



Al-Mulk

(The Sovereignty)

In the Name of God, the Infinitely Compassionate,
the Continually Merciful

Blessed is the One in whose hands is the Sovereignty:
and He/She has creative power over everything—

He/She who created death and life so that He/She
may reveal which of you is best and most beautiful in
deeds. And He/She is the Almighty, Most Dear, the Oft-
Forgiving [*al-ʿAziz, al-Ghafur*],

He/She who created the seven heavens in harmony;
no lack of proportion will you see in that which the
Infinitely Compassionate [*ar-Rahman*] has created. Just
look again: can you see any flaw?

Turn your vision again and then again—at last your
glance will come back to you, dazzled and exhausted.

And We have adorned the nearest heaven with
lights and made them shooting stars to drive onward the
perversely corrupt ones, for whom We have prepared the
painful purification of a kindled fire—

for those who turn away from their Sustainer and
Cherisher in ungrateful denial there is the painful
purification of blazing fire; and terrible is such a journey.

When they are cast into it, they will hear the sigh of
its surging as it rises towards them,

nearly bursting with fury. Whenever some are cast

into it, its keepers ask: “Hasn’t a warner come to you?”

And they answer, “Yes, a warner did come to us, but we wouldn’t believe him and would say, ‘Never has Divine Reality sent down any (Message); you are just lost in extreme delusion!’”

And they continue: “If only we had listened, or reflected, we wouldn’t be among the companions of the blazing fire!”

And so they will come to realize their mistakes, but far removed (from that beautiful forgiveness) will have become those companions of the blazing fire.

Truly, for those who remain conscious of Divine Reality—even though hidden (behind the fabric of seen existence)—there is forgiveness, and a magnificent recompense.

And whether you keep hidden your word or declare it, He/She certainly knows the secrets of hearts.

Should He/She not know, He/She who created (you and everything)?

And He/She is the Most Subtle, the One Who is All-Aware [*al-Latif, al-Khabir*].

It is He/She who has made the earth to be in humble service to you—journey about in all its regions and partake of the nourishment He/She provides, but be aware that even as you spread abroad, you will be returning to Him/Her.

Do you feel secure that He of the Attributes will not cause you to be swallowed up by the earth when it quakes?

Or can you feel secure that He of the Attributes will not let loose upon you a swirling storm of stones, such that you will come to know (the truth of) My warning?

And indeed, those who lived before disregarded (My warning). How then was My disregard?

Don't they observe the birds above them spreading their wings and folding them in? None can uphold them except the Infinitely Compassionate [*ar-Rahman*]¹—truly, it is He/She who watches over all things.

Who is it that can be a host for you to give you succor, except the Infinitely Compassionate [*ar-Rahman*]? Those who turn away in denial are only deluding themselves.

Or who is there who can provide you with sustenance if He/She were to withhold His/Her provision? No, but they stubbornly persist in their disdain and their headlong flight.

But is one who falls on his/her face, stumbling upon the ground, better guided, or one who walks upright on a clear way?

Say: "It is He/She who has raised you and endowed you with hearing, sight, and hearts—how seldom are you grateful!"

Say: "It is He/She who has multiplied you on earth, and it is to Him/Her you will be gathered."

They ask: "When will this promise be—if you are speaking Truth?"

Say: "Knowledge of that is with God alone; I am but a clear warner."

Yet later when they see it draw near, the faces of those intent on ungratefully denying Truth will be stricken with grief; and it will (then) be said: "This is that which you were summoning."

Say: "What do you think? Whether God destroys me and those who follow me, or graces us with beneficent Mercy, is there anyone who could protect deniers of Truth from painful purification?"

Say: "He/She is the Infinitely Compassionate [*ar-Rahman*]¹—in Him/Her have we come to have faith, and

in Him/Her have we placed our trust. And in time you will come to know which of us has been lost in obvious error.”

Say: “Just consider! If one morning all your water were suddenly to disappear beneath the ground, who could provide you with water from clear springs?”

[*Surah al-Mulk*, 67:1–30 complete]



Al-Qalam

(The Pen)

In the Name of God, the Infinitely Compassionate,
the Continually Merciful

Nun. Consider the Pen, and consider that which they
write—

by the grace of your Sustainer, you are not crazy.

And truly, yours is an unceasing recompense:

for surely, you are (founded) upon a most magnificent
character [*khuluqin 'azim*].

Soon you will see and they will see

which of you it is who is confused.

Truly, your Sustainer knows best which of you has
strayed from His abundant Path, and He knows best who
receives real guidance.

So do not listen to those who cut themselves off by
lying.

They would love you to compromise, so that they
might also compromise.

Do not heed a despicable foul-mouthed one,

who is a slanderer and malicious backbiter,

hindering good, transgressing beyond bounds (of
what is right), deeply immersed in error,

brutal and of evil character,

just because he has wealth and numerous offspring.

When Our Signs are declared to him, he says:

“Stories of bygone eras!”

Soon shall We mark him with his arrogance, clearly as the nose on his face.

Truly, We have tested them as We tested the people of the garden, when they were determined to gather the fruits in the morning,

without referring it to God’s Will (by God’s permission, *Inshallah*).

Then there came upon it a visitation from your Sustainer, all around it, while they slept,

and by the morning it became a place of darkened stubble.

At daybreak, they called out, one to another,

“Go to your field in the morning, if you would harvest.”

So they set out, whispering privately to each other,

“Don’t let any poor person trespass this day,”

and they began the morning with miserly intent.

But when they saw it, they declared, “Surely we have lost our way!

“No; surely, we have been ruined!”

One who was more just (than the others) said, “Didn’t I tell you: ‘Will you not glorify God?’”

They responded, “Limitless in Glory is our Sustainer! We have been among those who do wrong!”

Then they turned upon each other, blaming each other.

They said, “Woe to us; we have indeed gone beyond the bounds of what is right.

“But perhaps our Sustainer will replace this with that which is better, for surely we turn to our Sustainer in longing and hope.”

Such is the suffering (in this world), but the purifying

chastisement of the Hereafter will be even greater, if only they knew.

Truly, for the God-conscious are joyful gardens of blessing, within the Presence of their Sustainer.

Would We treat those who have surrendered like those who are lost in error?

What is wrong with you? How are you reckoning?

Or do you have a book that you study—
in which you find what you wish?

Or have you received a solemn promise, binding on Us until the Day of Standing, that your portion will be as you judge?

Ask them who among them is able to assure this!

Or do they have some associates (with God, any wise ones to support their views)? Then let them produce their “associates” if they are of the truthful.

The Day when all will be laid bare to the bone (revealing our essential connection to God), when they shall be called to prostrate in awe, and they will be unable to do so—

in humility their eyes will be downcast, disgrace will overcome them; seeing that they had been called to prostrate in awe before, when they were sound (and they had turned away).

And so leave to Me those who deny this discourse—
step by step We draw them in (to humility), though they are unaware.

For see how though I give them respite for a while,
My conceiving is steadfast.

Are you asking them for compensation, so that they should fear they would be burdened with debt?!

Or do they think the Hidden Reality is within their grasp, so that they can write it down?

Bear then with patience your Sustainer's Will, and do not be like the Companion of the Great Fish (Jonah), who cried out after being overwhelmed with despair; had not grace from his Sustainer reached him, he would indeed have been cast forth upon that barren shore in humiliation;

but his Sustainer drew him (to Himself) and made him to be among those who make things whole.

And so, (be patient) even though they who are determined to deny Truth would all but kill you with their eyes whenever they hear this reminder, and see how they say, "Surely, he is a madman!"

But this is nothing less than a reminder (a love-song, a *zhikr*) to all the worlds. [*Wama huwa illa zhikrun lil- 'alameen.*]

[*Surah al-Qalam*, 68:1–52 complete]

