>a</sup>

وَمَا كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الطُّوْرِ اِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلٰكِنْ رَّحْمَةً مِّنْ رَبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا اَتَتْهُمْ مِنْ نَّذِيْرٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

**47** And lest, if a disaster should befall them for what their hands have sent before, they should say: Our Lord, why didst Thou not send to us a messenger so that we might have followed Thy messages and been of the believers?

وَكَوَلَا اَنْ تُصِيْبَهُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌ يَّمْلِكُوْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ فَيَقُوْلُوْا رَبَّنَا كُوَلَا اَمْرًا سَلَّمْتَ اِلَيْنَا اَسْوَءًا فَتَتَّبِعَ اٰیٰتِكَ وَتَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

**48** But (now) when the Truth has come to them from Us, they say: Why is he not given the like of what was given to Moses? Did they not disbelieve in that which was given to Moses before? They say: Two enchantments backing up each other! And they say: Surely we are disbelievers in both.<sup>a</sup>

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوْا كُوَلَا اُوْتِيَ مِثْلَ مَا اُوْتِيَ مُّوْسٰى اَوْ كُمْ يَكْفُرُوْا اَيْمًا اُوْتِيَ مُّوْسٰى مِنْ قَبْلُ ؕ قَالُوْا اِسْحٰرٌ نَّظَّهَرَ اللهُ وَ قَالُوْا اِنَّا بِكُلِّ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

45a. Why is Midian mentioned in particular, though Moses stayed there for a short time; see 27a. Moses lived in Midian for ten years, just as the Prophet passed ten years of his life at Madinah, yet what a transformation was wrought in the course of these ten years! This very fact was a clear proof of his truth.

46a. This verse throws light on the significance of the foregoing verses: *Thou wast not there, but it was Divine mercy that put a prophecy into the mouth of Moses regarding thee.* This is made clear by the words *a mercy from thy Lord that thou mayest warn....* The people to whom no warner had come before were the Arabs. Compare 32:3; 36:6.

48a. The disbelievers did not adopt any one firm position against the Holy Prophet, and whenever one objection was shown to be erroneous, they took refuge in another. At the advent of the Prophet they said that he should have received a revelation like the revelation of Moses, but when the likeness was pointed out to them, and they were told that their fate would be like the fate of the opponents of Moses, they said that both Moses and Muhammad were deceivers who enchanted people by their eloquence, the one helping the other, and therefore they believed neither in the one nor in the other.