

Surah 7, al-Araf Mecca 39

The Quran's Text & Yusuf Ali's Translation:

...وَآكُتِبْ لَنَا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُدْنَا إِلَيْكَ

7: 156. "And ordain for us that which is good, in this life and in the hereafter: for we have turned unto Thee."

... قَالَ عَذَابِي أُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَاءُ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ...

He said: "With My punishment I visit whom I will; but My mercy extendeth to all things.

[Ali's comments: 1125. Allah's mercy is in and for all things. All nature subserves a common purpose, which is for the good of all His creatures. Our faculties and our understandings are all instances of His grace and mercy. Each unit or factor among his creatures benefits from the others and receives them as Allah's mercy to itself: and in its turn, each contributes to the benefit of the others and is thus an instance of Allah's mercy to them. His mercy is universal and all-pervasive; while His justice and punishment are reserved for those who swerve from His plan and (to use a mediaeval juridical formula) go out of His Peace.]

...فَسَاكُتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ...

That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those
- who do right, - and practice regular charity,

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ...

- and those who believe in Our signs;

Transliteration *Waktub lana_ fi ha_zihid dunya_ hasanataw wa fil
a_khirati inna_ hudna_ ilaik(a), qa_la 'aza_bi usibu bihi man
asya_(u), wa rahmati wasi'at kulla syai'(in), fa sa'aktubuha_ lillazina
yattaqu_na wa yu'tu_naz zaka_ta wallazina hum bi a_ya_tina_
yu'minu_n(a).*

[1126. The personal grace and mercy -and their opposite- are referred to the singular pronoun "I" while the impersonal Law, by which Allah's Signs operate in His universe, is referred to the plural pronoun of authority and dignity, "We".]

...الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ

7: 157. "Those who follow the Messenger, the
unlettered Prophet,

...الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ...

whom they find mentioned in their own
(Scriptures); in the law and the Gospel;

[1127. In this verse is a prefiguring, to Moses, of the Arabian Messenger, the last and greatest of the messengers of Allah. Prophecies about him will be found in the Tawrah and the Injil. In the reflex of the Tawrah as now accepted by the Jews, Moses says: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me" (Deut. 18:15): the only Prophet who brought a Shariah like that of Moses was Muhammad Al-Mustafa, and he came of the house of Ismail the brother of Isaac the father of Israel. In the reflex of the Gospel as now accepted by the Christians, Christ promised another Comforter (John 14:16): the Greek word Paraclete which the Christians interpret as referring to the Holy Spirit is by our Doctors taken to be Pericyte, which would be the Greek form of Ahmad. See 61:6.]

...يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ...

for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil:

...وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ...

he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure);

..... وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ...

He releases them from their heavy burdens
and from the yokes that are upon them.

[1128. **Aglal:** plural of gullun, a yoke, an iron collar. In the formalism and exclusiveness of the Jews there were many restrictions which were removed by Islam, a religion of freedom in the faith of Allah, of universality in the variety of races, languages, manners and customs.]

...فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ...

So it is those who believe in him, honor him,
help him, and follow the light which is sent
down with him,

[1129. **Light which is sent down with him:** the words are "with him", not "to him", emphasizing the fact that the Light which he brought illumines every one who has the privilege of joining his great and universal Fellowship.]

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ...

it is they who will prosper."

[1130. **Falah:** prosperity in its general sense as well as in its spiritual sense. - In the general sense it means that right

conduct is the only door to happiness and well-being. - In the spiritual sense it means that Faith and its fruits (right conduct) are the only gates to salvation.]

Muhammad Asad's Translation:

[Moses]

7: 156

And ordain Thou for us what is good in this world as well as in the life to come: behold, unto Thee have we turned in repentance!" [God] answered: "With My chastisement do I afflict whom I will - **but My grace overspreads everything**: 123 and so I shall confer it on those who are conscious of Me and spend in charity, and who believe in Our messages –

(7:157) those who shall follow the [last] Apostle, the unlettered Prophet whom they shall find described in the Torah that is with them, and [later on] in the Gospel: 124 [the Prophet] who will enjoin upon them the doing of what is right and forbid them the doing of what is wrong, and make lawful to them the good things of life and forbid them the bad things, and lift

from them their burdens and the shackles that were upon them [aforetime]. 125 Those, therefore, who shall believe in him, and honour him, and succour him, **and follow the light that has been bestowed from on high through him** - it is they that shall attain to a happy state."

Muhammad Pickthall's Translation:

7:156

And ordain for us in, this world that which is good, and in the Hereafter (that which is good), Lo! We have turned unto Thee. He said: I smite with My punishment whom I will, and My mercy embraceth all things, therefore I shall ordain It for those who ward off (evil) and pay the poor-due, and those who believe Our revelations;

7:157

Those who follow the messenger, **the Prophet who can neither read nor write**, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel (which are)

with them. He will enjoin on them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong. He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibit for them only the foul; and he will relieve them of their burden and the fetters that they used to wear. Then those who believe in him, and honor him and help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him: they are the successful.

[Asad's comments:

123 Cf 6:12 (and the corresponding note 10), as well as 6:54.

124 The interpolation of the words "later on" before the reference to the Gospel is necessitated by the fact that the whole of this passage is addressed to Moses and the children of Israel, that is, long before the Gospel (in the Qur'anic sense of this term - cf. surah 3, note 4) was revealed to Jesus. The stories of some of the earlier prophets given in this surah - beginning with the story of Noah and ending with that of Moses and the children of Israel - constitute a kind of introduction to this command to follow the "unlettered Prophet", Muhammad. The stress

on his having been "unlettered" (ummi), i.e., unable to read and write, serves to bring out the fact that all his knowledge of the earlier prophets and of the messages transmitted by them was due to divine inspiration alone, and not to a familiarity with the Bible as such.

For the Old Testament predictions of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (especially in Deuteronomy xviii, 15 and 18), see surah 2, note 33; for the New Testament prophecies to the same effect, see 61 :6 and the corresponding note 6.

125 A reference to the many severe rituals and obligations laid down in Mosaic Law, as well as to the tendency towards asceticism evident in the teachings of the Gospels. Thus the Qur'an implies that those "burdens and shackles", intended as means of spiritual discipline for particular communities and particular stages of man's development, will become unnecessary as soon as God's message to man shall have achieved its final, universal character in the teachings of the Last Prophet, Muhammad.