

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE BOOK
OF
SAFAR

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SHAYKH DR. 'ABDALQADIR AS-SUFI

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DISCOURSE 1

JULY 5TH 2008

Allah the Exalted says in Surat al-Qadr (97:1-5):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ①
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ②
لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ③
تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَكِ وَالرُّوحُ
فِيهَا يُأْذَنُ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ④
سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ⑤

In the name of Allah, All-Merciful, Most Merciful

Truly We sent it down on the Night of Power.
And what will convey to you what the Night of Power is?

The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.
In it the angels and the Ruh descend
by their Lord's authority
with every ordinance.

It is Peace –
until the coming of the dawn.

The Night of Power, in it the Angels and the Ruh descend by their Lord's authority. So we find that the Qur'an itself is hurtling from beyond the beyond-time-and-space from the 'Arsh, down into the heart of the Rasul, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam – awaiting the Divine impulse that Sayyiduna Jibril would open to Rasul, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, at the significant moment of event that merited the opening of these lights into the world of time and space. We now turn to Surat al-Quraysh (106):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
لَا يَلْفُ قُرَيْشٍ ① إِيَّاهُمْ رِحْلَةَ الْشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ ② فَلْيَعْبُدُوا
رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ③ إِلَٰهَهُمْ أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ ④

In the name of Allah, All-Merciful, Most Merciful
In acknowledgment of
the established tradition of Quraysh,
their tradition of the winter and summer caravans:
so let them worship the Lord of this House
who has preserved them from hunger
and secured them from fear.

We find in this Surat that Allah honours the Quraysh for their caravans of the summer and the winter. Allah indicates by this that the winter and the summer caravan have to be linked to the worship of the Lord of the House. Then this has to be connected to a knowledge that Allah has preserved them from hunger and secured them from fear. Therefore, by the process of the caravan, they have knowledge of Allah's power and compassion towards them. The significance and importance of the journey is that it is the means by which the people get to know of this tremendous mercy and compassion of Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala.

Now we go to Surat at-Tariq (86:11-14):

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجَمِ ﴿١١﴾ وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ ﴿١٢﴾
 إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ فَصْلٍ ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَاهُوَ بِالْمَنْزِلِ ﴿١٤﴾

By Heaven with its cyclical systems
 and the earth with its splitting seeds,
 it is truly a Decisive Word.
 It is no joke.

Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, tells us that the heavens are designed on a movement, on a journey, that is circular – the heavens are moving in this circular motion as the foundational reality of existence. “And the earth with its splitting seeds.” So you go from the stars and the cosmos to the seeds which are also moving, they are moving and breaking open to give life to the earth. The whole cosmic system is journeying, is on Safar. And Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says that this is no joke. It is not something poetic and pretty, but

the foundational reality on which He has set up His creation. Now we go to Surat at-Takwir (81:1-21):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ① وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ② وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ
 سُيِّرَتْ ③ وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ④ وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ⑤
 وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ⑥ وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ⑦ وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ
 سُئِلَتْ ⑧ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُنِيتَ ⑨ وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ⑩ وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ
 كُشِطَتْ ⑪ وَإِذَا الْبِحِيمَةُ سُعِّرَتْ ⑫ وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ ⑬ عَلِمَتْ
 نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ⑭ فَلَا أَقْسَمُ إِلَّا بِالْحَنَسِ ⑮ الْجَوَارِ الْكُنَّسِ ⑯
 وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسْعَسَ ⑰ وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ ⑱ إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ
 كَرِيمٍ ⑲ ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ ⑳ مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ ㉑

In the name of Allah, All-Merciful, Most Merciful

When the sun is compacted in blackness,
 when the stars fall in rapid succession,
 when the mountains are set in motion,
 when the camels in foal are neglected,
 when the wild beasts are all herded together,
 when the oceans surge into each other,
 when the selves are arranged into classes,
 when the baby girl buried alive is asked
 for what crime she was killed,
 when the Pages are opened up,

when the Heaven is peeled away,
 when the Fire is set ablaze,
 when the Garden is brought up close:
 then each self will know what it has done.

No! I swear by the planets with their retrograde motion,
 swiftly moving, self-concealing,
 and by the night when it draws in,
 and by the dawn when it exhales,
 truly it is the speech of a noble Messenger,
 possessing great strength,
 securely placed with the Lord of the Throne,
 obeyed there, trustworthy.

You see the situation where Allah is revealing that every-thing in creation is in this dynamic activity of moving. Every-thing is moving. Everything is in action – every single aspect of life, as we saw in these Ayats. This is the actual condition in which the human finds himself. We shall see that it also involves the human creature. So let us look now at Surat al-Baqara (2:35-39):

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ
 وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا
 هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ
 عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
 عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ فَتَلَقَىٰ
 آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۖ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾

قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٠٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

We said, “Adam, live in the Garden, you and your wife,
and eat freely from it wherever you will.
But do not approach this tree and so become wrongdoers.”

But Shaytan made them slip up by means of it,
expelling them from where they were.
We said, “Go down from here as enemies to each other!
You will have residence on the earth
and enjoyment for a time.”

Then Adam received some words from his Lord
and He turned towards him.
He is the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful.

We said, “Go down from it, every one of you!
Then when guidance comes to you from Me,
those who follow My guidance
will feel no fear and will know no sorrow.”

But those who are kafir and deny Our Signs
are the Companions of the Fire,
remaining in it timelessly, for ever.

Here we find three elements. Allah sends the family of Adam
out from the Garden, they are expelled, and sent on this

journey to the earth. That is the first aspect of it. Then, “Adam received some words from his Lord,” in other words, it is because of this event that you have the creation, the arrival on the planet Earth, of the reality of Nabawiyya. So Adam, ‘alayhi salam, is invested with a message from his Lord for mankind. So the beginning of this relationship Allah has towards the human creature, subhanahu wa ta’ala, if we can use such a word as relationship, is Nabawiyya, which is the link or the opening by which Allah opens this knowledge to the sons of Adam. Allah, subhanahu wa ta’ala, says: “Those who follow My guidance will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. But those who are kafir and deny Our Signs are the Companions of the Fire.” In other words, without that journey, Nabawiyya would not take place and would not even be necessary. So the beginning of the reality of knowledge for human beings comes from this journey. If they had not taken this journey they would not have been open to this knowledge in the wisdom of Allah, subhanahu wa ta’ala.

Now we go to Surat al-Muminun (23:23-29):

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَقَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا
 اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُوا الَّذِينَ
 كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ مَا هَذَا إِلَّا بَشْرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتَفَضَّلَ
 عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنْزَلَ مَلَائِكَةً مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي
 ءِآبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ حِجَّةً فَتَرَبَّصُوا بِهِ
 حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ

أَنْ إِصْنَعِ الْفُلَكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَحْرِمَنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُورُ
 فَاسْلُكْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ
 الْقَوْلُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تُخَاطِبُنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُخْرَقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾
 فَإِذَا اسْتَوَيْتَ أَنْتَ وَمَنْ مَعَكَ عَلَى الْفُلِكِ فَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ
 الَّذِي بَدَعُنَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَنْزِلْنِي مُنْزَلًا مُبْرَكًا
 وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

We sent Nuh to his people and he said,

“My people, worship Allah.

You have no god other than Him.

So will you not have Taqwa?”

The ruling circle of those of his people
who were kafir said,

“This is nothing but a human being like yourselves

who simply wants to gain ascendancy over you.

If Allah had wanted He would have sent Angels down.

We never heard of anything like this
among our ancestors, the earlier peoples.

He is nothing but a man possessed
so wait a while and see what happens to him.”

He said, “My Lord, help me
because of their calling me a liar!”

We revealed to him: “Build the Ship
under Our supervision and as We reveal.

When Our command comes
and water bubbles up from the earth,

load into it a pair of every species,
 and your family – except for those among them
 against whom the word has already gone ahead.
 And do not address Me concerning those who do wrong.
 They shall be drowned.
 When you and those with you
 are settled in the Ship,
 then say: ‘Praise be to Allah who has rescued us
 from the people of the wrongdoers!’
 And say: ‘My Lord, land me in a blessed landing-place.
 You are the best Bringer to Land.’”

Here we have the famous narration of Sayyiduna Nuh, ‘alayhi salam. What is interesting to grasp is this same situation in which Allah sends the family of Nuh on a journey which was, as it were, against all the odds. It is a terrifying journey – sending them out on the flood waters and guaranteeing him against all the people whom he has been negated by and has had to fight against. Then he is ordered to make this Du‘a: “My Lord, land me in a blessed landing place. You are the best Bringer to Land.”

Let us all recite it:

وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَنْزِلْنِي مُنْزَلًا مُبْرَكًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

“My Lord, land me in a blessed landing place.
 You are the best Bringer to Land.”

Now let us look at Surat al-Anbiya' (21:71-75):

وَبَجَّيْنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
 الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ
 إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾
 وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ
 الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا
 عِبْدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَلُوطًا - اتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَبَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنْ
 الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ الْخَبِيثَاتِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ
 فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا ۖ إِنَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

We delivered both him and Lut
 to the land which We had blessed for all beings.

And in addition to that We gave him Ishaq and Ya'qub
 and made both of them Salihun.

We made them leaders, guiding by Our command,
 and revealed to them how to do good actions
 and establish Salat and pay Zakat,
 and they worshipped Us.

We gave right judgement and knowledge to Lut
 and rescued him from the city
 which committed disgusting acts.

They were evil people who were deviators.

We admitted him into Our mercy.

He was one of the Salihun.

When Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says, “We delivered both him and Lut,” He is referring to Sayyiduna Ibrahim and Sayyiduna Lut, ‘alayhum salam. So of these great Prophets, Allah says:

وَجَيَّئِنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

We delivered both him and Lut
to the land which We had blessed for all beings.

So the journey is what precedes Allah’s introducing them to a land which is blessed. In other words, this is exactly the same as the Ayats we have just seen previously – Allah’s bringing people to a blessed place because they have made this journey, fisabilillah, against all the odds of safety. Now we go to Surat Yusuf (12:109):

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا
يُوحِي إِلَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ ۗ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَدَارُ
الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

The significance of what we are about to look at, is that it is the end of the long narration in a unique Surat in Qur’an which simply tells the story of Sayyiduna Yusuf, ‘alayhi salam. It is a series of journeys over years, bringing great suffering to the father of Yusuf, and great trouble, distress

and conflict to his brothers, and a long, long travail for Yusuf which, again, ends with this tremendous apotheosis of Rahma and the reunification of Yusuf with his father in the wonderful phrase in Qur'an where his father says: "I can smell Yusuf's scent!" It is beautiful. With the culmination of this life-long journey, in this Ayat, Allah explains the pattern of existence:

We sent none before you but men inspired with revelation
from among the people of the cities.
Have they not travelled in the land
and seen the final fate of those before them?
The abode of the Akhira is better
for those who have Taqwa.
So will you not use your intellect?

Allah says: "Will you not use your intellect?" So the function of the intellect is to recognise that the journey is to Allah. The destiny is to Allah. In the Qur'an, Allah openly gives away secrets of existence. It only requires you to look into it with reflection and the things open up for you. "We sent none before you but men inspired with revelation from among the people of the cities. Have they not travelled in the land and seen the final fate of those before them?" So the function of travelling in the land is to see the fate of the ones who were before you. You cannot fail to see, wherever you go, what happened to people. And what happened to people was that in turning from Allah and disobeying Allah, disaster crashed down on them. But there are those people who, with this knowledge, are lifted out, they are rescued from the flood. They are rescued from the Fire. And He says:

وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

The abode of the Akhira is better
for those who have Taqwa.
So will you not use your intellect?

Now we come to Sayyiduna Musa, ‘alayhi salam, in Surat al-Qasas. Again, this story is actually called ‘The Story’. The story of Yusuf is a story and this is the other story. We go to Ayats 5-20:

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ
أَسْضَعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ
أَيِّمَةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾
وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ
وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا
مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

We desired to show kindness to those
who were oppressed in the land
and to make them leaders
and make them inheritors
and establish them firmly in the land,
and to show Pharaoh and Haman and their troops
the very thing that they were fearing from them.

Look at what Allah is telling us. Allah, subhanahu wa ta‘ala, has decreed that something should happen, and this is HOW He makes it happen. It is something that is not there, but the outcome will be this.

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ

أَسْنُضَعِفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَهْلَ مَسْكَنٍ وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٥﴾
 وَنَمُكِّنْ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَرِي فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا
 مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ آلِ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ
 فَإِذَا اخْفَتِ عَلَيْهِ فَالْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِ وَلَا تَحْزَنِي
 إِنَّا رَأَيْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا إِتَارًا وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ فَالْتَقَطَهُ
 آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ
 وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِبِينَ ﴿٨﴾ وَقَالَتْ إِمْرَأَةٌ
 فِرْعَوْنَ قَرَّتْ عَيْنِي لِئَلَّا يَكْتُلُونِي وَأُوتِيْتُ مِثْرًا كَثِيرًا
 وَأَنْتَ خَيْرٌ مِنْكَ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَارُ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ
 أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَرِحًا بِأَنَّ كَتَمَتْ بَيْتَ رَبِّهَا لَهَا لَعَلَّهَا
 رَبُّنَا أَخْتًا وَأَخْبَتَ إِلَىٰ آلِ مُوسَىٰ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَقَالَتْ
 لِأُخْتِي قُصِّيهِ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَنْ جُنْبٍ وَهُوَ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾
 وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ
 عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ ﴿١٢﴾
 فَرَدَدْنَاهُ لِيَالِي أُمِّهِ كَمَا تَفَرَّقَ عَيْنَاهُ وَلَا تَحْزَنَ وَلِتَعْلَمَ
 أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَمَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ، وَاسْتَوَىٰ ۗ اٰتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۗ وَكَذٰلِكَ
 نَجْرِي ۙ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِيْنَةَ عَلٰى حِيْنِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ
 اٰهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيْهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلٰنِ هٰذَا مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ ۗ وَهٰذَا مِنْ
 عَدُوِّهِ ۗ فَاسْتَغَاثُ الَّذِيْ مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ ۗ عَلٰى الَّذِيْ مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَرَهُ
 مُوسٰى فَقَضٰى عَلَيْهِ ۗ قَالَ هٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۗ اِنَّهُ وَعَدُوُّ مُّضِلٌّ
 مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿١٧﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ اِنِّىْ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِيْ فَاغْفِرْ لِيْ فَغَفَرَ لَهُ ۗ وَاِنَّهُ هُوَ
 الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿١٨﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ اَكُوْنَ ظٰهِيْرًا
 لِّلْكَافِرِيْنَ ﴿١٩﴾ فَاَصْبَحَ فِي الْمَدِيْنَةِ حٰكِمًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ۗ فَاِذَا الَّذِيْ
 اِسْتَنْصَرُوْهُ بِالْاَمْسِ يَسْتَصْرِحُوْهُ ۗ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسٰى اِنَّكَ لَخَوِيٌّ
 مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَلَمَّا اَنَّ اَرَادَ اَنْ يَّبْطِشَ بِالَّذِيْ هُوَ وَعَدُوٌّ لَّهُمَا قَالَ يَمُوسٰى
 اَتُرِيْدُ اَنْ تَقْتُلِنِيْ كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا بِالْاَمْسِ ۗ اِنْ تُرِيْدُ اِلَّا اَنْ
 تَكُوْنَ جَبَّارًا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيْدُ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِيْنَ ﴿٢١﴾
 وَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ اَقْصَا الْمَدِيْنَةِ يَسْعٰى ۗ قَالَ يَمُوسٰى اِنَّ الْمَلَاَ
 يٰتَمُرُوْنَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوْكَ فَاخْرُجْ اِنِّىْ لَكَ مِنَ النَّصِيْحِيْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

We desired to show kindness to those
 who were oppressed in the land
 and to make them leaders
 and make them inheritors

and establish them firmly in the land,
and to show Pharaoh and Haman and their troops
the very thing that they were fearing from them.

We revealed to Musa's mother, "Suckle him and then
when you fear for him, cast him into the sea.
Do not fear or grieve – We will return him to you
and make him one of the Messengers."

The family of Pharaoh picked him up
so that he might be an enemy
and a source of grief to them.
Certainly Pharaoh and Haman
and their troops were in the wrong.

The wife of Pharaoh said,
"A source of delight for me and for you –
do not kill him.
It may well be that he will be of use to us
or perhaps we could adopt him as a son."
They were not aware.

Musa's mother felt a great emptiness in her heart
and she almost gave him away –
only We fortified her heart so that
she would be one of the Muminun.

She said to his sister, "Go after him."
And she kept an eye on him from afar
and they were not aware.

We first made him refuse all wet-nurses,

so she said, "Shall I show you to a household
who will feed him for you and be good to him?"

That is how We returned him to his mother
so that she might delight her eyes and feel no grief
and so that she would know that Allah's promise is true.

But most of them do not know this.

And when he reached his full strength and maturity,
We gave him judgement and knowledge.
That is how We recompense good-doers.

He entered the city at a time
when its inhabitants were unaware
and found two men fighting there –
one from his party and the other from his enemy.
The one from his party asked for his support
against the other from his enemy.
So Musa hit him, dealing him a fatal blow.
He said, "This is part of Shaytan's handiwork.
He truly is an outright and misleading enemy."

He said, "My Lord, I have wronged myself. Forgive me."
So He forgave him.
He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

He said, "My Lord, because of Your blessing to me,
I will never be a supporter of evildoers."

Morning found him in the city, fearful and on his guard.
Then suddenly the man
who had sought his help the day before,

shouted for help from him again.
Musa said to him, “You are clearly a misguided man.”

But when he was about to grab the man
who was their common enemy,
he said, “Musa! Do you want to kill me
just as you killed a person yesterday?
You only want to be a tyrant in the land,
you do not want to be a reformer.”

A man came running from the furthest part of the city,
saying, “Musa, the Council
are conspiring to kill you, so leave!
I am someone who brings you good advice.”

In this last Ayat we find, “A man came running from the furthest part of the city,” and we find this also in Surat Ya Sin (36:19):

وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى
قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ ائْتِعُوا الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

A man came running from the far side of the city, saying,
‘My people! follow the Messengers!’

It is this echo whereby, in these crises of life, there is someone who comes and says, “Follow the Messengers!” It is not the Messenger himself but someone who says, “Follow the Messengers!” Here, it is someone who comes running and says, “I come to give you good advice,” but what is good advice is from Allah, subhanahu wa ta’ala. Thus an

essential part of wisdom is that Allah sends people with the right words, and you hear it, and you act by the good, and then you get the good, you get the benefit.

We will look now at Ayats 29 and 30 of the same Surat:

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ ۚ آنَسَ مِنْ جَانِبِ
الطُّورِ نَارًا ۚ قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا
لَّعَلِّي آتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾
فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِنْ شَلْطِئِ الْوَادِ الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ
الْمُبْرَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَنْ يَمْوِسِي ۖ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

When Musa had fulfilled the appointed term
and had set off with his family,
he noticed a fire from one side of the Mount.
He said to his family, “Stay here, I can see a fire.
Hopefully I will bring you back some news from it
or a burning branch from the fire
so that you will be able to warm yourselves.”

But when he reached it a voice called out to him
from the right hand side of the valley
in the part which was full of blessing,
from out of the bush:
“Musa, I am Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.”

The last part of this, is Ayat 43 in Surat al-Qasas:

وَلَقَدْ - اتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الْأُولَى
بَصَائِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

We gave Musa the Book
after destroying the earlier nations,
to awaken people's hearts and as a guidance and a mercy
so that hopefully they would pay heed.

So look at this journey of Sayyiduna Musa, which begins with him as a helpless baby in a basket in the river, and it takes him through all these adventures where he kills someone. Look at the vicissitude, look at the trials he has! And the journey continues, and its final outcome is that he is appointed Messenger, and he then has a direct meeting with Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, in the coming upon the fire on the mountain. So this is the journey. Without the journey of Sayyiduna Musa, the event cannot happen – without this tremendous journey on the river and through this great wealthy kingdom where he has to struggle to stay alive – and it ends with the meeting with his Lord.

Now we go to Surat as-Saffat (37:139-148):

وَإِنَّ بُرْسُ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾
إِذَا بَقِيَ إِلَى الْفُلْكِ الْمَشْحُونِ ﴿١٤٠﴾ فَسَاهَمَ
فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُدْحَضِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾ فَالْتَقَمَهُ الْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾ لَلَّتْ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى
 يَوْمٍ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ فَنبَذْنَاهُ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ سَقِيمٌ ﴿١٤٥﴾ وَأَنْبَتْنَا
 عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِّنْ يَقْطِينٍ ﴿١٤٦﴾ وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى مِائَةِ أَلْفٍ أَوْ
 زَيْدٍ مِّنْهُمْ ﴿١٤٧﴾ فَآمَنُوا فَفَرَّغْنَا لَهُمُ الْوَيْلَ إِلَى حِينٍ ﴿١٤٨﴾

Yunus too was one of the Messengers.

When he ran away to the fully laden ship
and cast lots and lost.

Then the fish devoured him and he was to blame.

Had it not been that he was a man who glorified Allah,
he would have remained inside its belly
until the Day they are raised again.

So We cast him up onto the beach and he was sick,
and We caused a gourd tree to grow over him.

We sent him to a hundred thousand or even more.

They had Iman

and so We gave them enjoyment for a time.

Thus the journey of Yunus is into the depths of a triple darkness. He was in the darkness of the night, in the belly of the whale and in the darkness of the depths of the ocean. So out of this journey into triple darkness, Allah takes him and gives him followers, raises him up and makes him one of the Messengers. Now the last of these narrations we come to is in Surat al-Isra' (17:1):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ
 الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ وَمِنَ آيَاتِنَا
 أَنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٠﴾

In the name of Allah, All-Merciful, Most Merciful
 Glory be to Him who took His slave on a journey by night
 from the Masjid al-Haram to the Masjid al-Aqsa,
 whose surroundings We have blessed,
 in order to show him some of Our Signs.
 He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

Here the Rasul, sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, also has this same experience as these other Prophets, but Allah, subhanahu wa ta‘ala, took him through the air, from the haram of Makkah to al-Aqsa of Jerusalem. He took him to that meeting which is described as being within two bows-lengths of the Lord of the Universe. In other words, to within the proximity that is the closest conceivable, which, in the language of the Arabs, is the nearest that a person is allowed to approach a king. In other words, it was an intimacy of the most extreme limit of what is permitted.

What we have seen is that all the elements of creation are on a journey, and whichever one of the elements you are encountering can take you to the meeting with your Lord, which, in the language of Tasawwuf, is Fana‘ fillah. Sayyiduna Yunus had his Fana‘ in the Essence, in water. Sayyiduna

Ibrahim in fire, Sayyiduna Musa in earth, in seeing the bush, and Rasul, sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, in being taken through the air from one part of this world to the other.

So the point of this is that this is how existence is. It is itself a journey – but everything is on a journey, even the actual atoms. Everything is moving, everything is alive – everything! Remember how Rasul, sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, spoke to the stones. He spoke to the dead in the well at Badr. You must remember that this is the true nature of existence. This is why, for the Sufis, Safar is OBLIGATORY. You HAVE to get up and get out! This is an age where men have become enslaved. They want salaries, they want to be safe, they want to be secure, they have a debt and they want to pay their debt! No, no, no! You were born to have knowledge of Allah, subhanahu wa ta‘ala, and for this you must make the journey. You have to travel. Travel in the land. You have to SEE.

This is your obligation. You must wake up from this sleep-walking of the age we live in and realise and see what Allah has done with the world – what the creation is – see its beauty and see the terrible majesty that happens to those who have turned away from Allah, and you must understand what is happening wherever you go. Also you must seek those people of knowledge from whom you can take benefit so that on the highway you will encounter the man who comes running from the furthest part of the city and says: “Follow the Messengers!” and opens a door for you.

This is the destiny for the elite of the Elite. This is the Tariqa of Shaykh as-Shadhili and Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Habib and Shaykh al-Fayturi.