

Chapter 25, Al-Furqan (The Criterion)

Description: Polytheism is condemned, doubts and objections are dealt with, and the believer's characteristics are described.

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Introduction

As with many other chapters of Quran this one takes its name from the first verse as well. Al-Furqan means the Criterion and the chapter comprises of seventy-seven verses. It refers to the Quran being the book that differentiates between right and wrong. It is from the pages of the Quran that we are to learn the difference between what is good and what is bad. This chapter was revealed in Mecca and begins with a condemnation of all forms of polytheism. It deals with the doubts and objections being raised by the disbelievers and describes the power of God. The chapter ends with the qualities of the believers.



Verses 1 - 9 Distinguishing right from wrong

Blessed is God who has sent down the criterion of what is right and what is wrong (the Quran) to his Prophet, Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, in order that he may warn the world. God is the One who controls the heavens and the earth; He has no offspring or partners. He does not share control in any way. He has created all things and determined them with precision. Yet the unbelievers have taken other gods who are unable to create, have no power over life and death and cannot harm or help in anyway. Those who deny the truth say that the Quran is a forgery devised by Muhammad with the assistance of others but this is unjust and a lie.

Prophet Muhammad is told by God to reply that the Quran is sent down by He who knows the secrets of the heavens and the earth. They (the disbelievers) ask what sort of messenger eats food and walks about in the markets; why is he not accompanied by an angel or has treasure or even a garden of his own? The wrongdoers then declare that Muhammad is affected by magic. They use their own imagination to discredit Muhammad; they are clearly lost.

Verses 10 - 16 A fire prepared

Blessed is God who could if He willed give Muhammad any number of special things, even more special than the things the disbelievers ask about such as gardens under which rivers flow and palaces too. They (the disbelievers) deny the Hour but God has prepared

a blazing fire for those who deny the Hour. When they see the Hellfire in the distance they will hear its fury and roaring and will then be flung into it pleading for death. Which is better they are asked, this, or the garden promised to the righteous? Paradise is a reward and a destination for the righteous where they will find whatever they desire. This is God's promise.

Verses 17 " 24 Deities deny divinity

On the Day of Judgement, God will gather all of humankind with the deities. The deities will be asked if they tried to mislead the people and they will answer that they most certainly did not. The deities will deny the disbelievers and the punishment will not be averted. God reminds Prophet Muhammad that all the prophets ate food and walked in the markets and streets and that some people have been created to be a trial for others. Those who ask why they do not see God or angels, do not really believe in a day when they will stand before God. They are insolent and arrogant. The Day they see the angels will not be a good day for them. The angels will forbid them to cross the barrier and their deeds will be turned to dust and scattered in the wind. The companions of the garden will have a better home.

Verses 25 " 34 Regrets

The Day the clouds are torn apart will be a hard day for the disbelievers. They will bite their hands in regret and wish they had chosen better companions, finally acknowledging Satan as a treacherous enemy. Prophet Muhammad will decry the people who took the Quran as nonsense and God replies that every messenger had a wicked enemy. The disbelievers of Mecca ask why the Quran was not sent down all at one time and God answers that it was sent gradually to strengthen the Prophet's heart. He (Prophet Muhammad) is told that God will help Him answer any arguments put to him. Those who are the furthest away from the right path will fall on their faces into Hell.

Verses 35 " 44 Those who rejected the revelations

Moses was given the scripture and he and his brother Aaron went to those who denied God's signs, they disbelieved and were destroyed. Likewise Noah's people were drowned. God also destroyed the people of 'Aad, Thamud, the Companions of the Rass, and many other generations. All were given warnings which they denied, and it led to their utter destruction. Now they deny Muhammad but soon they will see a punishment for doing so. Prophet Muhammad is asked if he has ever seen a person who has taken his own desires as his god. Prophet Muhammad cannot guide cannot guide a person who chooses not to hear or understand the warning. Some people are people are like cattle lead away from the right track.

Verses 45 - 62 The Power of God

It is God who lengthens the shade; the night is a rest and the day a type of resurrection. He is the One who brings the wind, and sends down water from the sky to bring life to a dead land and quenches the thirst of humankind and animals. This process

is repeated so that people might take heed but most of the time they persist in their disbelief. Prophet Muhammad is told not to give in.

God created two seas, one salty and bitter the other sweet and fresh; he created humankind from water. Even knowing this some people worship something other than God. God sent Muhammad as good news and a warning, thus humankind should put their trust in the Living God who never dies. God created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six days and established Himself above them upon His throne. But some people do not bow down, instead they turn further away. God created the stars, the sun and the moon so that some people would choose to be grateful.

Verses 63- 77 Mannerisms of the believers

The believers walk with humility, address ignorant people with words of peace, and spend the night worshipping their Lord and asking to be kept safe from the fires of Hell. They are not extravagant nor stingy and they never invoke any deity but God. They do not kill except for a just reason, and they do not commit adultery or fornication. God is able to change the bad deeds into good for those who repent and become righteous. The believers do not bear false witness; they pass by frivolity with dignity and take heed of God's signs and revelations. These are the ones whose patience will be rewarded with Paradise, where they will be welcomed with greetings and salutations and shall live forever. Prophet Muhammad is told to say that God does not care if you invoke Him or not but if you reject His revelations you will face the punishment.

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