

## Awakening (at-Tanbeeh)

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ تَحْمِلَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا

**"Indeed, We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man [undertook to] bear it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant."<sup>1</sup>**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمْسِكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ أَنْ تَزُولَا وَلَئِنْ زَالَتَا إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ.

**"Indeed, Allah holds the heavens and the earth, lest they cease. And if they should cease, no one could hold them [in place] after Him."<sup>2</sup>**

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَأَتِيَةٌ

**"And We have not created the heavens and earth and that between them except in truth. And indeed, the Hour is coming."<sup>3</sup>**

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوا مَا تَرَكَ عَلَى ظَهَرِهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى

**"And if Allah were to impose blame on the people for what they have earned, He would not leave upon it [i.e., the earth] any creature. But He defers them for a specified term."<sup>4</sup>**

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

**"O you who have believed, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow – and fear Allah."<sup>5</sup>**

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All things in creation have a beginning, and our beginning is an awakening... the realization that within oneself all is not well. This awakening may come early in life, or it may come quite late. And even, perhaps, there might be several beginnings after periods of stagnation. Yet, each beginning holds the highest potential, and this is a great mercy from Allah.

The lifetime is a short journey through one aspect of creation. Its length is not our concern, for Allah *subhānahu wa ta'ālā* has determined it according to His own knowledge and will, making it entirely adequate for every soul to establish whatever will be a witness for it on the Day of Judgement.

<sup>1</sup>Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33:72.

<sup>2</sup>Sūrah Fāṭir, 35:41.

<sup>3</sup>Sūrah al-Ḥijr, 15:85.

<sup>4</sup>Sūrah Fāṭir, 35:45.

<sup>5</sup>Sūrah al-Ḥashr, 59:18.

A further mercy to mankind is that every new beginning nullifies all that preceded it, be it disbelief, sin, or mere failure to make the best use of one's time and resources. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) affirmed, "*Islam destroys what was before it, and repentance destroys what was before it.*"<sup>6</sup> What greater generosity could there be than that of Allah ta'ālā, who, after mentioning the eternal humiliation and punishment of those who commit the gravest sins, adds:

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

***"...Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful."***<sup>7</sup>

Know then, that however long or short a life span might be, its quality, by the grace of Allah, is determined from that point when one asserts his human faculties of thought and reason and awakens to the purpose of his creation, undertaking to fulfill his responsibilities on earth in obedience to his Creator. The length of this period is again determined by Allah in adequate measure, according to His perfect knowledge of every soul. From this beginning, true life emerges – life of a higher quality which only the believer can achieve...

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا

***"And is one who was dead and We gave him life and made for him light by which to walk among the people like one who is in darkness, never to emerge therefrom?"***<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Muslim and Ahmad.

<sup>7</sup>Sūrah al-Furqān, 25:70.

<sup>8</sup>Sūrah al-An'ām, 6:122.