

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

For Fast 17 – September 7

Chapter 21

- 16 And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them for sport.¹
- 17 If We had wished to take a pastime, We would have taken it from before Ourselves; by no means would We do (so).
- 18 Indeed, We hurl the Truth against falsehood, so it knocks out its brains, and lo! it vanishes.²
And woe to you for what you describe!
- 19 And to Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. And those who are with Him are not too proud to serve Him, nor are they weary.
- 20 They glorify (Him) night and day: they do not tire.
- 21 Or have they taken gods from the earth who give life?
- 22 If there were in them gods besides Allah, they would both have been in disorder. So glory be to Allah, the Lord of the Throne, being above what they describe!³
- 23 He cannot be questioned as to what He does, and they will be questioned.⁴
- 24 Or, have they taken gods besides Him? Say: Bring your proof. This is the reminder of those with me and the reminder of those before me.⁵ But most of them do not know the Truth, so they turn away.
- 25 And We sent no messenger before you but We revealed to him that there is no God but Me, so serve Me.⁶
- 26 And they say: The Beneficent has taken to Himself a son. Glory be to Him! No, they are honoured servants⁷ —
- 27 They do not speak before He speaks, and according to His command they act.⁸

Notes:

1 (v. 16) In nature every cause has an effect and every end is achieved by means. Life must be taken seriously, not as a jest.

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- 2 (v. 18) Truth defeats falsehood by force of argument and evidence. The domain in which truth overcomes falsehood is the human mind and heart. This fight is not by means of any weapons of war, and it is not for the conquest of any territory.

Mark the deep conviction of the Prophet as to the ultimate triumph of Truth in the world. Truth had dawned on his mind in full resplendence. The forces of darkness and falsehood, which were uppermost in Arabia when these words were uttered, were brought to naught in his lifetime and, however powerful they may appear to be, they cannot even today make a stand before the onward march of Truth.

- 3 (v. 22) There is order in the universe because one law pervades the whole of it, and one law clearly points to one Author and Maintainer of that law. Note that here Allah is spoken of as *Rabb al-'Arsh*, the nourisher to perfection, or Lord, of the Throne, so that the Throne itself is sustained by God, and it is not God Who is sustained by the Throne.
- 4 (v. 23) It is only Allah Who is above being questioned. Every human being, however great he may be, is accountable both to some other human beings and to Allah.
- 5 (v. 24) The great and fundamental truth of the Unity of Allah is common to all religions; no prophet ever taught polytheism.
- 6 (v. 25) All messengers taught that there is only One God and He only must be worshipped. This is what is meant by saying that all prophets taught *Islam*. Prophets before the Holy Prophet Muhammad did not teach the system which we call *the religion of Islam*. They taught what lies at the root of Islam, namely that God is One and only He is to be worshipped. This root can also be called *Islam*.
- 7 (v. 26) Refuting the doctrine that Jesus is the son of God, it is added that *they are honoured servants*. The words draw attention to the fact that others besides Jesus were spoken of as the sons of God, but that the title signified nothing more than that they were honoured servants, and that therefore Jesus was the son of God exactly in the same sense.
- 8 (v. 27) This verse affords a conclusive testimony for the sinlessness of prophets. In the first place they do not speak till Allah has spoken, i.e., they speak according to what He has taught them, not speaking of their own accord. And secondly, when they act, they act according to His commandment. Thus both their words and deeds are in accordance with Divine will, and therefore sin or disobedience of God cannot be attributed to them. The context shows clearly that the verse speaks of prophets, and not of angels.