



## Part 26

### CHAPTER 46

#### *Al-Aḥqāf*: The Sandhills

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 4 sections; 35 verses)

This is the last chapter of the *Hā Mīm* group, and is entitled *The Sandhills*, the title being taken from the tracts of sand which contributed to the destruction of the tribe of 'Ād (v. 21). The fact is mentioned to warn the Arabs that, when the fate of a nation is sealed, it may be brought about on sea, as in the case of Pharaoh and his hosts, or on sand, as in the case of the tribe of 'Ād. For the date of revelation, see introductory note to ch. 40.

The chapter continues the subject-matter of the last chapter, dealing with the truth of revelation in the first section and with the witness of truth in the second. The last two sections, after referring to the fate of 'Ād, contain a warning for those who reject the truth.

#### SECTION 1: Truth of Revelation

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

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 Beneficent God!

حَمْدٌ

2 The revelation of the Book is from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise.

تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ

3 We created not the heavens and the earth and all between them save with truth and for an appointed term.<sup>a</sup> And those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَمَّا أُنذِرُوا مُّعْرِضُونَ

3a. The Universe had a beginning and it will also have an end.

4 Say: Have you considered that which you invoke besides Allāh? Show me what they have created of the earth, or have they a share in the heavens? Bring me a Book before this or any relics of knowledge, if you are truthful.

5 And who is in greater error than he who invokes besides Allāh such as answer him not till the day of Resurrection, and they are heedless of their call?

6 And when men are gathered together, they will be their enemies, and will deny their worshipping (them).

7 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, those who disbelieve say of the Truth when it comes to them: This is clear enchantment.

8 Nay, they say: He has forged it. Say: If I have forged it, you control naught for me from Allāh.<sup>a</sup> He knows best what you utter concerning it. He is enough as a witness between me and you. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.<sup>b</sup>

9 Say: I am not the first of the messengers,<sup>a</sup> and I know not what will be done with me or with you. I follow naught but that which is revealed

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ  
اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ  
أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ إِيَّائِنِي  
يَكْتِيبُ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَذَا أَوْ آخِرُهُ مِنْ

عِلْمٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ④

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ  
اللَّهِ مَنْ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ  
الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَائِهِمْ غَفْلُونَ ⑤

وَإِذَا حُشِرَ النَّاسُ كَانُوا لَهُمْ أَعْدَاءً  
وَكَانُوا إِعْبَادَ تِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ ⑥

وَإِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ هَذَا  
سِحْرٌ مُؤْتَمِرٌ ⑦

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ إِنْ افْتَرَيْتُهُ  
فَلَا تَمْلِكُونَ لِي مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا هُوَ  
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ كَفَى بِهِ  
شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَهُوَ  
الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ⑧

قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدْعًا مِنَ الرُّسُلِ  
وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا يُفْعَلُ بِي وَلَا بِكُمْ  
إِنْ أَتَيْتُمْ إِلَّا مَا يُرْسَى إِلَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا

8a. From Allāh here means from the punishment of Allāh. If the Qur'ān was a lie which the Prophet had forged, none could avert the punishment which must come upon a forger.

8b. It is noteworthy that, whenever the punishment of the opponents is alluded to, as in the statement *He is enough as a witness between me and you*, the Divine attribute of mercy and forgiveness is also mentioned to indicate that mercy always predominates in the Divine nature.

9a. *Bid'* signifies a novelty, or a thing existing for the first time (LL). And you say such a one is *bid'* in this affair when he is the first who has done it (LL). Prophets had appeared before the Holy Prophet Muḥammad in every country and nation throughout the whole world, and God's sending messengers for the reformation of men was the universal experience of humanity.

to me, and I am but a plain warner.<sup>b</sup>

**10** Say: See you if it is from Allāh, and you disbelieve in it, and a witness from among the Children of Israel has borne witness of one like him,<sup>a</sup> so he believed, while you are big with pride. Surely Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ⑩

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
وَكَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ  
بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِ فَأَمَنَ  
وَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي  
الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ⑩

## SECTION 2: Witness of Truth

**11** And those who disbelieve say of those who believe: If it had been a good, they would not have attained it before us. And as they are not guided thereby, they say: It is an old lie.

**12** And before it was the Book of Moses, a guide and a mercy. And this is a Book verifying (it) in the Arabic language,<sup>a</sup> that it may warn those who do wrong, and as good news for the doers of good.

**13** Surely those who say, Our Lord is Allāh, then continue on the right way, on them is no fear, nor shall they grieve.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَوْ كَان حَيْرًا مَّا سَبَقُونَا إِلَيْهِ ۗ  
وَإِذْ كَمْ يَهْتَادُوا بِهِ فَيَسْئَلُونَ هَذَا  
إِفْكًا قَدِيمًا ⑩

وَمِنْ قَبْلِهِ كَتَبَ مُوسَىٰ إِمَامًا وَ  
رَحْمَةً ۗ وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانِ  
عَرَبِيًّا لِّيُنذِرَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ۗ وَ  
بُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُحْسِنِينَ ⑩

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ شَعَرُوا  
اسْتِقَامًا ۖ فَلَا حَوْلَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَأَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ⑩

9b. The Prophet is made to deny any detailed knowledge as to the ultimate end of one or the other party, but the warning is reaffirmed in the concluding words to show that evildoers must suffer the evil consequences of their deeds. *I know not*, therefore, simply signifies that *he did not know the details*.

10a. The witness from among the Children of Israel, who bore witness of one like him is Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee.... And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him" (Deut. 18:18, 19). It is to the concluding statement in the above quotation that attention is called in the words, *see you if it is from Allāh, and you disbelieve in it*.

12a. The words refer to the subject-matter of v. 10, which speaks of Moses' prophecy. The Qur'ān is here declared as fulfilling that prophecy, and the reference to its being in the Arabic language signifies the coming of the Prophet from among the Ishmaelites, who spoke that language, and who were the brethren of the Israelites, this fact being clearly mentioned in the prophecy of Deut. 18:18.

14 These are the owners of the Garden, abiding therein — a reward for what they did.

15 And We have enjoined on man the doing of good to his parents. His mother bears him with trouble and she brings him forth in pain. And the bearing of him and the weaning of him is thirty months. Till, when he attains his maturity and reaches forty years,<sup>a</sup> he says: My Lord, grant me that I may give thanks for Thy favour, which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good which pleases Thee; and be good to me in respect of my offspring. Truly I turn to Thee, and truly I am of those who submit.

16 These are they from whom We accept the best of what they do and pass by their evil deeds — among the owners of the Garden. A promise of truth, which they were promised.

17 And he who says to his parents: Fie on you! Do you threaten me that I shall be brought forth, when generations have passed away before me? And they both call for Allāh's aid: Woe to thee! Believe; surely the promise of Allāh is true. But he says: This is nothing but stories of the ancients.

18 These are they against whom the word proves true, among nations of the jinn and the men that have passed away before them. Surely they are losers.

أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۗ  
جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

وَوَضَّيْنَا لِلْإِنْسَانِ يُولَدَيْهِ إِحْسَنًا ۖ  
حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۖ  
وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِضْلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ  
إِذَا بَلَغَ أَسَدَهُ ۖ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً  
قَالَ سَرِيتٌ أَوْزَعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ  
الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ  
أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ ۖ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي  
فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي  
مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ  
مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ  
فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَعَدَّ الصِّدْقَ  
الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

وَالَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَّكُمَا  
أَتَعِدُنِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَيْتِ  
الْقُرُونُ مِنْ قَبْلِي ۖ وَهُمَا يَسْتَفْغِيَانِ  
اللَّهَ وَيَبْكَ أَمِنًا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ  
فَيَقُولُ مَا هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي  
أَمْرِ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ  
وَإِلَٰسٍ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

15a. It would appear from this that the spiritual maturity of man usually takes place at the age of forty. Evidence of this is also found in the fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad received the Divine message for the regeneration of mankind at the age of forty.

19 And for all are degrees according to what they do, and that He may pay them for their deeds and they will not be wronged.

20 And on the day when those who disbelieve are brought before the Fire: You did away with your good things in your life of the world and you enjoyed them; so this day you are rewarded with the chastisement of abasement because you were unjustly proud in the land and because you transgressed.

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا ۖ  
وَلِيُوقِيَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ أَلْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَاتِكُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهَا ۖ فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۖ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

### SECTION 3: The Fate of 'Ād

21 And mention the brother of 'Ād; when he warned his people in the sandy plains<sup>a</sup> — and warners indeed came before him and after him — saying: Serve none but Allāh. Surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day.

22 They said: Hast thou come to us to turn us away from our gods? Then bring us that with which thou threatenest us, if thou art truthful.

23 He said: The knowledge is only with Allāh, and I deliver to you that wherewith I am sent, but I see you are an ignorant people.

24 So when they saw it — a cloud advancing towards their valleys, they said: This is a cloud bringing us rain. Nay, it is that which you sought to

وَإِذْ كَرَّ أَخَا عَادٍ إِذْ أُنذَرَ قَوْمَهُ  
بِالْأَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ خَلَّتِ الشُّدُرُ مِنْ  
بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمَنْ خَلْفَهُ إِلَّا تَعْبُدُوا  
إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ  
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٢١﴾

قَالُوا أَوَجَّئْنَا لِيَتَفَكَّرَنَا عَنْ آلِهَتِنَا  
فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ  
مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

قَالَ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا بَلَّغْتُ  
مَّا أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ وَلَكِنِّي أَرَأَيْتُمْ  
قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ عَارِضًا مُسْتَقْبِلَ أَوْدِيَّتِهِمْ  
قَالُوا هَذَا عَارِضٌ مُّطِيرٌ ۖ نَا طِبْلٌ هُوَ  
مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُمْ بِهِ ۖ طَرِيحٌ فِيهَا

21a. The brother of a people signifies their prophet, Hūd being the prophet sent to 'Ād. *Ahqāf* is plural of *hiqf*, which signifies a *heap* or *hill of sand that has assumed a bowed form*, and *al-ahqāf* applies, particularly to certain oblong tracts of sand in the region of Esh-Shihr (LL). Rodwell and Muir locate the 'Ādites in the country round about Tā'if; others in Ḥaḍramaut. The latter opinion is the correct one, as maps of Arabia plainly show Al-Ahqāf to be situated in Ḥaḍramaut.

hasten, a wind wherein is painful chastisement.

**25** Destroying everything by the command of its Lord. So at dawn naught could be seen except their dwellings. Thus do We reward the guilty people.

**26** And certainly We had given them power in matters in which We have not empowered you, and We had given them ears and eyes and hearts, but neither their ears, nor their eyes, nor their hearts availed them aught, since they denied the messages of Allāh, and that which they mocked at encompassed them.

عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا  
لَا يُرَى إِلَّا مَسْكِنُهُمْ كَذَلِكَ  
نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّهُمْ فَبِمَا إِنْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِيهِ  
وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ سَمْعًا وَأَبْصَارًا وَأَفْئِدَةً  
فَمَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَلَا أَبْصَارُهُمْ  
وَلَا أَفئِدَتُهُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِذْ كَانُوا  
يَجْحَدُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ  
مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

#### SECTION 4: A Warning

**27** And certainly We destroyed the towns round about you,<sup>a</sup> and We repeat the messages that they may turn.

**28** Then why did those whom they took for gods besides Allāh to draw (them) nigh (to Him) not help them? Nay, they failed them. And this was their lie and what they forged.

**29** And when We turned towards thee a party of the jinn,<sup>a</sup> who listened to the Qur'ān; so when they were in its presence, they said: Be silent. Then when it was finished, they turned back to their people warning (them).

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْقُرَى  
وَصَرَّفْنَا الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾  
فَلَوْلَا نَصْرُهُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ  
دُونِ اللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا آلِهَةً بَلَى ضَلُّوا  
عَنْهُمْ وَذَلِكَ إِنْكُمُومًا وَمَا  
كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَإِذْ صَرَّفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ  
يَسْمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ  
قَالُوا أَنْصِتُوا فَكُنَّا قُضِي وَلَوْ  
إِلَى قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

27a. The cities of 'Ād, Thamūd and Sheba lay on the borders of Arabia; thus the people living in the metropolis are told how those living around them were aforesaid destroyed, and they should take a lesson from their fate.

29a. The jinn spoken of here seem to be the leaders of certain Jewish tribes, because they are spoken of in the next verse as believers in Moses. In fact, they are of the same class as those spoken of in 72:1; see 72:1a.

30 They said: O our people, we have heard a Book revealed after Moses, verifying that which is before it, guiding to the truth and to a right path.

31 O our people, accept the Inviter to Allāh and believe in Him. He will forgive you some of your sins and protect you from a painful chastisement.

32 And whoever accepts not the Inviter to Allāh, he cannot escape in the earth, nor has he protectors besides Him. These are in manifest error.

33 See they not that Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not tired by their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Aye, He is surely Possessor of power over all things.

34 And on the day when those who disbelieve are brought before the Fire: Is it not true? They will say: Yea, by our Lord! He will say: Then taste the chastisement, because you disbelieved.

35 So have patience, as men of resolution, the messengers, had patience, and seek not to hasten on for them (their doom). On the day when they see that which they are promised, (it will be) as if they had not tarried save an hour of the day. (Thine is) to deliver. Shall then any be destroyed save the transgressing people?

قَالُوا الْيَقَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ  
يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى  
طَرِيقٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

يَقَوْمَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا  
بِهِ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَ  
يُجِرْكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾

وَمَنْ لَا يَجِبْ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ  
بِمُعْجِزٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ  
دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَكَمْ يَعْبُرُ  
بِحَلْقَيْنَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يُمْسِكَ السَّمَوَاتِ  
بِأَيْدِيهِ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى  
النَّارِ أَلَيْسَ هَذَا بِالْحَقِّ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ  
وَرَبَّنَا قَالِ قَدْ وَفَّوْنَا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا  
كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

فَأَصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَرْشِ مِنَ  
الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ  
يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا  
إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنْ نَّهَارٍ بَلَّغَ قَهْلًا  
يُهْلِكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾