

in life and double [chastisement] after death, and you would have found none to succor you against Us). These verses refer to an offer of compromise made to the Prophet by the disbelievers (either of Makka or of Ṭāʾif). They asked the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, to recognize some of their deities as true gods, and in return offered to recognize him as their leader. The proposal was emphatically rejected by the Prophet; the infallibility (*ʿiṣma*) (*q.v.*) granted to the Prophet by Allah made it impossible for him to attribute anything to Allah which He Himself had not revealed (*cf. Tafṣīrs* of Ṭabarī, Rāzī, Bayḍawī, and Shawkānī, *sub* Q 17:74-75). Al-Ṭabarī narrates from the Successor Qatāda (d. 117/735) that when Q 17:74 was revealed, the Prophet prayed, “Do not leave me, O my Lord, to myself (*naḥsī*), even for the blinking of an eye” (*sub* Q 17:74-75).

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See also: ALLAH MOST HIGH; BELIEF; BELIEVERS; BLOOD; BODY; FEAR; HEART; INFALLIBILITY OF PROPHETS; MANIFEST AND THE HIDDEN; PROPHETHOOD; REVELATION; SOUL.

MUZAFFAR IQBAL

Articles of Belief (*arkān al-īmān*)

See ALLAH MOST HIGH; BELIEF

Articles of Islam (*arkān al-islām*)

See PILLARS OF ISLAM

Asbāb al-Nuzūl

See OCCASIONS OF REVELATION

Ascension

See NIGHT JOURNEY AND ASCENSION

Asceticism

See ABSTINENCE

Āsiya

See MOTHER OF MŪSĀ, UPON HIM PEACE

al-Asmāʾ al-ḥusnā

See BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLAH

ʿAṣr

See TIME; PRAYER

Ass

See ANIMALS

ASTRAY

ḌĀLL

This article comprises the following sections: i. Definitions; ii. Usage; iii. Those Who Have Gone Astray; iv. Those Who Lead Others Astray; v. Causes of Going Astray; vi. Leading Astray as Ascribed to Allah Most High; vii. The Punishment of Those Gone Astray; viii. Bibliography.

Definitions

Ḍalāl/ḍalāla (“to go astray”) is derived from the root *ḍ-l-l*, which primarily signifies absence or

concealment; for example, *ḍalla al-māʿ fī-l-laban* (“the water strayed into the milk”) means it disappeared into it. Similarly, *ḍalla al-kāfir* (“the disbeliever went astray”) signifies his failure to attain the truth, and *ḍalla al-nāsī* (“the one who forgot strayed”) implies he had a lapse in memory (Azharī, *Tahdhīb, sub ḍ-l-l*).

Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004) defines *ḍalāl* as the loss of something, or its leaving its rightful place; therefore, *ḍalla al-shayʿ* (“the thing went astray”) would mean that it was lost, and similarly *ḍalla fulān ʿan al-ṭarīq* (“so-and-so strayed from the road”) means he lost his way. One who is astray is called *ḍāll*. *Idlāl* and *taḍlīl*, however, mean to lead another astray, and one who does this is *muḍill* (*Maqayīs*; Ibn Manzūr).

Al-Rāghib al-Aṣḥāhānī (d. 502/1108) defines *ḍalāl* as any deviance from the right course, intentional or unintentional, great or small. The term thus applies to any kind of mistake, and is attributable to prophets as well as disbelievers. The Qurʾān says of the Prophet Muḥammad, blessings and peace be upon him, *And He found you astray (ḍāll) and guided you* (Q 93:7), “astray” here being interpreted as “unaware of the concerns of prophethood”—something altogether distinct from the error ascribed to disbelievers (see INFALLIBILITY OF PROPHETS) (*Mufradāt*).

Dalāl and over 40 derivatives of its trilateral root occur in the Qurʾān 191 times, often as opposed to *hudā* (right guidance). Similarly, *idlāl* (to misguide) is opposed to *hidāya* (to guide) (e.g., Q 34:24; 35:8) (see GUIDANCE AND MISGUIDANCE). *Idlāl* can also mean the attribution of *ḍalāl* to someone (Ibn Manzūr), as in the verse *And Allah will never lead a people astray (yuḍlilla) after He has guided them until He has made clear to them what they should avoid. Verily Allah is the All-Knower of all things* (Q 9:115). This is interpreted as referring to those believers who prayed for the forgiveness of dead disbelievers before knowing of its prohibition, and who feared punishment for having done so. Thus Allah made it clear to them that He does not deem anyone astray except in the case of knowing and willful disobedience (Ṭabarī; Rāzī; Ālūsī).

Usage

The term *ḍalāl* in the Qurʾān most often refers to deviance from faith in Allah Almighty, as in the verse *and he who exchanges belief (īmān) (q.v.) for disbelief (kufr) (q.v.) has verily strayed from the right way* (Q 2:108). Other meanings of *ḍalāl*, as given by al-Dāmaghānī (d. 478/1085) and Ibn al-Jawzī (508-597/1114-1200), include temptation, loss, misery, and ruin (respectively, *al-Wujūh wal-naẓāʾir* and *Nuzhat al-aʿyun*). Among

other Qurʾānic meanings of *ḍalāl* are:

- invalidation: *Those who disbelieve and hinder from the way of Allah, He will render their deeds vain* (Q 47:1). Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 527/1132) explains that their actions will be wasted, there being no one to accept or recompense them for their deeds (*Kashshāf*; for more on such economic language in the Qurʾān, see BUYING AND SELLING);
- to forget, as in the verse which explains why two women rather than one are required to take the place of one man as witnesses: *so that if one of them goes astray, the other can remind her* (Q 2:282), meaning if one forgets her testimony (Ṭabarī);
- to err, as the People of the Garden (*Aṣḥāb al-Janna*) (*q.v.*) exclaimed when they did not recognize it destroyed before them: *Verily, we have gone astray* (Q 68:26), meaning they had taken the wrong path and were lost (Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*);
- ignorance or unawareness, as Prophet Mūsā, peace be upon him, said about killing a man: *I did it then, when I was of those who were astray* (Q 26:20), meaning he was unaware that his stroke would lead to the man’s death (Ibn ʿAṭīyya; Rāzī). Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), however, interpret *ḍalāl* here as referring temporally to his pre-prophethood ignorance regarding revelation (see their *Tafsīrs*).

Al-Shinqīṭī (d. 1393/1973) notes that all of the above definitions can be understood through three primary categories. The first is to be unaware of the reality of something. In this category he includes the previous example of Mūsā, peace be upon him, as well as the verse *My Lord neither strays nor does He forget* (Q 20:52), meaning He does not err (Ṭabarī; Zamakhsharī). The second category, which is most prevalent in the Qurʾān, is that of deviance from belief to disbelief, for example: *Say: “O people of the Book, exceed not the limits in your religion, trespassing beyond the truth, and do not follow the vain desires of people who went astray afore and who misled many, and strayed from the right path”* (Q 5:77). The third use of *ḍalāl* implies absence and decline, as in the oft-repeated phrase *and what they invented will have strayed from them (wa-ḍalla ʿanhum mā kānū yaftarūn)* (Q 6:24; 7:53; 10:30; 11:21; 16:87; 28:75), meaning that the invented deities whose intercession the disbelievers anticipate will bring them no benefit on the Day of Judgment (Ālūsī). Similarly, in the verse, *And they say: “When we are astray in the earth, shall we indeed be created anew?” Nay, but they are disbelievers in the meeting with their Lord* (Q 32:10), *when we are astray in the earth* means “when our corpses have