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THE MU'TAZILA AND THEIR TAFSĪR TRADITION

A comparative study of five exegetical
glosses on Qur'an 3.178

Suleiman A. Mourad

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In a previous article,¹ I examined the approach to *tafsīr* and methodology of al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101) as articulated in the introduction to his *al-Taḥdhīb fī tafsīr al-qur'ān*. There, al-Jishumī defines a hermeneutical system comprised of eight categories: Reading (*al-qirā'a*), Philology (*al-luḡha*), Grammatical Syntax (*al-i'rāb*), Structural Composition (*al-naẓm*), Meaning (*al-ma'nā*), Occasion of Revelation (*al-muzīl*), Evidences and Decrees (*al-adhilla wa-l-aḥkām*), and Messages and Stories (*al-akhbār wa-l-qiṣas*). In the case of the categories of Reading, Philology, Grammatical Syntax, Structural Composition, and Occasion of Revelation, the exegete, according to al-Jishumī, has to adopt and abide by the established consensus of scholars, including the *rasm* (orthography) of the *muṣḥaf* of the codex (*muṣḥaf*) of the caliph 'Uthmān. In other words, the exegete is not at liberty to amend or introduce weak or poorly authenticated views on these categories to fit his purpose. Yet, it is in the categories of Meaning, Evidences and Decrees, and Messages and Stories that the exegete demonstrates his prowess and rationality in *tafsīr*.

Given that the majority of Mu'tazila exegeses are not extant, we cannot verify if this hermeneutical system is used by all of them. In *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr*, for instance, al-Rummānī adopts a hermeneutical system made up of five categories: Meaning (*al-fahm*), Reading (*wujūh al-qirā'at*), Grammatical Syntax (*al-i'rāb*), Evidences (*al-dalālat*), and Decrees (*al-aḥkām*).

The issues that one can raise relate to the types of presuppositions that guide the Mu'tazila exegesis of the Qur'an, and whether or not al-Jishumī's approach and methodology are reflective of the entire Mu'tazila *tafsīr* tradition.

This paper is an attempt to focus on these questions by examining the glosses of five Mu'tazila exegetes on Qur'an 3.178. They are by Ibn al-Khallāl al-Baṣrī (d. after 377/988) in *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*,² al-Rummānī (d. 384/994) in *Tafsīr al-Jāmi' al-kabīr*,³ al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1024) in *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*,⁴ al-Jishumī in *al-Tahdhīb*,⁵ and al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) in *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf*.⁶ The glosses by Ibn al-Khallāl and 'Abd al-Jabbār come from their books on the ambiguous verses of the Qur'an (*mutashābih al-qur'ān*), which deal with a specific class of verses that the Mu'tazila consider ambiguous and therefore requiring proper interpretation to unlock their true meaning. Those by al-Rummānī, al-Jishumī and al-Zamakhsharī are taken from their general exegetical works. The objective of this paper, therefore, is to map the Mu'tazila tradition of qur'anic exegesis.

The verse under examination, Qur'an 3.178, reads as follows:

﴿وَلَا يَحْسِبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُنزِلُ لَهُمُ لِيُذَكَّرُوا إِنَّمَا وَرَثَتُمْ عَذَابَ مُبِينٍ﴾

From the onset, one can see that the five Mu'tazila exegetes examined in this paper consider Q 3.178 as requiring serious exegesis. Ibn al-Khallāl and 'Abd al-Jabbār include it in their respective *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*, thus labeling it as an ambiguous (*mutashābih*) verse. Al-Rummānī argues that in order to understand this verse, we need to refer it to a clear (*muhkam*) one, which indicates that he also considers it as ambiguous. Al-Jishumī and al-Zamakhsharī do not state this clearly, but from their discussion it is evident that they too treat it as requiring special handling; in the case of al-Jishumī, he does not specifically say that Q 3.178 is an ambiguous verse, but a good part of his section on Q 3.178 is identical to what one finds in al-Rummānī.⁷

What makes Q 3.178 an ambiguous verse? For one, it is not accompanied with a notice that marks it as such. There must be, therefore, something in the meaning of this verse that alerts the Mu'tazila exegetes to label it as ambiguous. According to 'Abd al-Jabbār, "They (the predestinarians) allege that almighty God declared [in this verse] what proves that he intends from disbelievers to increase in disbelief." So it is the literal meaning of this verse that alerts the Mu'tazila, or to put it in other words, it is the interpretation that the predestinarians advocate which is unacceptable to the Mu'tazila. So the predestinarians read Q 3.178 to mean:

*You should not think it is good for them that We prolong their lives. We prolong their lives in order that they increase in sin. A painful torture awaits them.*⁸

Ibn al-Khallāl sums up how the predestinarians advocate their view:

They [the predestinarians] allege that God informed His prophet [Muhammad] (God's blessing upon him) that His prolonging the

lives of the disbelievers is not for something good that He intends for them. Rather, it is for them to become more sinful. So He forbid His prophet (God's blessings upon him) to think it was good for them. This is contrary to the argument of our opponents [the believers in free will], who claim that what almighty God gave to the disbelievers and increased their existence, leisure, and lives were only so that they increase in obedience and do what God has commanded them to do and for something good for them. They contradict God and reject what He made known and stipulated about their condition and description.⁹

One major thing comes out of this reading of Q 3.178 is that in the view of the predestinarians, God instructs Muhammad that he should not consider it for a good purpose that He prolongs the lives of the disbelievers. Verse 3.178 tells him that the reason for prolonging their lives is so that they commit more sins, thus intensifying the torture that awaits them in the hereafter. God wants that they commit more sins, and they have no choice but to carry out what God had predestined for them. Surely in this case, to argue that prolonging the lives of the disbelievers is intended to give them a chance to repent contradicts, in the view of the predestinarians, God's word.

Let's turn to our five exegetes and see how they deal with Q 3.178. The first issue we encounter in their glosses on this verse is the reading of the verb *يَحْسِبَنَّ*. As in many cases in the Qur'an, there are various ways of reading a word. With respect to the verb in question, there are two established readings: *يَحْسِبَنَّ* or *يَحْسِبَنَّ*. In the case of the former reading (with the third person prefix 'ي'), the expression *وَلَا يَحْسِبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا* means: *Those who disbelieved should not think*. But in the case of the latter reading (with the second person prefix 'ت'), *وَلَا يَحْسِبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا* means: *You (i.e. Muhammad) should not think those who disbelieve*. Ibn al-Khallāl reads it *يَحْسِبَنَّ*, that is as an address to the prophet Muhammad, whereas al-Rummānī, 'Abd al-Jabbār, al-Jishumī and al-Zamakhsharī consider *يَحْسِبَنَّ* as the stronger reading, and the verse as an address to the disbelievers. As noted earlier, al-Jishumī identifies *Reading* as one of the categories of his hermeneutical system, and al-Rummānī before him did this too. The proper reading of the Qur'an comes up therefore as an important aspect of Mu'tazila *tafsīr*. The reading of a word not only determines what it means, but also how the entire verse is to be understood.

Al-Rummānī provides an interesting discussion on the reading of Q 3.178. He states that all readers of the Qur'an read *يَحْسِبَنَّ* with the prefix 'ي', except Ḥamza ibn Ḥabīb (d. 156/773) who read it *يَحْسِبَنَّ* with the prefix 'ت'; the reference here is for the canonical readings of the Qur'an. Al-Rummānī then argues that even though it is correct to read it with 'ت', the 'ي' is the better reading because the verb acts on the second sentence; like al-Jishumī, al-Rummānī identifies Grammar as one of the five categories of his hermeneutical system. In other words, al-Rummānī is saying that *We prolong their lives for something*

good for them is a parenthetical clause, which allows him to read Q 3.178 to mean: *Those who disbelieved should not think that We prolong their lives so that they increase in sin. We prolong their lives for something good for them.* Al-Zamakhsharī completely agrees with this opinion, and al-Jishumī lists it as a sound view. What we see in this discussion is the importance of grammar to proper exegesis. This grammatical restructuring of the verse necessitates therefore that it is to be understood as an address to the disbelievers, in the sense that prolonging their lives is not permission from God for them to indulge in sin, but rather it offers a chance for them to repent and mend their ways.

Ibn al-Khallāl finds a serious fault with this restructuring of Q 3.178; as noted earlier, he reads the verse as an address to Muhammad. Two main points are raised by Ibn al-Khallāl against this restructuring of the parts of Q 3.178; incidentally, he ascribes it to an earlier Mu'tazila scholar Abū Ja'far al-Iskāfī (d. 240/854).¹⁰ Ibn al-Khallāl contends that for the argument to stand it would necessitate that the two conjunctions *amma* (أَمَّا in قَامًا) and *inna* (إِنَّمَا in قَامًا) be read *inna* and *amma* respectively:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا — إِنَّمَا عَلَّمِي لَمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ — أَلَمْ نَعْلَمْ لَمْ لِيَزَادُوا إِقَامًا وَلَمْ نَعْدَابٌ مُهِينٌ﴾

He gives two reasons for this. First, the verb in the verse (تَحْسَبَنَّ) acts on the conjunction, thus it could only be in the form of *amma* (that is, وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ أَنَّ). If, as al-Iskāfī contends, there is inversion in the verse (*taqḍīm wa-ta'khīr*), then the second part of the sentence is the object of the verb, which requires therefore that *inna* must be corrected to *amma* (that is, وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّمَا عَلَّمِي لَمْ لِيَزَادُوا إِقَامًا). Second, when one starts a sentence with this conjunction, which is the way to treat the parenthetical clause as an independent clause, it can only be in the form of *inna* (إِنَّمَا عَلَّمِي لَمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ). In other words, the inversion argument would require a modification of the way each of the two conjunctions is read. But the problem with this is that none of the readers of the Qur'an read the verse in the way that the inversion argument would mandate. Equally important, the parenthetical clause cannot modify the grammar of the rest of the sentence, as this reading would also require.

What this examination of Ibn al-Khallāl's rejection of the suggested restructuring of Q 3.178 shows is that he does this on grammatical grounds and because it violates the established canonical readings of the Qur'an. Actually, both al-Rummānī and al-Jishumī admit that even though it is possible according to the rules of the Arabic language to read the first conjunction as *inna*, yet, none of the readers of the canonical readings did so; they all read it *amma*. Al-Zamakhsharī states that Yahyā ibn Waththāb (d. 103/722) read the two conjunctions precisely in the way that the inversion argument would require.¹¹ It is clear therefore that this is at most a very weak argument given that the overwhelming consensus is against it. Proper grammar, therefore, comes up as a key issue in Mu'tazila exegesis, even

though the end result in the case of Q 3.178 is that the position of Ibn al-Khallāl does not agree with the view promoted by the other exegetes, thus reflecting a division among the Mu'tazila regarding the grammatical structure of Q 3.178.¹²

If Grammar and Reading are major categories in Mu'tazila hermeneutics, why then did the other exegetes not bother as much about the problem caused by the inversion in the parts of Q 3.178? It seems, and I will come back to this later as well, that the sole justification for arguing that the verse comprises a parenthetical clause, and ignoring the grammatical implication, is to shift the order within the sentence to read: *Those who disbelieved should not think that We prolong their lives so that they increase in sin. We prolong their lives for something good for them.* In other words, the restructuring of the parts of this verse is mandated by dogma: defending the Mu'tazila doctrine of 'adl (God's justice), one of the tenets of their theological system, which assumes that humans have free will.

Does this mean that Ibn al-Khallāl did not care about the doctrine of 'adl? Does it mean that he understood verse 3.178 to mean: *Those who disbelieved should not think that We prolong their lives for something good for them. We prolong their lives so that they increase in sin?* The answer is emphatically in the negative. As shown earlier, he ridicules the predestinarians for believing that the verse means that God wants from prolonging the lives of the disbelievers so that they increase in sin. His extensive hermeneutics of this verse provide a compelling argument against the predestinarians and validate not only the Mu'tazila interpretation of this verse, but the doctrine of 'adl as well. Ibn al-Khallāl says,

They [the predestinarians] are to be rebutted that, "You cannot deny that God has shown the invalidity of your argument and the foulness of your interpretation when He said: *I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me* (Q 51.56). Thus He encompassed all of mankind and jinn in the cause of His creating them. He meant by His saying *to worship Him* the contrary of what you have argued and believed that almighty God prolonged the life of the disbeliever, preserved and gave him protection and good health in order for him to disbelieve in Him and accuse Him falsely. How is it possible that He is enraged by something He wishes and desires, or condemns them for doing that for which He created them and drove them to it! Isn't it the ultimate absurdity and extreme ignorance what you have attributed to your Creator and described your Lord with! May He greatly be exonerated from such abhorrent descriptions and repulsive portrayals."

They are to be rebutted as well that, "How do you refute the argument of your opponents, which is in harmony with almighty

God's word, wisdom, and intended grace and mercy? For He meant by that [verse] to inform about the consequence of the affair of the disbelievers, and that they end in sin and increase [in it] due to their hypocrisy. Almighty God's prolonging their lives is not really prolonging their lives for them to increase in sin. For this is used in the Book of almighty God and in the speech of the Arabs, such as His praised and almighty saying: *They set up [false deities] as God's equals to lead people astray from His path* (Q 14.30). They actually set up gods alongside God in order to bring them nearer to God (Q 39.3). But since this necessitates going astray, He described them for doing what they have done as if for that purpose [to bring them nearer to God]. Similarly is His saying: *Pharaoh's household picked him up to be for them an enemy and a source of grief* (Q 28.8). We know that they delighted by picking him up so that he could be [their] son, source of joy, and the apple of their eye. The poet said:

*For death mothers feed their babies
and for the destruction that houses are built.*

He also said:

*We collect our money for the inheritors
and our houses we built for destruction.*

But people seek children so that they live, not to die. They collect their wealth for themselves, not to the inheritors. They build their houses to live and reside in them, not to see them destroyed. The poet only meant the ultimate consequence. This issue is so clear that it is not necessary to exert any more effort to clarify it more than that.

The validity of our argument is therefore proven, namely that the intention of almighty God in this verse is to inform His prophet, God's mercy upon him, about the consequence of their [the disbelievers'] affair, that they will not benefit from the prolonging of their lives, and that they will only increase in error by it and obsession to commit offenses and indulge in sins. No one who knows the language of the Arabs and how they express themselves argues for the invalidity of this [view].

This extensive discussion by Ibn al-Khallāl shows that his interpretation of Q 3.178 hinges on the exegesis regarding the particle *li* in (لِيَدْرَأُوا). If it is taken to mean intention (*al-irāda*), then, in Ibn al-Khallāl's mocking tone,

"How is it possible that He is enraged by something He wishes and desires, or condemns them for doing that for which He created them and drove them to it!" That would be "ultimate absurdity and extreme ignorance." For Ibn al-Khallāl, the particle *li* can only mean consequence (*al-'āqiba*), namely that God informs "about the consequence of the affair of the disbelievers."

Al-Rummānī, 'Abd al-Jabbār and al-Jishumī make very similar arguments and, aside from the issue of restructuring the parts of Q 3.178, their interpretation hinges too on the exegesis of the particle *li*. According to them, it indicates the consequence (*al-'āqiba*) of something. It cannot mean intention, for "If God intended this [increasing in sin] for them," according to al-Rummānī and al-Jishumī, "then in doing it they would be obedient to Him. But intending what is morally repulsive is absurd?"¹³ Al-Rummānī adds that God rejected that He intends what is absurd when He said: *Do you think that We created you in vain* (Q 23.115)." Here too, dogma comes up as a key operational factor in exegesis: defending the doctrine of *tawhīd*, another tenet of the Mu'tazila theological system, which mandates that one cannot believe in views that compromise the divine essence. 'Abd al-Jabbār puts it unequivocally: "We [the Mu'tazila] reject that [God] intends disbelieve and all other offenses."

Aside from the issue of absurdity, there is another hermeneutical tool that is employed by the exegetes examined in this paper. Ibn al-Khallāl, al-Rummānī, 'Abd al-Jabbār and al-Jishumī cite verse Q 28.8 (*Pharaoh's household picked him up to be for them an enemy and a source of grief*) as a proof that in several instances in the Qur'an where the particle *li* is used, it could not mean intention. In the case of Q 28.8, it is irrational to argue that the Pharaoh and his household picked Moses from the Nile so that he could be their enemy and a source of grief. As Ibn al-Khallāl puts it, "they delighted by picking him up so that he could be [their] son, source of joy, and the apple of their eye." So the particle indicates consequence; Moses ended up being the enemy of the Pharaoh.

There are, therefore, aside from hermeneutical categories, certain rational principles that govern exegesis and determine how the verses of the Qur'an are to be interpreted. In the case of Q 3.178, it could not mean that God intends sins or predestines the lives of disbelievers to commit offenses for that would be absurd, which implies that God is absurd. But it would be irrational to think that God is absurd. Such a principle mandates that the particle *li* in Q 3.178 could only intend consequence. In another context, it could only mean intention, such as in Q 51.56 (*I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me*), which Ibn al-Khallāl, al-Rummānī, 'Abd al-Jabbār and al-Jishumī cite as a proof that God intends from all of humanity and creatures of the jinns that they worship Him. If the purpose of creation is to worship God, it would be irrational then to also say that He wants them to increase in sin.

Al-Zamakhsharī comes to the same conclusion, but ignores the issue around the exegesis of the particle *li*. He says,

If you ask: "How is it possible that His prolonging their lives in order to increase in sin is the objective of almighty God?" I would say: "It is the cause for prolonging their lives, but not every cause has an objective. Don't you see that you say, 'I did not participate in a warring raid due to weakness and neediness,' and 'I left the country to avoid vice,' even though none of that (weakness, neediness, vice) is your objective. Similarly is the increase in sin, it is the cause and purpose for prolonging their lives." If you ask: "How could the increase in sin be the cause for prolonging their lives in the same way as weakness is the cause for not participating in war?" I would say: "Since in God's knowledge, which encompasses everything, they will increase in sin, the prolonging of their lives happens and is a purpose for it [increase in sin] by way of metaphor."

So it is clear that, for al-Zamakhsharī, *We prolong their lives so that they increase in sin* is a metaphorical expression that must not be taken literally and as reflective of God's purpose. His purpose is "for them to repent and become believers."

A final point regarding the exegetes examined in this paper is that they consider exegesis to be a battlefield, where they fight opponents over their misinterpretations of the Qur'an. So, exegesis for the Mu'tazila is not a passive process in which the exegete simply proposes the meanings of the Qur'anic verses. Rather, it is an opportunity to reinforce one's position and point out the fallacies in the beliefs of his opponents. As seen in their respective discussion, Ibn al-Khallāl and 'Abd al-Jabbār are obsessed with the misinterpretation of the predestinarians. Al-Jishumī, too, remarks that Q 3.178 is "evidence that the belief of the compulsionists regarding the created being is false." And even though al-Rummānī and al-Zamakhsharī do not directly address the predestinarians, there is no doubt that their words reflect clear awareness about what the proponents of predestination advocate and how to answer them.

Conclusion: understanding Mu'tazila tradition of Qur'anic exegesis

The five exegetes examined in this paper agree on several aspects relating to the approach and methodology with respect to qur'anic exegesis. They also disagree on other aspects. But what is evident for all of them is that exegesis of the Qur'an is informed and governed by a hermeneutical system that is applied to the verses to disclose their correct meaning. This hermeneutical system involves proper reading, grammar, and other aspects that

relate to the verification of the text. Some exegetes, such as al-Rummānī and al-Jishumī, do identify this hermeneutical system, but the others noticeably adopt it without stating so in their introductions.

One can infer from their respective views that the exegete is not at liberty to propose readings or restructure the text without their being documented in the codex (*mushhaf*) of 'Uthmān or its canonical variations. Even in instances that allow the exegete to bring out a meaning that perfectly accords with the doctrines of the Mu'tazila, he still has to justify it on the basis of a canonical precedence. As we saw earlier, Ibn al-Khallāl rejects the restructuring of the parts of Q 3.178 because it violates all established traditions (be it grammar or reading) about this verse. And even though al-Rummānī and al-Jishumī advocate the view about the restructuring, they admit that none of the readers changed the conjunctions (*imlamma*) as it would be required if one assumes there is inversion in the verse and the middle sentence is a parenthetical clause.

But there is more than a hermeneutical system that informs the Mu'tazila approach and methodology in qur'anic exegesis. *Tafsīr* has to produce for a given verse a meaning that is rational and does not violate the tenets of the Mu'tazila theological system. If the meaning goes against their theological system, it cannot be rational. This is best summed up by 'Abd al-Jabbār, as noted earlier, who says, "We reject that [God] intends disbelieve and all other offenses." In other words, the tenets of *'adl* and *tawhīd* require that God is just and cannot do what is absurd. Subsequently, if a verse implies something that the Mu'tazila categorically reject, the verse is labeled as ambiguous and the tool of their hermeneutical system are applied to it in order to bring out a meaning that agrees with their assumptions. Again, these tools could not be applied in such a way to introduce novelties in the text of the verse (be it reading, grammar, structure composition, or philology).

In this respect, it is not surprising to see that the Mu'tazila insist that exegesis is a serious duty. The exegetes are under *taklif*, as al-Jishumī states in his exegetical gloss on Q 3.7,¹⁴ or as al-Zamakhsharī puts it in his introduction that authoring an exegesis of the Qur'an "is on the same par as the personal obligation (*farḍ al-'ayn*)."¹⁵ It is in this way that we can explain the variation among the five exegetes examined in this paper. Even though we find the same approach and methodology in *tafsīr*, and in some cases close similarities between texts, these are not indications of passive borrowing. Rather, similarities are actually instances where later exegetes agree with the views of earlier exegetes. So we understand better why Ibn al-Khallāl felt at liberty to tear apart the view of his predecessor al-Iskāfī. Each exegete has to come to exegesis well equipped with what the task entails in terms of knowledge and tools, to produce meanings that are governed by a hermeneutical system and rationality, and that are not at variance with the Mu'tazila's theological tenets.

Appendix

A. Ibn al-Khallāl al-Baṣrī (d. after 377/988), *Kitāb al-Radd 'alā al-jabrīya*
The text of section Q. 3.187 is edited on the basis of manuscript Caetani 332 of Ibn al-Khallāl's *Kitāb al-Radd 'alā al-jabrīya al-qadarīya fīma ta'allaqū bih min mutashābih āy al-qur'ān al-karīm*, folios 36a–38a.

وما تعلقوا به قوله سبحانه: ﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُغَلِّبِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّأَنفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُوَلِّي لَهُمْ لِيُزَادُوا إِثْمًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾ (١٧٨: ٣). قالوا: فأجر سبحانه نيته صلى الله عليه أن إملاءه للكفار ليس هو خير يريد لهم، وإنما هو ﴿لِيُزَادُوا إِثْمًا﴾. فنهى نيته صلوات الله عليه أن يحسب أن ذلك خير لهم، وهذا ضد ما يذهب إليه مخالفونا، لأنهم يزعمون أن الله تعالى لم يعط الكفار شيئاً ولا زادهم من البقاء والنعيم والإملاء إلا ليزدادوا طاعة ويلغوا ما أمرهم الله به ولما هو خير لهم، خلافاً على الله ورداً لما أحرر به / ٣٦ ب | عنهم ونصن عليه من حالهم وصفتمهم.

يقال لهم: ما أنكرتم أن يكون الله تعالى قد دلّ على بطلان مذهبكم هذا وبيح تأويلكم بقوله: ﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِي﴾ (٥٦: ٥١)، فمجموع الإنس والجن بالإختيار عن علة خلقه لهم. وإنما أراد بقوله لأن يمدوه خلافاً لما ذهبتم إليه وادتمم به من أن الله تعالى أملاً للكفار وبقائه وأعطاه السلامة والصحة ليكفر به ويفترى عليه. وكيف يجوز أن يغضب من شيء يريد به ويحبّه ويسخط عليهم من فعل ما خلقهم من أجله وحاشهم إلى فعله؟ وهل يكون غاية العيب وغاية الجهل إلا ما نسبتم إليه خالقكم ووصفتم به ربكم، تعالى عن قبح الصفات ومذموم العوت علواً كبيراً

ثم يقال لهم: بأي شيء تدعون ما قاله مخالفوكم مما هو موافق لقول الله تعالى وحكمته ومشيئته لفضله ورحمته من أنه أراد بذلك الإخبار عن عاقبة أمر الكفار وأن مصيرهم إلى الإثم وأثمهم يزادون عند نفاقهم؟ وإملاء الله تعالى لهم إنما لا لأنه إملاء على الحقيقة ﴿لِيُزَادُوا إِثْمًا﴾. إذ كان ذلك مستعملاً في كتاب الله تعالى وفي كلام العرب نحو قوله سبحانه وتعالى: ﴿وَجَعَلُوا لِيهِ أُنْدَادًا لِيُضِلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ﴾ (١٤: ٣٠)، وهم على التحصيل اتخذوا أهة من دون الله ليقرّبوهم ﴿إِلَى اللَّهِ﴾ ﴿وَلَقَدْ﴾ (٣٩: ٣). / [٣٧] ولكنة لما كان ذلك موجباً للضلال، وصفهم بأثم فعلوا ما فعلوه لأجله. وكذلك قوله: ﴿فَالْتَفِطْهُ أَلْ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا﴾ (٢٨: ٨)، وقد علمنا أثم بسطوا بالتفاطه أن يكون لهم ولداً وسروراً وفرة عين. وقال الشاعر: فسلموت تغدوا الوالدات سخالها كما خراب الدهر تبي المساكن.

وقال أيضاً: أموالنا لذوي الميراث بجمعها ودورنا لخراب الدهر نبيها.

والناس يريدون أولادهم للحياة لا للموت، ويجمعون أموالهم لأنفسهم لا للورثة، وينون دورهم لعمارها والسكنى فيها لا لخرابها. وإنما أحرر الشاعر بذلك عن العاقبة، وهذا أشد استفاضة من أن يحتاج إلى أن يتكلم له أكثر من هذا الاحتجاج. فصح جواز ما قلناه من مراد الله تعالى في الآية من أنه أراد إخبار نيته صلى الله عليه بعاقبة أمرهم وأثم لا ينتفع بما أعطوه من الإملاء ولا يزادون به إلا غياً وانحساراً في فعل المعاصي والاستزادة من المأثم. وهذا ما لا يدفع جوازه من عرف كلام العرب وما يجري عليه مخاطبتهم.

وقد ذكر أبو جعفر الإسكاني رحمه الله في هذه الآية وجهاً هو أنه قال: إن هذا الكلام على التقديم والتأخير، والمعنى: ولا / [٣٧ ب] تحسبن الذين كفروا إنما غلب لهم ليزدادوا إنما غلب لهم خيراً لأنفسهم، كما قال تعالى: ﴿هُدَاهِبْ بِيكُنَابِي هَذَا قَالَفِي إِلَهُهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُمْ فَانظُرْ قَادًا يَرْجِعُونَ﴾ (٢٧: ٢٨)، أراد فانظر ماذا يرجعون ثم تولى عنهم. ومثل قوله: ﴿وَلَا

تظنّ الذين يدعون ربهم بالغداة والعشي يريدون وجهه ما عليك من حسابهم من شيء وما من حسابك عليهم من شيء فتظنّهم فتكون من الظالمين﴾ (٦: ٥٢)، المعنى: فلا تظنّ الذين يدعون ربهم فتكون من الظالمين ما عليك من حسابهم من شيء فتظنّهم، فأخر ﴿فتكون﴾ وهو مقدم في المعنى. وهذا تأويل لا أرتضيه لما عليه من العلمن الواضح، وذلك أن التقديم والتأخير لا يغير الشيء عما هو عليه فيما يستحقه من الإعراب والبناء كما إنك إذا قلت: ضرب زيد عمراً، فكان زيد فاعلاً كان مرفوعاً في التقديم والتأخير وكان المفعول منصوباً كذلك، فلم يكن للتقديم والتأخير بأمر فيما يجب من الإعراب في الفاعل والمفعول. وسبيل قوله تعالى ﴿إِنَّمَا﴾ بفتح المزة أما ففتح بالفاعل الواقع عليها وهو ﴿تَحْسَبَنَّ﴾، لأنك لو ابتدأت المزة لم يجر إلا كسرهما، فكانت الحال لو كان على ما قال أبو جعفر لوجب أن تكون القراءة بفتح المزة في إنما الثانية وكسرهما في إنما الأولى لأن معنى وقوع ﴿تَحْسَبَنَّ﴾ على الثاني كأنه قال: / [٣٨] ولا تحسبن الذين كفروا إنما غلب لهم ليزدادوا إنما. فلما لم يجر في قراءة أحد فتح المزة في إنما الأخيرة ولم يقرأ أحد إلا ﴿إِنَّمَا نُغَلِّبِي لَهُمْ لِيُزَادُوا إِثْمًا﴾ بكسر المزة، علم أن ﴿تَحْسَبَنَّ﴾ لم تقع بها وإنما مبتدأة ولذلك لم يجر فيها غير الكسر، والوجه الأول واضح جداً بخفي بوضوحه عن تكلف سواه.

B. Al-Rummānī (d. 384/994), *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr*
The section on Q. 3.178 is edited on the basis of manuscript Bibliothèque Nationale 6523 of al-Rummānī's *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr*, folios 147b–149a.

القول في قوله جل وعز: ﴿وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُغَلِّبِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّأَنفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُوَلِّي لَهُمْ لِيُزَادُوا إِثْمًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾ (١٧٨: ٣). / [١٤٨] يقال: ما أصل الإملاء؟ الجواب: طول المدّة. ﴿نُغَلِّبِي لَهُمْ﴾ نطول أعمارهم. ومنه وأحمرني مائاً، أي حيناً طويلاً. ومنه عشت طويلاً وتعلّيت حيناً. والملا: الدهر. واللوان: الليل والنهار، لعلول تعاقبهما. فأتا إملاء الكتاب فلطول المدّة بالوقوف عند كل كلمة. ويقال: من قرأ ﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾ بالفاء؟ الجواب: حمزة، وفتح السين. وقرأ الباقون بالياء للمحمة من تحت، وهو الاختيار لأن حسب تعدى إلى أن على تقدير المفعولين. ويجوز بالفاء على البديل كقول جل وعز: ﴿هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً﴾ (٤٣: ٦٦).

وكما قال الشاعر: فما كان تيس هلكه هلك واحد ولكنه بنان قوم محذما.

ويقال: يجوز كسر إنما الأولى مع التاء في تحسبن؟ الجواب: نعم، يجوز في العربية إلا أنه لم يقرأ به أحد من السبعة، وهو وحده الكلام مع التاء لتكون الجملة في موضع الخبر نحو حسبت زيدا أنه كريم.

ويقال: ما معنى ﴿إِنَّمَا﴾ / [١٤٨ ب] غلب لهم ليزدادوا إنما؟ الجواب: إنما غلب لهم على أن عاقبة أمرهم ازدياد الإثم، وهذه لام العاقبة، والدليل عليها ﴿فَالْتَفِطْهُ أَلْ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا﴾ (٢٨: ٨).

وقال الشاعر: وأم سماك فلا تجرعي فسلموت ما تلذ الوالدة

فأنسم لو قتلوا مالكا لكت لهم حية واحدة.

وقال آخر: وللمسايا تربي كل مرضعة وللحرايب يجذ الناس بنيانا.

كان المعلوم أنهم يكفرون فيه. وقيل: في الآية تقدم وتأخير تقديره²² ولا يحسن الدين كفروا إنما علي لهم ليزدادوا إنما بل علي لهم وتعطيهم أعماراً خير يكسونه، كأنه قيل: لم تعطهم العمة للكفر إنما أعطيتهم للشكر، عن الأصم: ﴿إِنَّمَا نُعَلِّي لُهُمْ﴾²³ أي غلبهم ونطيل أعمارهم.²⁴ ﴿لِيَزِدَادُوا إِنَّمَا﴾، هذه لام العافية أي علي لهم وعانيتهم ازدياد الإثم، كقوله: ﴿فَالنَّقْطَةُ آلٌ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ وَخَزَنَةٌ﴾ (٢٨: ٨). قال الشاعر:

لدروا للموت وابنوا للحراب.

وقال آخر: أم سماك فلا تجرعي فلموت ما تلد الوالدة.

وتقول: ما تزيدك موعظتي إلا شرأ، ونظائره تكثر. ﴿وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾، يعني بهينهم في نار جهنم. وقيل: لهم قتل في الدنيا على الموان، وحرقت في النار على الموان.

النزول

قيل: نزلت في مشركي مكة، عن مقاتل. وقيل: نزلت في قريظة والنضير، عن عطاء.

الأحكام

تدل الآية على أن بقاء المكلف إذا عصى الله فيه فلا يكون خيراً له، لأن كونه خيراً يتعلق بأمرين أحدهما من جهته تعالى، وهو أنه إذا أباه ومكّه ولطف له وأراد منه أن يطيع كان هذا خيراً، والثاني من جهة العبد، وهو أن يطيع ربه ويتقوا لأمره، فإذا لم يحصل ذلك من العبد جاز أن يقال: إنه ليس بخير له. وقد روي عن ابن مسعود أنه قال: ما من نفس برّة ولا فاجرة إلا والموت خير لها. أما العاجرة فتستريح ويستراح منها، وقرأ ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِبُنَّ﴾ الآية، وأما البرّة فقرأ ﴿وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ﴾ (٣: ١٩٨). وروي نحوه عن ابن عباس. وتدل على فساد قول الخيرة في المخلوق لأنه أضاف ازدياد الإثم إليهم، وكذلك أضاف الحساب إليهم. ولا يقال إن اللام في قوله: ﴿لِيَزِدَادُوا إِنَّمَا﴾ لام الإرادة، لأنه لو أراه منهم لكانوا مطيعين له، ولأن إرادة التبيح فيحة. وقد قال تعالى: ﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ (٥٦: ٥١). ثم على مذهبه كان يعني أن يقال: إنما علي لهم ليزيدهم كفراً بأن يخلق فيهم.

E. Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), *Tafsīr al-kashshāf*

The text of Q. 3.178 is taken from al-Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-kashshāf*, 4 vols., ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Shāhīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiya, 1995), 1: 434–435.

﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾ فيمن قرأ بالياء نصب، و ﴿إِنَّمَا نُعَلِّي لُهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ﴾ بدل منه، أي ولا تحسبن أن ما علي للكافرين خير لهم. وأن مع ما في حيزه بنوب عن المفعولين، كقوله: ﴿أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ﴾ (٢٥: ٤٤). وما مصدرية بمعنى ولا تحسبن أن إملأنا خير، وكان حقها في قياس علم الخط أن تكتب مفصولة، ولكنها وقعت في الإمام متصلة ولا يخالف وتتبع سنة الإمام في خط المصاحف. فإن قلت: كيف صح جيء بالبدل ولم يذكر إلا أحد المفعولين ولا يجوز الاختصار بفعل الحساب على مفعول واحد؟ قلت: صح ذلك من حيث أن التحويل على البدل والبدل منه في حكم المنحى. ألا تراك تقول: جعلت متاعك بعضه فوق بعض، مع امتناع سكوتك على متاعك. ويجوز أن يقدر مضاف محذوف على ولا تحسبن

الذين كفروا أصحاب أن الإملاء خير لأنفسهم أو ولا تحسبن حال الذين كفروا أن الإملاء خير لأنفسهم. وهو فيمن قرأ بالياء رفع. والفعل متعلق بأن وما في حيزه. والإملاء لهم تخليتهم وشأنهم، مستعار من أملى لفرسه إذا أرحى له الطول ليرعى كيف شاء. وقيل: هو إملأهم وإطالة عمرهم، والمعنى: ولا تحسبن أن الإملاء خير لهم من منعمهم أو قطع آجالهم. ﴿إِنَّمَا نُعَلِّي لُهُمْ﴾، ما هذه حقها أن تكتب متصلة لأنها كائنة دون الأولى، وهذه جملة مسانقة لتعليل للحملة قبلها، كأنه قيل: ما بالمهم لا يحسبون الإملاء خيراً لهم.

فجبل: ﴿إِنَّمَا نُعَلِّي لُهُمْ لِيَزِدَادُوا إِنَّمَا﴾. فإن قلت: كيف جاز أن يكون ازدياد الإثم غرضاً لله تعالى في إملائه لهم؟ قلت: هو علة للإملاء، وما كل علة بغرض. ألا تراك تقول: قعدت عن الغزو للعجز والفاقة، وخرجت من البلد لمحافة الشتر، وليس شيء منها بغرضي لك. وإنما هي علل وأسباب. فكذاك ازدياد الإثم جعل علة للإمهال وسبباً فيه. فإن قلت: كيف يكون ازدياد الإثم علة للإملاء كما كان العجز علة للقعود عن الحرب؟ قلت: لما كان في علم الله المحيط بكل شيء أهم مردادون إنما، فكان الإملاء وقع من أجله وبسببه على طريق الجاز. وقرأ يحيى بن وثاب بكسر الأول وفتح الثانية ﴿وَلَا يَحْسِبُنَّ﴾ بالياء على معنى: ولا يحسبن الذين كفروا أن إملأنا لازدياد الإثم كما يفعلون، وإنما هو ليتوبوا ويدخلوا في الإيمان. وقوله: ﴿إِنَّمَا نُعَلِّي لُهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ﴾ اعتراض بين الفعل ومفعوله، ومعناه: أن إملأنا خير لأنفسهم إن عملوا فيه وعرفوا إنعام الله عليهم بتفسيح المدة وترك للعلاج بالعقوبة. فإن قلت: فما معنى قوله: ﴿وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾ على هذه القراءة؟ قلت: معناه: ولا يحسبوا إن إملأنا لزيادة الإثم والتعذيب. والواو للحال، كأنه قيل: ليزدادوا إنما معداً لهم عذاب مهين.

Notes

- 1 See Suleiman A. Mourad, "Toward a Reconstruction of the Mu'tazila Tradition of Qur'anic Exegesis: Reading the Introduction of the *Tahdhīb* of al-Hākīm al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101) and Its Application," in *The Aims and Methods of Qur'anic Exegesis (8th–15th Centuries)*, ed. Karen Bauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, and London: Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2012, in press). An earlier version appeared as "The Revealed Text and the Intended Subtext: Notes on the Hermeneutics of the Qur'ān in Mu'tazila Discourse as Reflected in the *Tahdhīb* of al-Hākīm al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101)," in *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas*, eds. Felicitas Opwis and David Reisman (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012), 367–395.
- 2 On the basis of manuscript Fondazione Caetani Ms. 332 (Rome, Italy) of Ibn al-Khallāl's *Kitāb al-Radd 'alā al-jabrīya al-qadarīya fīma ta'allaqū bih min mutashābih āy al-qur'ān al-karīm*.
- 3 On the basis of manuscript Bibliothèque Nationale Ms. 6523 of al-Rummānī's *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr*.
- 4 On the basis of al-Qādī 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*, 2 vols., ed. 'Adnān M. Zarzūr (Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1969).
- 5 On the basis of three manuscripts of al-Jishumī's *al-Tahdhīb fī tafsīr al-qur'ān*: Ambrosiana Library F184 (Milan, Italy), al-Jāmi' al-kabīr/Unayza #5 (Ṣan'ā', Yemen), and Āl al-Hāshimī Private Library (Ṣa'da, Yemen).
- 6 On the basis of al-Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf*, 4 vols., ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Shāhīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiya, 1995).
- 7 This is one possibility that points to the dependence of al-Jishumī on al-Rummānī. But it also could have been the case that they both relied on the same source. I have underlined in the text from al-Jishumī on Q. 3.178 in the Appendix the material that corresponds to that in al-Rummānī.

وقالوا: ليدوا للموت واسوا للخراب. وتقول: ما تزيدك موعظتي إلا شراً وما أراها عليك إلا وبالاً. ويقال: لما لا يجوز أن تحمل ﴿لِيُزَادُوا إِنَّمَا﴾ على الأظهر من معنى اللام وهو الإرادة لزيادة الأثام؟ الجواب: لأنه لو أراد منكم لكانوا مُطعِينَ له بفعله ولأن إرادة الفصح عَيْبٌ. وقد نفا الله حلّ نثائه ذلك بقوله: ﴿أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا﴾ (١١٥: ٢٣)، ولأنه يرد إلى الحكم في قوله: ﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ (٥٦: ٥١)، وقوله عزّ وجل: ﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رُسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ﴾ (٤: ٦٤).

ويقال: لم أنكر حسان الخير في ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ﴾ مع أنه خير من حيث هو نعمة عليهم؟ الجواب: فيه وجهان. الأول: خير من القتل في سبيل الله كشهداء أحد، عن أبي علي. الثاني: خير استحقوقه بفعلهم، أي لا يعتزوا بذلك فيظنوا أنه لشدة لهم، لأنهم كانوا يقولون أنه لو لم يرد ما هم عليه لم يجهلهم، عن أبي القاسم. وقد تضمنت الآية التحذير من الاعتزاز بالمهلة وطول المدّة في السلامة من المعالجة بالعقوبة لأن الاعتزاز يؤدي إلى شرّ عاقبة واعظم بليّة.

C. Al-Qādī 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1024), *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*

The section on Q. 3.178 is taken from al-Qādī 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*, 2 vols., ed. 'Adnān M. Zarzūr (Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1969), 1:174–175.

مسألة. قالوا: ثم ذكر الله تعالى بعده ما يدلّ على أنه يريد من الكفار الزيادة في الكفر، فقال: ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ لِيُزَادُوا إِنَّمَا﴾ (٣: ١٧٨)، وكما يدلّ قوله: ﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ (٥٦: ٥١) على أنه أراد من جميعهم العيادة، فكذلك هذا يدلّ على أنه أراد زيادة الكفر. والجواب عن ذلك: أنّ ظاهره لا يدلّ على أنه أراد الكفر، وإنما يدلّ على أنه أراد العقوبة لأنّ ظاهر الإنشائي عن الجزاء لا عن نفس الفعل في التعارف. ونحن لا نمتنع من أن يريد الله تعالى ذلك، وإنما نأبى إرادته الكفر وسائر المعاصي. وبعد، فإنّ هذه اللفظة قد يراد بها العاقبة كما تدخل بمعنى كَيْ في الكلام. وقد قال الله تعالى: ﴿فَأَلْقَيْتُ آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَرِيبًا﴾ (٢٨: ٨) من حيث كان ذلك مصيره، فهو المراد بقوله: ﴿إِنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ لِيُزَادُوا إِنَّمَا﴾، لأنه تعالى لو مدّ لهم في العمر لأجل ذلك لكان ظلماً لهم، لأنه أراد أن يكفروا ويدخلوا النار. وكيف يصحّ ذلك وهو يُرْعَب في الإيمان بكلّ وجوه الترتيب ويترجم عن الكفر بكلّ وجوه الزجر!

والمراد بالآية أنّ حال الكفار فيما اختاروه في عمرهم ليس بخير لهم من حال المؤمنين الذين ثبتوا على الجهاد، لأنّ من نافع ويتبع عن الجهاد ليس حاله كحال من ثبت عليه ورغب فيه. ثم قال من بعد: إنّما تمدّ لهم في العمر وإن علمنا أنّهم يشترطون على الكفر لكي يصلحوا، لأنّ الآية واردة في باب الجهاد، فيجب أن تكون محمولة على ما قلناه.

D. Al-Hākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101), *al-Tahdhīb fī tafsīr al-qur'ān*

The text of Q. 3.178 is edited using three manuscripts of al-Jishumī's *Tahdhīb*: Ambrosiana F184 (A), folios 126a–126b. 'Unayza #5 (U), folios 80b–81b, and Āl al-Hāshimī (H), folios 113b–114b. A dates from Ramaḍān 702/May 1303, and H dates from Sha'bān 697/May–June 1298; U does not have a date, but must be roughly from the same period as A and H. (I have underlined the parts in al-Jishumī's text that are identical to al-Rummānī's).

قوله تعالى: ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ لِيُزَادُوا إِنَّمَا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ﴾ (٣: ١٧٨)

القراءة

قرأ ابن كثير وأبو عمرو ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾، ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْلُونُ﴾ (٣: ١٨٠)، و ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ﴾ (٣: ١٨٨)، و ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّهُمْ﴾ (٣: ١٨٨) الأربعة بالياء وضمّ ١٦ الباء في قوله ﴿فَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّهُمْ﴾. وقرأ أبو جعفر ونافع وابن عامر ويعقوب بالياء إلا قوله ﴿فَلَا تَخْسِتُنَّهُمْ﴾ فإنه بالياء. وقرأ حمزة كلها بالياء. وقرأ عاصم والكسائي وخلف ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾، ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْلُونُ﴾ بالياء والياء بالياء. واختلافهم في فتح السين وكسر يثا¹⁷ في سورة البقرة. فمن قرأ بالياء فعلى الخطاب، قال الفراء: هو على تكرير المعنى كأنه قيل: لا تخسب يا محمد الذين كفروا، وعمل ﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾ النصب. ومن قرأ بالياء ف ﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾ في محل الرفع لأن الفعل مضاف إليه على تقدير لا¹⁸ بحسب الكافر إملاءنا إياهم حياً.

اللغة

الإملاء: الإمهال والتأخير، وأصله طول المدّة. والملاوان: الليل والنهار، لعلول تعاقبهما.

الإعراب

أما: فتفتح الألف بإجماع الفراء، ويجوز في العربية الكسر بأن تكون الجملة في موضع الخبر نحو حيث زيداً إنه كريم، والنصب لوقوع الحسان¹⁹ عليه. وقيل: هو بدل من الذين.

المعنى

ثم بين تعالى أن إمهالهم إذا كان يؤدي إلى العقاب فذلك لا ينفعهم، فقال تعالى: ﴿وَلَا يَخْسِتُنَّ﴾ لا يفتنن،²⁰ ﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ﴾، أي نجهلهم ونظلم أعمارهم ونؤخر موتهم. وعلى التاء ولا تخسب أيها الرسول، ولا تخسب أيها السامع،²¹ أو أيها الإنسان ﴿أَنَّمَا نُغَلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ﴾ معناه: لا يحسن الذين كفروا بقاءهم في الكفر خير من القتل بأحد في سبيل الله كشهداء أحد، عن أبي علي وأبي مسلم، لأن قتل أولئك يؤديهم إلى الجنة، ويقاومهم في الكفر يؤديهم إلى العقاب، بل قتلهم خير من بقاء هؤلاء، لأنّ لفظ الخير والشر يستعملان مضافاً، يقال: هذا خير لك من كذا، أو شرّ لك من كذا. وقيل: لا تحسبوا ذلك خيراً استحقوقه لجهلهم، أي لا تغتروا بذلك فتظنوا أنّ ذلك بمنزلة، لأنهم كانوا يقولون لو لم يرد ما هم عليه لم يجهلهم، عن أبي القاسم. وقيل: لا يحسن الذين كفروا / [١٢٦ب] أن دفعي القتل عنهم خير يكون منهم، عن الأصم. قال القاضي قريباً منه، قال: لا يظنّ هؤلاء المنافقون أن تخلصهم من القتل ينفعهم وأنه خير لهم حيث

8 Below are two modern translations of this verse:

- M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A New translation* (Oxford University Press, 2005):
The disbelievers should not think that it is better for them that We give them more time: when We give them more time they become more sinful – a shameful torment awaits them.
- Tarif Khalidi, *The Qur'an: A New Translation* (Penguin Books, 2009):
And let not those who blaspheme imagine that by deferring punishment We are doing them a favour; rather, We so defer them that they may increase in sin. Abasing torment awaits them.

9 For the Arabic text, see the Appendix.

10 Al-Jishumī ascribes this position to Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm (d. 201/817).

11 Although Yahyā ibn Waththāb was a known reader of the Qur'an, his reading is not one of the seven canonical ones, and does not even feature in the extended ten canonical readings. Al-Zamakhsharī seems desperate for a precedent.

12 Al-Farrā' (d. 207/822), for instance, lists both views as acceptable: al-Farrā', *Ma'ānī al-qur'ān*, eds. Ahmad Najātī and Muḥammad al-Najjār (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriya al-Āmma li-l-Kitāb, 1980), 1:248.

13 Al-Jishumī has it: "But intending what is morally repulsive is morally repulsive."

14 See Mourad, "The Revealed Text," 384–385, and 393 (Arabic text).

15 Al-Zamakhsharī. *al-Kashshāf*, 1:8.

16 A: (صم) is missing.

17 A and U: (ب) is missing.

18 A: (على).

19 A: (الحساب).

20 U: (لا يظنوا); H: (ظنوا).

21 A: (الشارع).

22 U: (مقدبره) is missing.

23 A: (لهم) is missing.

24 A: (عمرهم).