

Gabriel]. If Allāh had willed, those [generations] succeeding them would not have fought each other after the clear proofs had come to them. But they differed, and some of them believed and some of them disbelieved. And if Allāh had willed, they would not have fought each other, but Allāh does what He intends.

254. O you who have believed, spend from that which We have provided for you before there comes a Day in which there is no exchange [i.e., ransom] and no friendship and no intercession. And the disbelievers – they are the wrongdoers.
255. Allāh – there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them,⁸⁶ and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His Kursī⁸⁷ extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.
256. There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in ṭāghūt⁸⁸ and believes in Allāh has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allāh is Hearing and Knowing.
257. Allāh is the ally⁸⁹ of those who believe. He brings them out from darkneses into the light. And those who disbelieve – their allies are ṭāghūt. They take them out of the light into

⁸⁶ Allāh's knowledge encompasses every aspect of His creations in the past, present and future.

⁸⁷ Chair or footstool. It is not to be confused with *al-'Arsh* (the Throne), which is infinitely higher and greater than *al-Kursī*.

⁸⁸ False objects of worship, such as idols, heavenly bodies, spirits, human beings, etc.

⁸⁹ i.e., patron and supporter.

darknesses.⁹⁰ Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.

258. Have you not considered the one who argued with Abraham about his Lord [merely] because Allāh had given him kingship? When Abraham said, "My Lord is the one who gives life and causes death," he said, "I give life and cause death." Abraham said, "Indeed, Allāh brings up the sun from the east, so bring it up from the west." So the disbeliever was overwhelmed [by astonishment], and Allāh does not guide the wrongdoing people.
259. Or [consider such an example] as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, "How will Allāh bring this to life after its death?" So Allāh caused him to die for a hundred years; then He revived him. He said, "How long have you remained?" He [the man] said, "I have remained a day or part of a day." He said, "Rather, you have remained one hundred years. Look at your food and your drink; it has not changed with time. And look at your donkey; and We will make you a sign for the people. And look at the bones [of this donkey] – how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh." And when it became clear to him, he said, "I know that Allāh is over all things competent."
260. And [mention] when Abraham said, "My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead." [Allāh] said, "Have you not believed?" He said, "Yes, but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied." [Allāh] said, "Take four birds and commit them to yourself."⁹¹ Then [after slaughtering them] put on each hill a portion of them; then call them – they will come [flying] to you in haste. And know that Allāh is Exalted in Might and Wise."
261. The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in

⁹⁰The light of truth is one, while the darknesses of disbelief, doubt and error are many.

⁹¹i.e., train them to come to you on command.