

Sura 37: Al-Saffat (The Ranged in Rows)

In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy

This Sura was revealed in Mecca. Like the Sura before it, its verses are short and they have a fast rhythm. This Sura deals with the same subject matter of Meccan Suras. Its objective is to establish the fundamentals of the doctrine and emphasize the Oneness of God. However, this Sura deals with a specific form of myth that the Arabs before Islam believed in: the existence of a marriage relationship between God and the jinn. This myth claimed that the angels were the daughters of God as the result of this relationship.

The Sura has been divided into three sections. The first section deals with the myth of the relationship between God, jinn, and the angels. The second section gives examples from the history of nations which rejected God's messengers that came to them in the same way the Arabs rejected Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The third section returns back to discrediting the myth about the jinn and the angels. At the end the verses reassures the sincere and devout servants of God of His support.

Verses 1 to 68:

1. *By those who arrange themselves in rows,*
2. *And those who drive away with reproof,*
3. *And those who recite the reminder.*
4. *Verily, your God is One.*
5. *Lord of the heavens and of the earth and all that is between them, and Lord of every sunrise.*
6. *We have indeed adorned the lowest heaven with the ornament of the stars;*
7. *And guarded it against every rebellious devil.*
8. *They cannot eavesdrop on the Higher Assembly- they are pelted from every side.*
9. *Repelled, for they are under a perpetual torment;*
10. *Except for him who snatches a fragment, and there pursues him a piercing flame.*
11. *Then ask them (Muhammad), "Are they more difficult to create, or those whom we have created?" We created them of sticky clay.*
12. *Truly you wonder, while they ridicule,*
13. *And when they are reminded, they do not become mindful,*
14. *And when they see a sign, they ridicule.*
15. *And they say, "This is nothing but evident magic.*
16. *When we die, and become dust and bones, shall we be raised up (again);*
17. *And our forefathers?"*
18. *Say, "Yes, and you will be humiliated."*
19. *It will be a single blast and they will begin to see.*
20. *They will say, "Woe to us! This is the Day of Judgment."*
21. *This is the Day of Judgment, which you used to deny.*
22. *Assemble the wrongdoers, together with the like of them, and what they used to worship,*
23. *Besides God, and lead them to the path of Hell.*
24. *But stop them, for they must be questioned.*

25. *What is the matter with you that you do not help each other?*
26. *In fact, on that day they will be submissive.*
27. *And they will turn to one another, and question one another.*
28. *They will say, "It was you who used to come to us from the right."*
29. *They say, "You yourselves were not believers.*
30. *We had no power over you, but you were transgressing people;*
31. *Now the Word of our Lord has been fulfilled against us. We are about to taste (the torment).*
32. *We led you astray, for truly we were ourselves astray."*
33. *This day they will (both) share in the torment.*
34. *That is how We deal with the guilty.*
35. *For when it was said to them, "There is no deity except God," they were arrogant;*
36. *And said, "Shall we forsake our gods for a mad poet?"*
37. *He has come with the Truth, and he confirmed (the Message of) the messengers (before him).*
38. *You shall indeed taste the painful torment.*
39. *And you will only be recompensed according to what you have done.*
40. *But the sincere (and devoted) servants of God,*
41. *For them there is a known provision.*
42. *Fruits, and they will be honored,*
43. *In the Gardens of bliss,*
44. *On couches facing one another;*
45. *A cup from a gushing spring will be brought round for them,*
46. *White, delicious to the drinkers,*
47. *Causing no headache or intoxication.*
48. *And with them are those of modest gaze, with lovely eyes,*
49. *As if they were eggs carefully protected.*
50. *Then they will turn to one another and question one another.*
51. *One of them will say, "I had an intimate companion (on the earth),*
52. *Who used to say, 'Are you one of those who believe?*
53. *Can we, when we are dead and have become mere dust and bones - can we (then) verily be brought to account?'"*
54. *He will say, "Will you have a look?"*
55. *He looked down and saw him in the depth of Hell.*
56. *He said, "By God, you almost ruined me.*
57. *Had it not been for the Blessing of my Lord, I would have certainly been among those who were brought (to Hell).*
58. *Are we then not to die?*
59. *Except our former death, and that we shall not be tormented?*
60. *Verily this is the supreme achievement.*
61. *For the like of this let all strive, who wish to strive."*
62. *Is that a better accommodation or the tree of Zaqqum?*
63. *We have truly made it (as) a trial for the wrongdoers.*
64. *It is a tree that springs out of the bottom of Hell.*
65. *The shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devils.*
66. *Truly they will eat thereof and fill their bellies therewith.*

67. Then on top of that they will have a drink of boiling water.
68. Then they will return to Hell. (37: 1 - 68)

“By those who arrange themselves in rows, and those who drive away with reproof, and those who recite the reminder. Verily, your God is One. Lord of the heavens and of the earth and all that is between them, and Lord of every sunrise.” Those who arrange themselves in rows, who drive away with reproof, and who recite the reminders are three groups of angels. They were referred to using the tasks that they were given. The first task may be a reference to the angels who arrange themselves in rows in prayers or waiting for God’s commands to be issued. The second task may be a reference to the angels who rebuke and treat harshly the sinners at their time of death. The third task may be a reference to the angels who recite the Quran and sing God’s praise. An oath is being made using these angels to emphasize the concept of the Oneness of God. God then introduces Himself to His servants, *“Lord of the heavens and of the earth and all that is between them, and Lord of every sunrise.”* The heavens and the earth and everything in between are seen by the people. People should reflect on the signs that they see in the heavens and the earth, signs which testify to the existence of God. The expression, *“Lord of every sunrise,”* expresses a cosmic reality. As the earth rotates around the sun, sunrise changes every day. Each location on earth has its own sunrise. So as we live on earth we see many sunrises. The reflection on the signs of God in the universe fills the heart with awe of God.

“We have indeed adorned the lowest heaven with the ornament of the stars;” The verses refer to the jinn and to the miracle of the creation of heaven. One can see the ornaments of the stars. It indicates that the beauty of the creation was an intended plan of God. God wanted his creation to be beautiful, well proportioned, and meticulously arranged. The beauty that God embedded in His creation is part of the nature of the creation. God wanted His creation to look beautiful and to function perfectly. Some of the stars guard the heavens from the transgression of the jinn, *“and guarded it against every rebellious devil. They cannot eavesdrop on the Higher Assembly- they are pelted from every side. Repelled, for they are under a perpetual torment; except for him who snatches a fragment, and there pursues him a piercing flame.”* We do not know how these jinn eavesdrop, how they snatch the fragments, nor do we know how they are pelted. This knowledge is beyond our human ability. The important thing is that these jinn are prevented from getting into heaven. Had they had a relationship with God as the disbelievers claimed, they would not have been treated this way.

The Prophet (PBUH) was asked to pose a question to the disbelievers, *“Then ask them (Muhammad), ‘Are they more difficult to create, or those whom we have created?’”* If they believe that God created the heavens, the earth, the angels, and the jinn would it be difficult for God to create people? This was a rhetorical question. The answer follows directly, *“We created them of sticky clay.”* It is certainly not difficult for God to create them. The Prophet (PBUH) was wondering why they rejected the message. The answer was then given, *“Truly you wonder, while they ridicule, and when they are reminded, they do not become mindful, and when they see a sign, they ridicule. And they say, ‘This is nothing but evident magic. When we die, and become dust and bones, shall we be raised up (again); and our forefathers?’”* They did not reflect on the signs of God’s power. They saw the signs in the universe and they saw the signs within themselves but they were heedless of their meanings. They simply rejected the concept of

resurrection. The verse then confronted them with a blunt message, *“Say, ‘Yes, and you will be humiliated.’”* It will be only one blast, *“It will be a single blast and they will begin to see. They will say, ‘Woe to us! This is the Day of Judgment.’”* They will cry in anguish asking, *“is this the Day of Judgment?”* The answer will come with rebuke, yes indeed, *“This is the Day of Judgment, which you used to deny.”*

The narrative then changes from the third person to the first person addressing those who denied the Day of Judgment before, *“Assemble the wrongdoers, together with the like of them, and what they used to worship, besides God, and lead them to the path of Hell.”* Assemble the wrongdoers and those who were like them, and guide them to the path of Hell. They refused to be guided to the straight path in their life, so in the Hereafter they will have to settle with being guided to the path of Hell. They will be questioned, *“But stop them, for they must be questioned.”* The first question is, *“What is the matter with you that you do not help each other?”* Why are you not helping each other today? When no answer is given, their situation will be described, *“In fact, on that day they will be submissive.”*

The narrative then continues to describe what the disbelievers will do, *“And they will turn to one another, and question one another. They will say, ‘It was you who used to come to us from the right.’”* The followers will accuse their leaders of misleading them by coming from the right. This is a metaphorical expression. Coming from the right means coming with power. The followers will say to the leaders you forced us to follow you. Then the leaders will respond, *“They say, ‘You yourselves were not believers. We had no power over you, but you were transgressing people;’”* You were not really believers in the first place, and moreover we did not have any power over you. You were misguided because you were transgressors. No, the Lord’s decree has been passed and we like you will get the torment that we deserve; *“Now the Word of our Lord has been fulfilled against us. We are about to taste (the torment). We led you astray, for truly we were ourselves astray.”*

The verdict will be issued, *“This day they will (both) share in the torment. That is how We deal with the guilty.”* The reason for the punishment will be given, *“For when it was said to them, ‘There is no deity except God,’ they were arrogant; and said, ‘Shall we forsake our gods for a mad poet?’”* The answer to their claim will then be given, *“He has come with the Truth, and he confirmed (the Message of) the messengers (before him). You shall indeed taste the painful torment. And you will only be recompensed according to what you have done.”*

But the sincere and devout servants of God will be saved from this punishment, *“But the sincere (and devoted) servants of God, for them there is a known provision, fruits. And they will be honored, in the Gardens of delight, on couches facing one another; a cup from a gushing spring will be brought round for them, white, delicious to the drinkers, causing no headache or intoxication.”* They will be in bliss. They will be given physical as well as spiritual pleasures. They were chosen by God and this is the highest rank of honor. They will be also honored at the High Assembly. They will be reclining on couches enjoying fruits and drinks with their spouse, *“And with them are those of modest gaze, with lovely eyes, as if they were eggs carefully protected.”*

They will reminisce about their previous life. One of them will remember a friend that he had in his lifetime, *“Then they will turn to one another and question one another. One of them will say, ‘I had an intimate companion (on the earth), who used to say, ‘Are you one of those who believe? Can we, when we are dead and have become mere dust and bones - can we (then) verily be brought to account?’”* His friend did not believe in the Day of Judgment. As he was recalling the conversation with his disbelieving friend, he thought to check upon him and find out what was his fate, *“He will say, ‘Will you have a look?’ He looked down and saw him in the depth of Hell.”* He looked and saw his disbelieving friend in the bottom of Hellfire. He then addressed him, *“He said, ‘By God, you almost ruined me. Had it not been for the Blessing of my Lord, I would have certainly been among those who were brought (to Hell).’”* The scene of his disbelieving friend in Hell reminds him of the great blessings of God that he is enjoying. He wanted to reassure himself of these blessings; he will ask *“Are we then not to die except our former death, and that we shall not be tormented? Verily this is the supreme achievement.”* Then a statement to awaken the hearts and to exhort people to strive for this achievement is made, *“For the like of this let all strive, who wish to strive.”*

Compare this to the fate that awaits the other group who rejected guidance, *“Is that a better accommodation or the tree of Zaqqum? We have truly made it (as) a trial for the wrongdoers. It is a tree that springs out of the bottom of Hell. The shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devils.”* Is the permanent bliss better or is it the tree of Zaqqum? It is a tree that springs from the bottom of Hell. Its fruits are like the heads of devils. People do not know what a devil’s head look like, but it must look awful. It must be horrible to look at, so how about eating it? This tree was made a test to the disbelievers. When Abu Jahl bin Hisham heard about it, he ridiculed the idea of talking about a tree that grows inside fire. But it is not difficult to imagine a tree having the same characteristics of fire to be growing in Hell. The disbelievers will eat from it, *“Truly they will eat thereof and fill their bellies therewith.”* When their bellies are full and they ask for water, they will be given boiling water to quench their thirst, *“Then on top of that they will have a drink of boiling water.”* Then they will be returned back to their permanent dwellings in Hell, *“Then they will return to Hell.”*

Verses 69 to 148:

69. *They indeed found their fathers astray.*
70. *They rushed along in their footsteps.*
71. *And verily most of the people of old went astray before them,*
72. *Even though We sent messengers to warn them.*
73. *Then see what was the end of those who were warned (but heeded not),*
74. *Except the sincere (and devoted) servants of God.*
75. *And Noah called upon Us, and We are the best of responders.*
76. *And We delivered him and his people from the great distress.*
77. *And We made his offspring the survivors.*
78. *And We left (this blessing) for him among the later generations.*
79. *Peace be upon Noah among all people.*
80. *Thus indeed do We reward the doers of good.*

81. *He was one of Our believing servants.*
82. *Then We drowned the others.*
83. *Verily among those who followed his way was Abraham.*
84. *When he came to his Lord with a sound heart.*
85. *When he said to his father and his people, "What is it that you worship?*
86. *Is it false gods beside God that you desire?*
87. *Then what is your idea about the Lord of the worlds?"*
88. *Then he looked up to the stars.*
89. *And he said, "I am indeed sick,"*
90. *So they turned away from him, and departed.*
91. *Then he turned to their gods and said, "Will you not eat (of the offerings before you)?*
92. *What is the matter with you that you don't speak?"*
93. *Then he turned towards them, striking with his right hand.*
94. *And (his people) came toward him in haste.*
95. *He said, "Do you worship that which you carved yourselves?*
96. *When God created you and what you do?"*
97. *They said, "Build for him a furnace, and throw him into the blazing fire."*
98. *They wanted to harm him, but We made them the most humiliated them.*
99. *He said, "I will go to my Lord. He will surely guide me.*
100. *My Lord, grant me a righteous (son)."*
101. *So We gave him the good news of a forbearing boy.*
102. *And when (his son) was old enough to share in his father's endeavors, (Abraham) said, "My dear son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrifice you. What do you think?" He said, "My father, do that which you are commanded. God willing, you shall find me perseverant."*
103. *Then, when they both submitted (to God), and he had flung him down upon his face,*
104. *We called out to him, "Abraham;"*
105. *You have already fulfilled the vision" - thus indeed do We reward the doers of good.*
106. *That was verily a clear test.*
107. *And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice.*
108. *And We left (this blessing) for him among the later generations.*
109. *Peace be on Abraham.*

110. *Thus indeed We reward the doers of good.*
111. *He was one of our believing servants.*
112. *And We gave him the good news of Isaac - a prophet - one of the righteous.*
113. *We blessed him and Isaac. And of their seed some are righteous and some clearly wronged themselves.*
114. *And certainly We conferred a favor on Moses and Aaron.*
115. *And We saved them and their people from the great distress;*
116. *And We supported them, so they became the victors.*
117. *And We gave them the clear Scripture.*
118. *And We guided them to the straight path.*
119. *And We left (this blessing) for them among the later generations.*
120. *Peace be on Moses and Aaron.*
121. *Thus indeed We reward the doers of good.*
122. *They were two of Our believing servants.*
123. *Elias was most surely of the messengers.*
124. *When he said to his people, "Will you not be conscious of God?*
125. *Do you call upon Ba'l and forsake the Best of Creators?*
126. *God, your Lord and the Lord of your ancestors?"*
127. *But they rejected him, and they will certainly be brought forward.*
128. *Except the sincere and devoted servants of God.*
129. *And We left (this blessing) for him among the later generations.*
130. *Peace be on Elias.*

131. *Thus indeed We reward the doers of good.*
132. *He was one of Our believing servants.*
133. *And Lut was most surely of the messengers.*
134. *We delivered him and his followers,*
135. *All Except an old woman among those who stayed behind;*
136. *Then We destroyed the others.*
137. *And most surely you pass by them in the morning,*
138. *And at night; Will you not then use reason?*
139. *Jonah was most surely of the messengers.*
140. *When he ran away to a ship completely laden;*
141. *And then he drew lots and was of those who were cast off.*
142. *The big fish swallowed him, and he had done acts worthy of blame.*
143. *And had he not been one of those who glorify (God)*
144. *He would certainly have remained inside the fish till the Day of Resurrection.*
145. *Then We cast him on a barren shore while he was sick;*
146. *And We caused a tree of gourd to grow above him;*
147. *And We sent him to a hundred thousand people or more.*
148. *And they believed, therefore We let them enjoy (life) for a while. (37: 69 – 148)*

“They indeed found their fathers astray. They rushed along in their footsteps.” They hastened to follow in the footsteps of their forefathers, even though they knew that their forefathers went astray. They were warned but failed to heed the warning, *“And verily most of the people of old went astray before them, even though We sent messengers to warn them. Then see what was the end of those who were warned (but heeded not), except the sincere (and devoted) servants of God.”* So, see what was the fate of those who did not heed the warning? The consequences for those heedless people will be described in the following stories, which start with the story of

Prophet Noah (PBUH).

“And Noah called upon Us, and We are the best of responders. And We delivered him and his people from the great distress; and We made his offspring the survivors. And We left (this blessing) for him among the later generations. Peace be upon Noah among all people. Thus indeed do we reward the doers of good. He was one of our believing servants. Then We drowned the others.” The verses describe how Noah (PBUH) called upon his Lord; and how his call was completely and comprehensively answered. God saved Noah (PBUH) and those who believed with him and He helped Noah’s (PBUH) progeny to establish a new life on earth. His legacy was kept for generations after he passed away as a reward for his good deeds. The sign of his good deeds and the reason for the good reward was his faith in God. Noah (PBUH) was, *“one of our believing servants.”* The disbelievers were punished, *“Then We drowned the others.”*

The story of Prophet Abraham (PBUH) followed the story of Prophet Noah (PBUH). First, the link between Abraham (PBUH) and Noah (PBUH) was established, *“Verily among those who followed his way was Abraham.”* Many years separated the two but they shared the same message. Abraham’s (PBUH) most important characteristic is then highlighted, *“When he came to his Lord with a sound heart;”* Abraham (PBUH) came to God with absolute submission and devotion. Abraham’s (PBUH) pure heart was shocked and dismayed at the behavior of his people, *“When he said to his father and his people, ‘What is it that you worship?’* He felt angry when he saw them worshipping idols and expressed his anger in a question, *“Is it false gods beside God that you desire?”* How can anyone worship false gods instead of the Lord of the Worlds, *“Then what is your idea about the Lord of the worlds?”* How would you worship other gods beside God? What do you think will happen to you when you meet God?

The narrative moves forward to another scene, *“Then he looked up to the stars. And he said, ‘I am indeed sick.’ So they turned away from him, and departed.”* It was narrated that this happened on the day of one of their festivals. They used to go out for a picnic on that day. Prophet Abraham (PBUH) wanted to teach them a lesson so he declined to go out with them. When they left he went to the temple, *“Then he turned to their gods and said, ‘Will you not eat (of the offerings before you)? What is the matter with you that you don’t speak?’”* He saw that there was food in front of the idols, so he asked them why do not they eat. Naturally, no answer was forthcoming from the idols. So he continued in his sarcasm asking them why they do not speak. When no one spoke, *“he turned towards them, striking with his right hand.”* When his people came back from their picnic and saw what happened to their gods, they went to question Abraham (PBUH), *“And (his people) came toward him in haste.”* His answer to their questions was a simple and logical question, *“He said, ‘Do you worship that which you carved yourselves? When God created you and what you do?’”* How can you worship what you carve yourselves? The true God, who is the only One worthy of worship is their maker. They were so incensed, *“They said, ‘Build for him a furnace, and throw him into the blazing fire.’”* This was the only logic they knew: do not argue with him but burn him and silence him forever. But God supported him, *“They wanted to harm him, but We made them most humiliated them.”* They failed because God protected His sincere servant.

The narrative now turns to Abraham (PBUH), *“He said, ‘I will go to my Lord. He will surely guide me. My Lord, grant me a righteous (son).’”* Abraham (PBUH) migrated towards God. This was a spiritual migration more than a geographical migration. Abraham (PBUH) forsake everything in his life, his father, his people, and his home and submitted himself fully to God. He was certain that God will guide him. He did not have children so, he asked God to give him a child. God responded favorably to his prayer, *“So We gave him the good news of a forbearing boy.”* This was his son, Ishmael (PBUH). One can imagine Abraham’s (PBUH) happiness when he was given the glad tidings telling him that he will be a father to a, *“forbearing boy.”*

Then we come to the unique situation that Abraham (PBUH) found himself in, *“And when (his son) was old enough to share in his father’s endeavors, (Abraham) said, ‘My dear son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrifice you. What do you think?’ He said, ‘My father, do that which you are commanded. God willing, you shall find me steadfast.’”* How wonderful was the faith, the obedience, and the submission? Look at Abraham (PBUH), an old man who deserted his family and kin and migrated away from his homeland, yearning for a child and finally God gave him a forbearing boy. He was looking forward for the child to grow up and be his companion in life. When the child grew up and Abraham (PBUH) was about to start enjoying his son’s company, he saw a dream in which he was sacrificing his son. He knew that the dream was a sign from God for him to sacrifice his son. What could he do? It was not a clear command from God, neither was it a revelation from God, it was only a sign. But for Abraham (PBUH) that was enough. He did not hesitate. He submitted to God’s sign without even asking why? He was not annoyed nor was he afraid. He accepted Gods’ command willingly. He approached his son quietly telling him about the dream he saw. His words reflected his feeling of security in accepting God’s command. He wanted his son to think about this grave situation. He did not cheat nor force his son into accepting the sacrifice. He wanted his son to be his partner in the decision and in the reward that God will give to his obedient servants.

The son’s reaction was not much different from his father’s. The son not only accepted God’s command willingly submitting to the will of God but also showed his confidence in God’s wisdom. Like his father he felt secure and content with God’s decree. The Arabic word that has been translated here as, *“My father,”* is an endearing way of address. One can see that Ishmael’s response did not even reflect a shred of resentment towards his father. His words did not reflect any feeling of heroism, only an expression of the absolute trust in the will of God, *“God willing, you shall find me steadfast.”*

“Then, when they both submitted (to God), and he had flung him down upon his face,” They both submitted to the will of God and they proceeded to do what they were told to do. Their actions proved their faithfulness, the obedience and their submission. God Called, *“We called out to him, ‘Abraham; You have already fulfilled the vision’ - thus indeed do We reward the doers of good. That was verily a clear test. And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice.”* They fulfilled the command. Abraham (PBUH) has given the highest example of submission to God, even if it meant to sacrifice his son. God responded and ransomed Ishmael (PBUH) with a momentous sacrifice. God rewarded them for their submission. They were chosen for a very difficult test. God prepared their hearts and gave them the perseverance to accept and fulfill the command. So, they deserved the great reward.

Muslims celebrate these events every year. They sacrifice an animal to commemorate the story of Abraham (PBUH) and to learn the meaning of submission willingly to God. God does not want people to suffer. But people being tested to examine their willingness to submit to God's decrees. When the people show their truthfulness in submitting to God, He in turn will reward them as He rewarded their patriarch before. Abraham's (PBUH) legacy will be remembered till the end of time, "*And We left (this blessing) for him among the later generations.*" His lord will bestow His peace on him, "*Peace be on Abraham.*" That is how God rewards the doers of good and the believing servants, "*Thus indeed We reward the doers of good. He was one of our believing servants.*" God then gave another of His blessings, "*And We gave him the good news of Isaac - a prophet - one of the righteous. We blessed him and Isaac. And of their seed some are righteous and some clearly wronged themselves.*" God did not only give him another son but also blessed that son and made him a prophet. Some of their progeny will be righteous and others will wrong themselves.

Moses (PBUH) and Aaron (PBUH) were from their righteous progeny, "*And certainly We conferred a favor on Moses and Aaron; and We saved them and their people from the great distress; and We supported them, so they became the victors. And We gave them the clear Scripture. And We guided them to the straight path. And We left (this blessing) for them among the later generations. Peace be on Moses and Aaron. Thus indeed We reward the doers of good. They were two of Our believing servants.*" This is a very brief summary of the story of Moses (PBUH) and Aaron (PBUH). It mentions that they were chosen by God. They were saved together with their people from the, "*great distress.*" They were given victory over Pharaoh and his people, and they were given, "*the clear Scripture.*" They were guided to the straight path and their memory will remain forever. They were greeted with the greeting of peace, a reward for the doers of good.

Another brief glimpse into the story of Prophet Elias (PBUH) is given, "*Elias was most surely of the messengers. When he said to his people, 'Will you not be conscious of God? Do you call upon Ba'l and forsake the Best of Creators, God, your Lord and the Lord of your ancestors?' But they rejected him and they will certainly be brought forward; except the sincere and devoted servants of God. And We left (this blessing) for him among the later generations. Peace be on Elias. Thus indeed We reward the doers of good. He was one of Our believing servants.*" Elias (PBUH) called his people to believe in the One God. He expressed his dismay that they left the worship of the, "*Best Creator,*" to worship an idol. But they rejected him and they will be brought to receive their punishment. But the believers will be saved.

A brief glimpse into the story of Prophet Lut (PBUH) follows, "*And Lut was most surely of the messengers. We delivered him and his followers, all except an old woman among those who stayed behind; then We destroyed the others. And most surely you pass by them in the morning, and at night; will you not then use reason?*" The verses describe how Lut (PBUH) was chosen as a messenger, how he was saved, and how the disbelievers were destroyed. It also reminds the Arabs with the close by remains of his city, the remains that they pass by almost every day.

The last of these brief stories is the story of Prophet Jonah (PBUH), "*Jonah was most surely of the messengers. When he ran away to a ship completely laden, and then he drew lots and was of*

those who were cast off. The big fish swallowed him, and he had done acts worthy of blame. And had he not been one of those who glorify (God) he would certainly have remained inside the fish till the Day of Resurrection. Then We cast him on a barren shore while he was sick; And We caused a tree of gourd to grow above him; And We sent him to a hundred thousand people or more. And they believed, therefore We let them enjoy (life) for a while.” The Quran did not mention where the people of Jonah (PBUH) used to live, but it is understood that they lived near the sea. The narrations mentioned that Prophet Jonah (PBUH) was angry at his people who rejected him. He warned them that they will be punished. In his anger, he left the city and went to the sea shore where he boarded a ship. The ship was tossed around by the waves. The people onboard thought that they have among them a person who committed a sin. They believed that the only way to save the ship was to find that person and threw him to the sea. They drew lots and the lots indicated that Jonah (PBUH) was the one to be thrown overboard. He was swallowed by the whale. He realized his sin, repented, and glorified God. God responded favorably to his prayer and he was saved. He was sent again to his people who became believers after he had left them.

Verses 149 to 182:

149. *Now ask them (Muhammad), “Are the daughters for your Lord, while for them the sons?*
150. *Or did We create the angels females, while they were witnesses?’*
151. *It is out of their falsehood that they say,*
152. *“God has begotten children.” Indeed, they are liars.*
153. *Has He chosen daughters in preference to sons?*
154. *What is the matter with you? How do you judge?*
155. *Will you not then become mindful?*
156. *Or do you have a clear authority?*
157. *Then bring your book (of authority) if you are truthful.*
158. *And they have invented a relationship between Him and the jinn, whereas the jinn know well that they will be brought before (Him).*
159. *Glory be to God. (He is) far above the things they ascribe (to Him).*
160. *Except for the sincere and devoted servants of God.*
161. *Surely you and what you worship,*
162. *Cannot tempt (anyone) away from Him,*
163. *Except those who will burn in Hell.*
164. *And there is none of us but has an assigned place;*
165. *And we are verily arranged in rows;*
166. *And we are the glorifiers (of God).*
167. *And there were those who said,*
168. *“If only we had a scripture like previous people,*
169. *We would have certainly been sincere servants of God.”*
170. *Yet (now that it is come) they disbelieve therein; but they will come to know.*
171. *Our Word has been given to our servants, the messengers.*
172. *That they would certainly be victorious;*

173. *And that Our troops will certainly be victors.*
 174. *So turn you away from them for a little while,*
 175. *And watch them, for they will (soon) see.*
 176. *Do they wish to hasten Our torment?*
 177. *But when it descends into the open space before them, evil will be the morning for those who were warned.*
 178. *So turn you away from them for a little while,*
 179. *And watch, for they will (soon) see.*
 180. *Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Eminence, far above what they describe;*
 181. *And peace on the messengers.*
 182. *And praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds. (37: 149 -182)*

“Now ask them (Muhammad), ‘Are the daughters for your Lord, while for them the sons? Or did We create the angels females, while they were witnesses?’ It is out of their falsehood that they say, ‘God has begotten children.’ Indeed, they are liars. Has He chosen daughters in preference to sons? What is the matter with you? How do you judge? Will you not then become mindful?” The verses refute the myth that the Arabs used to believe in. The Arabs hated having daughters; they considered having daughters as a trial. They practiced infanticide against female babies. But they had the audacity to call the angels the daughters of God. So, Muhammad (PBUH) ask them how can they keep the sons for themselves and attribute the daughters to God? Or did God do that Himself? Then ask them about the origin of this myth. Did they witness the creation of the angels to know that they were created females? It is all a lie and they have no proof, otherwise they should bring that proof if they were truthful, *“Or do you have a clear authority? Then bring your book (of authority) if you are truthful.”*

What about the other myth? They claimed that the angels were the daughters of God born by the jinn. The jinn knew that they were created by God as the rest of His creation and on the Day of Judgment they will be held accountable for their deeds, *“And they have invented a relationship between Him and the jinn, whereas the jinn know well that they will be brought before (Him).”* God is far above what they ascribe to Him, *“Glory be to God. (He is) far above the things they ascribe (to Him).”* The believing jinn will escape the torment, *“Except for the sincere and devoted servants of God.”*

The Quran turns to the disbelieving Arabs, *“Surely you and what you worship, cannot tempt (anyone) away from Him, except those who will burn in Hell.”* The disbelievers along with what they worship have no power to tempt the believers. They will only tempt those who are already assigned to Hellfire.

The angels will then speak, *“And there is none of us but has an assigned place; and we are verily arranged in rows; and we are the glorifiers (of God).”* They know their places which were assigned to them and they perform the tasks which were prescribed for them.

The narrative turns back to the disbelievers reminding them of what they used to say. They envied the people of the Scripture. They said that had they been given a scripture like the people

before them they would have certainly believed, *“And there were those who said, ‘If only we had a scripture like previous people, We would have certainly been sincere servants of God.’”* But when they received guidance they rejected it, *“Yet (now that it is come) they disbelieve therein; but they will come to know.”* So let them wait for the consequence of rejecting guidance.

“Our Word has been given to our servants, the messengers: that they would certainly be helped; and that Our troops will certainly be victors.” God’s promise was fulfilled. His religion was established and His Message crushed the falsehood. All attempts to erase the divine message failed. The messengers of God were certainly the victors. This promise is one of the norms that God created. He will support his devoted servants who call to His straight path. Victory may be delayed; it may take a different form than what people wanted but it will come in the form that God wants it to be.

“So turn you away from them for a little while, and watch them, for they will (soon) see. Do they wish to hasten Our torment? But when it descends into the open space before them, evil will be the morning for those who were warned. So turn you away from them for a little while, and watch, for they will (soon) see.” The Prophet (PBUH) was commanded to ignore them. The day will come when the promise of God will be fulfilled. Do they really wish to hasten the punishment? When it comes it will be their doom.

The Sura ends with glorifying God, greeting the messengers and singing the praise of God, *“Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Eminence, far above what they describe. And peace on the messengers; and praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.”*