

## For Fast 24

### Chapter 27

- 15 And certainly We gave knowledge to David and Solomon. And they said: Praise be to Allah, Who has made us excel many of His believing servants!
- 16 And Solomon was David's heir, and he said: O people, we have been taught the speech of birds, and we have been granted all sorts of things. Surely this is manifest grace.

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*Note:* Solomon had a large and magnificent kingdom, and a highly organised state. He made extensive use of technology, and used birds and animals for state purposes, such as communications. Being taught "the speech of birds" doesn't mean being able to converse with birds but being able to send and receive messages by means of birds as carriers, and communicate orders to birds which they obeyed through their training. But while having such a great kingdom of mighty power and technological advancement, Solomon is always conscious that he must praise and thank Allah for it at every step.

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- 18 Until when they (Solomon and his forces) came to the valley of the Naml (or "ants"), a Namlite (or "ant") said: O Naml (or "O ants"), enter your houses, so that Solomon and his forces may not crush you, while they do not know.
- 19 So he smiled, wondering at her word, and said: My Lord, grant me that I may be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good such as You are pleased with, and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous servants.

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*Note:* Solomon was marching with his army through a valley called *Naml*, which may be the name of a tribe, and the speaker who warned his people to enter their houses would be a member of this tribe or a Namlite. Most, however, translate *naml* as ("ant"), and think that an ant literally spoke these words, which Solomon understood. Even if *naml* is taken to mean "ant", the words "enter your houses ..." may only indicate the reaction of the ants to danger, not that an ant addressed other ants in these words. In v. 19, Solomon smiling "at her word" would mean that he understood ant behaviour and had knowledge of it, not that he heard with his ears the ant speaking. Solomon's kingdom was highly organised and disciplined, and ants also have a very high degree of social organisation and order. It is possible that Solomon saw in ant behaviour the organisation of his own kingdom; perhaps he had previously learnt from observing them and applied the lessons to his own state system.

Solomon thus prays to God that he may always be grateful to Him for the favour bestowed upon him, of having all this ability and knowledge to organise a state, and that he may use his state power for doing good. Modern state rulers and heads of organisations would also benefit by resorting to this prayer.

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- 44 She (the Queen of Sheba) said: My Lord, surely I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

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*Note:* The Queen of Sheba was a neighbouring ruler to Solomon, and was an idol and sun worshippers. Solomon summoned her to his court and showed to her by a demonstration that behind the power of the sun was the power of the One God. She became convinced that it was not the sun which was a god, so she prayed to the One God as mentioned in this verse. Note that she didn't submit *to* Solomon but *with* Solomon to God. According to the Bible, Solomon started worshipping idols under the influence of his wives. The Quran refutes this, and shows that Solomon's wives came over to the belief in the One God by his preaching.

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**59** Say: Praise be to Allah and peace on His servants whom He has chosen! Is Allah better, or what they set up as partners (with Him)?

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**62** Or, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil, and will make you successors in the earth? Is there a god with Allah? Little mindful are you!

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*Note:* Allah is the only One Who answers the distressed person when the latter calls upon him in prayer, and removes the distress. The distressed person can be any human being. Not only does He remove the distress, but Allah can make such people take the place of the comfortable ones who never turned to Him or thanked Him. Specifically, the verse is referring to the persecuted Muslims of the time of the Holy Prophet. Allah did remove their distress a few years later, and they did become rulers in the land in place of their oppressors.

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