

(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 8 – August 29

Chapter 6

- 160 Whoever brings a good deed will have tenfold like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, will be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be wronged.¹
- 161 Say: As for me, my Lord has guided me to the right path — a right religion, the faith of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not of those who set up partners (with Allah).
- 162 Say: My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are surely for Allah, the Lord of the worlds —
- 163 no partner has He. And this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.²
- 164 Say: Shall I seek a Lord other than Allah, while He is the Lord of all things? And no soul earns (evil) but against itself. Nor does a bearer of burden bear another’s burden.³ Then to your Lord is your return, so He will inform you of that in which you differed.
- 165 And He it is Who has made you successors in the land and exalted some of you in rank above others, that He may try you by what He has given you. Surely your Lord is Quick in retribution, and He is surely the Forgiving, the Merciful.⁴

Notes:

- 1 (v. 160) No other sacred book gives such prominence to the quality of mercy in the Divine Being. While evil must have its evil consequence, it is only its like, but virtue brings a tenfold reward. According to a saying of the Holy Prophet, evil is pardoned or recompensed with its like, while good brings from a tenfold to a seven-hundredfold reward (Bukhari, 81:33). Thus the verse mentions only the maximum punishment of evil and the minimum reward of good.
- 2 (v. 163) The idea of entire submission to the Divine Being conveyed in the word *Islām* finds its perfect manifestation in the Holy Prophet, who is the first of the Muslims. Above even the noblest object that a man can set for himself stands the love of the Divine Being. The deed done may be for the welfare of one’s self, or of those dearest to one, or of one’s country or nation, but the mainspring of that action must be the love of the Divine Being, for then only is it that perfect disinterestedness combined with absolute justice to all creatures can be achieved. It is the highest goal of human life, and every Muslim is taught to set that goal before himself.
- 3 (v. 164) In these words the Christian doctrine of atonement is rejected by the Quran. Elsewhere we have: “That no bearer of burden bears another’s burden, and that man can have nothing but what he

strives for” (53:38–39). Every person who is born is called *a bearer of burden*, not because he is a sinner, but because he starts life with certain responsibilities of his own.

- 4 (v. 165) With the highest goal of life before them, Muslims are now told that they were going to be made rulers in the land. Their exaltation above others, however, was not due to their wealth or to their political power but simply to the fact that they submitted themselves to God, that their prayers and their sacrifices were not for their nation or their country but for God, Who was the *Rabb*, the Nourisher to perfection, of the whole of humanity. Hence they were a people who had the betterment of the whole of humanity in view. But even they are told, in the concluding words of the verse, that if they fall off and follow evil ways they will be requited, though the forgiveness and mercy of the Divine Being will ultimately take them by the hand.