

[creatures'] sustenance in four days without distinction<sup>1288</sup> – for [the information of] those who ask.

11. Then He directed Himself<sup>1289</sup> to the heaven while it was smoke and said to it and to the earth, "Come [into being],<sup>1290</sup> willingly or by compulsion." They said, "We have come willingly."
12. And He completed them as seven heavens within two days and inspired [i.e., made known] in each heaven its command. And We adorned the nearest heaven with lamps [i.e., stars, for beauty] and as protection.<sup>1291</sup> That is the determination of the Exalted in Might, the Knowing.
13. But if they turn away, then say, "I have warned you of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt [that struck] 'Aad and Thamūd.
14. [That occurred] when the messengers had come to them before them and after them, [saying], "Worship not except Allāh." They said, "If our Lord had willed,<sup>1292</sup> He would have sent down the angels, so indeed we, in that with which you have been sent, are disbelievers."
15. As for 'Aad, they were arrogant upon the earth without right and said, "Who is greater than us in strength?" Did they not consider that Allāh who created them was greater than them in strength? But they were rejecting Our signs.
16. So We sent upon them a screaming wind during days of misfortune to make them taste the punishment of disgrace in the worldly life; but the punishment of the Hereafter is more disgracing, and they will not be helped.
17. And as for Thamūd, We guided them, but they preferred blindness over guidance, so the thunderbolt of humiliating punishment seized them for what they used to earn.
18. And We saved those who believed and used to fear Allāh.

<sup>1288</sup>Also "four equal days" or "four days of completion."

<sup>1289</sup>See footnote to 2:19.

<sup>1290</sup>Literally, "become" or "do [as commanded]."

<sup>1291</sup>From the devils who attempt to steal information from the angels.

<sup>1292</sup>To send messengers.

19. And [mention, O Muḥammad], the Day when the enemies of Allāh will be gathered to the Fire while they are [driven], assembled in rows,
20. Until, when they reach it, their hearing and their eyes and their skins will testify against them of what they used to do.
21. And they will say to their skins, "Why have you testified against us?" They will say, "We were made to speak by Allāh, who has made everything speak; and He created you the first time, and to Him you are returned.
22. And you were not covering [i.e., protecting] yourselves,<sup>1293</sup> lest your hearing testify against you or your sight or your skins, but you assumed that Allāh does not know much of what you do.
23. And that was your assumption which you assumed about your Lord. It has brought you to ruin, and you have become among the losers."
24. So [even] if they are patient, the Fire is a residence for them; and if they ask to appease [Allāh], they will not be of those who are allowed to appease.
25. And We appointed for them companions<sup>1294</sup> who made attractive to them what was before them and what was behind them [of sin], and the word [i.e., decree] has come into effect upon them among nations which had passed on before them of jinn and men. Indeed, they [all] were losers.
26. And those who disbelieve say, "Do not listen to this Qur'ān and speak noisily<sup>1295</sup> during [the recitation of] it that perhaps you will overcome."
27. But We will surely cause those who disbelieve to taste a severe punishment, and We will surely recompense them for the worst of what they had been doing.

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<sup>1293</sup>With righteousness or by fearing Allāh.

<sup>1294</sup>In this world among the evil *jinn* and men.

<sup>1295</sup>Other meanings include "speak improperly" and/or "make a clamor." The purpose of this was to prevent the hearing or understanding of the Qur'ān.