

## QS 17 Q 13:27 – 43

13.27 The unbelievers say: “If only a miracle is sent down upon him from his Lord!”

Say: “God leads astray whomever He wills and guides to Him whoever repents,

13.28 They who believe and whose hearts feel secure at the remembrance of God” – in truth, let hearts feel secure at the remembrance of God!

13.29 They who believe and perform good deeds – blessings be upon them and the Abode of Bliss!”

13.30 Likewise did We send you to a nation before whom many nations had passed away, in order to recite to them what We had revealed to you, when they had blasphemed against the All-Merciful.

Say: “He is my Lord. There is no god but He! In Him I trust and to Him is my journey’s end.”

13.31 If only it had been a Qur’an wherewith mountains are moved or the earth is cut in pieces or the dead are spoken to!

But to God belongs dispensation of all matters. Do the believers not realize that if God had willed, He would have guided all mankind? And yet the unbelievers continue to be stricken by a calamity because of their actions, or else by one which alights close to their homes, until there shall come the promise of God. Surely God fails not His appointed time.

13.32 Other Messengers before you were met with ridicule. I granted the unbelievers respite and then I seized them – and what a punishment it was!

13.33 Is He who watches over every soul for what it earns...and yet they ascribe partners to God!

Say: “Name them! Or do you wish to inform Him of what He knows not on earth? Or is this speech a mere show?”

Rather, to those who disbelieve, their cunning was made attractive in their eyes, and they were driven away from the path of righteousness.

Whoever God leads astray, no guide has he.

13.34 Torment awaits them in this present life but the torment of the hereafter is even more

13.27 Ceux qui ont mécru disent: «Pourquoi n’a-t-on pas descendu sur lui (Muhammad) un miracle venant de son Seigneur?» Dis: «En vérité, Allah égare qui Il veut; et Il guide vers Lui celui qui se repent,

13.28 ceux qui ont cru, et dont les cours se tranquillisent à l’évocation d’Allah». Certes, c’est par l’évocation d’Allah que les cours se tranquillisent.

13.29 Ceux qui croient et font de bonnes œuvres, auront le plus grand bien et aussi le plus bon retour.

13.30 Ainsi Nous t’envoyons dans une communauté – que d’autres communautés ont précédée – pour que tu leur récites ce que Nous te révélons [le Coran], cependant qu’ils ne croient pas au Tout Miséricordieux. Dis: «C’est Lui mon Seigneur. Pas d’autre divinité à part Lui. En Lui je place ma confiance. Et à Lui je me repens».

13.31 S’il y avait un Coran à mettre les montagnes en marche, à fendre la terre ou à faire parler les morts (ce serait celui-ci). C’est plutôt à Allah le commandement tout entier. Les croyants ne savent-ils pas que, si Allah voulait, Il aurait dirigé tous les hommes vers le droit chemin. Cependant, ceux qui ne croient pas ne manqueront pas, pour prix de ce qu’ils font, d’être frappés par un cataclysme, ou [qu’un cataclysme] s’abattra près de leurs demeures jusqu’à ce que vienne la promesse d’Allah. Car Allah, ne manque pas à Sa promesse. 13.32 On s’est certes moqué des messagers avant toi. Alors, J’ai donné un répit aux mécréants. Ensuite, Je les ai saisis. Et quel fut Mon châtement!

13.33 Est-ce que Celui qui observe ce que chaque âme acquiert [est semblable aux associés? ...] Et pourtant ils donnent des associés à Allah. Dis [leur:] «Nommez-les. Ou essayez-vous de Lui apprendre ce qu’Il ne connaît pas sur la terre? Ou avez-vous été simplement séduits par de faux noms?» En fait, on a embelli aux mécréants leur stratagème et on les a empêchés de prendre le droit chemin. Et quiconque Allah laisse égarer, n’a plus personne pour le guider.

terrible. From God they can expect nothing to shield them.

13.35 The likeness of the Garden promised to the pious is one beneath which rivers flow. Its nourishment is everlasting, and so is its shade. This is the reward of the pious, but the reward of unbelievers is the Fire.

13.36 Those to whom We brought the Book are happy with what has been sent down upon you. But among religious sects there are some who reject a portion of it.

Say: "I was merely commanded to worship God and associate none with Him. I call to Him, and to Him is my final return."

13.37 So also did We send it down as an Arabic code of law.

Had you followed their fancies, after Knowledge had come to you, you would have found no protector or shield from God.

13.38 We sent Messengers before you to whom We gave spouses and progeny. But no Messenger could have worked any miracle except by God's leave.

For every matter decided there is a Register:

13.39 God erases what He wills, and ratifies. With Him is the Archetype of the Book.

13.40 Whether We show you part of what We promised them or whether we cause you to die, it is your duty to convey the message, but Ours is the accounting.

13.41 Do they not see how We descend upon their territory, causing it to shrink from its margins? It is God who judges, and nothing can hold back His judgment. He is quick to settle accounts.

13.42 Those before them also practiced their cunning, but to God belongs all cunning. He knows what each soul earns, and the unbelievers shall surely know to whom belongs the destiny of the Abode.

13.43 Those who blaspheme say: "You are no Messenger."

Say: "Let God suffice as witness between me and you – He who has knowledge of the Book."

13.34 Un châtement les atteindra dans la vie présente. Le châtement de l'au-delà sera cependant plus écrasant et ils n'auront nul protecteur contre Allah.

13.35 Tel est le paradis qui a été promis aux pieux: sous lequel coulent les ruisseaux; ses fruits sont perpétuels, ainsi que son ombrage. Voilà la fin de ceux qui pratiquent la piété, tandis que la fin des mécréants sera le Feu.

13.36. se réjouissent de ce qu'on a fait descendre vers toi. Tandis que certaines factions en rejettent une partie. Dis: «Il m'a seulement été commandé d'adorer Allah et de ne rien Lui associer. C'est à Lui que j'appelle [les gens], Et c'est vers Lui que sera mon retour».

13.37 Ainsi l'avons-Nous fait descendre (le Coran) [sous forme] de loi en arabe. Et si tu suis leurs passions après ce que tu as reçu comme savoir, il n'y aura pour toi, contre Allah, ni allié ni protecteur.

13.38 Et Nous avons certes envoyé avant toi des messagers, et leur avons donné des épouses et des descendants. Et il n'appartient pas à un Messenger d'apporter un miracle, si ce n'est qu'avec la permission d'Allah. Chaque échéance a son terme prescrit.

13.39 Allah efface ou confirme ce qu'il veut et l'Écriture primordiale est auprès de Lui.

13.40 Que Nous te fassions voir une partie de ce dont Nous les menaçons, ou que Nous te fassions mourir (avant cela), ton devoir est seulement la communication du message, et le règlement de compte sera à Nous.

13.41 Ne voient-ils pas que Nous frappons la terre et que Nous la réduisons de tous côtés? C'est Allah qui juge et personne ne peut s'opposer à Son jugement, et Il est prompt à régler les comptes.

13.42 Certes ceux d'avant eux ont manigancé (contre leur Messenger); le stratagème tout entier appartient à Allah. Il sait ce que chaque âme acquiert. Et les mécréants sauront bientôt à qui appartient la bonne demeure finale.

13.43 Et ceux qui ne croient pas disent: «Tu n'es pas un Messenger». Dis: «Allah suffit, comme témoin entre vous et moi, et ceux qui ont la connaissance du Livre (sont aussi témoins)».

## سورة الرعد

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أُنَابَ (27) الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ (28) الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ طُوبَى لَهُمْ وَحَسُنَ مَا بَدَأَ (29) كَذَلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ فِي أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا أُمَمٌ لِنَتْلُوَ عَلَيْهِمُ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابَ (30) وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْآنًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كَلِمَ بِهِ الْمَوْتَى بَلْ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ جَمِيعًا أَفَلَمْ يَنبَسِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَهْدَى النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَا يَزَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُمْ بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُ قَرِيبًا مِنْ دَارِهِمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ (31) وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزَأَ بِرُسُلٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَأَمَلَيْتُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ أَخَذْتَهُمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ (32) أَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَانِمٌ عَلَى كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ قُلْ سَمُّوهُمْ أَمْ تُنَبِّئُونَهُ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ بِظَاهِرٍ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بَلْ رُبَّكُمْ لَذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَكْرُهُمْ وَضَدُّوا عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ (33) لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلِعَذَابُ الْأُخْرَى أَشَقُّ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَاقٍ (34) مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ أُكُلُهَا دَائِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا تِلْكَ عُقْبَى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَعُقْبَى الْكَافِرِينَ النَّارُ (35) وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِغَيْرِ حَرَجٍ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُوتِرْتُ أَنْ أُعْبِدَ اللَّهَ وَلَا أُشْرِكَ بِهِ إِلَيْهِ أَدْعُو وَإِلَيْهِ مَآبُ (36) وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَغْدًا بَغْدًا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا وَاقٍ (37) وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً وَمَا كَانَ لِرُسُلٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ (38) يَمْخُوا لِلَّهِ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ أَمْرَهُ ثُمَّ الْكِتَابُ (39) وَإِنْ مَا تُرِيدُكَ بَعْضُ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفِّيكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ (40) أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقِّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ (41) وَقَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلِلَّهِ الْمَكْرُ جَمِيعًا يَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الْكُفَّارُ لِمَنْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ (42) وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ (43)

## Grodzki

In reference to Rippin's interesting comment on the sense of *suyyirat*, I would follow here Luxenberg's suggestion of a slightly different dotting – *suttirat* (through the Syriac root *star* – destroy, tear down, pull down) which applies well to all three mentions vv.: 13:31, 78:20 and 81:3, always in passive, and always referring to mountains. It seems much more plausible to have mountains destroyed/falling apart rather than being set in motion, especially when in all cases the surrounding verses speak of destruction using cognate vocabulary (Luxenberg 2007a: 144–5). This, however, does not solve the mysterious usage (and very unusual meaning) of *qur'ān<sup>am</sup>* followed by *bihi* (if it is in fact *bihi*) in v. 13:31.

## Khalfallah

L'expression *umm al-kitāb* est à mon sens le réceptacle où confluent théologie, rhétorique et exégèse. Il a fallu mobiliser des principes de *balāga* (assortis de données lexicales) pour montrer qu'il s'agit d'une synecdoque désignant : « source de ce qui est écrit ». Ensuite, les *mutakallimūn* (théologiens musulmans) ont longuement débattu pour savoir comment Dieu pouvait effacer et établir des Ordres, Décrets, Destins... sans être en contradiction. Quant aux *mufasssirūn*, ce verset était un prétexte pour discuter de leur théorie de l'abrogation. Les termes : *umm*, *umma*, *ummī* (et leurs autres dérivés) nécessitent, à mon sens, une plus longue étude exclusive en se référant aux sources préislamiques pour en connaître le socle tribal, non-arabes

(syriaque et hébreu) et non-musulmanes (chrétienne et juive) afin de mieux déterminer ses contours métaphoriques et anthropologiques.

### Kropp

The core statement seems to me v. 27: *Allāhu yuḏillu man yašā'u wa-yahdī man anāba*. Here I do not aim at the evidently broken logical connection between the two parts. In the first the divine action is absolute; in the second there seems to be a condition in the action of man. Other and frequent parallel statements clearly point to the absolute freedom in the almighty God's actions. It is not necessary to step into the never ending discussion (in other religions as well) of man's free will or related matters. But I want to point out that on the basis of the Qur'ān's fundamental verses such as v. 13:27 a discussion of God's justice is simply not possible. The more religious than philosophical problem of theodicy cannot arise. Add to this a rather terse and pessimistic view of human nature expressed in many verses and you easily understand why so many early Muslims resigned to the simple statement: *al-dunyā šarr!*

### Madigan

This passage is intriguing for its rich use of scriptural language, sometimes in slightly unexpected ways. All the relevant terms are here: the verbs *anzala*, *awḥā*, *hadā* and *talā*: the nouns Qur'ān, *ḏikr*, *āya*, *ḥukm*, *amr*, *rasūl*, *balāḡ* and particularly *kitāb*, including its use in the phrases *umm al-kitāb* and *allaḏīna ātaynāhum al-kitāb*.

Discussions of *umm al-kitāb* (v. 39) tend to take their cue from this passage and from Q 43:4 and presume it to mean an archetypal heavenly canon. However, the other use of *umm al-kitāb*, in Q 3:7 (see QS 5), should perhaps give us pause. There it is identified with the *ayāt muḥkamāt* and so with only part of the *kitāb*. The use of both Qur'ān (v. 31) and *kitāb* (v. 38) in indefinite form (and these are not by any means the only places in the Qur'ān where such occurs) alerts us to some of the complexities of those terms, which are so often read in an oversimplified identification with scriptural texts, actual or archetypal. Pickthall brings out some of this complexity when he translates *umm al-kitāb* as “the source of ordinance” (Q 13:39) and “the source of decrees” (Q 43:4). However in Q 3:7 (see QS 5) he uses “the substance of the Book.”

### Rippin

The use of *qur'ān<sup>am</sup>* in v. 31 is fascinating – something along the line of “decree” might be suggested as a meaning – if the sense of *suyyirat bihi* does suggest that agency of the object (the use of the passive verb is also found in Q 78:20 and Q 81:3 both with mountains but without the agent indicated by *bihi*).

Also of clear interest is v. 38, *li-kulli aḡalīn kitāb*, for what it means about the concept of *kitāb*; here it is deemed a “sign” from God of a messenger's divine mission.

### Sirry

One of the issues addressed in this passage is the opposition to the prophets before Muḥammad. Perhaps, this also reflects Muḥammad's contemporaries' rejection of his message. Vv. 34 and 35 deal with worldly and eschatological punishments for rejecters of the message of the previous prophets and rewards for believers. It seems that the moral message of this is that as God punished past generations of unbelievers, so in the same way He will punish those who rejected the Prophet's message. V. 36 is intriguing because it clearly implies confidence that the People of the Book will support the Prophet by recognizing the truth of his claims: "those to whom we have given the book rejoice at what has been revealed to you." Scholars offer different explanations as to why the Meccan revelations refer to Jews and Christians as those who support and confirm the truth of Muḥammad's message. Goitein, for instance, argues that Muḥammad did encounter some positive response from Jews and Christians at Mecca. "There is little doubt," says Goitein, "that Muḥammad's beginnings were met with approval by at least some of his monotheistic acquaintances" (1971:81). In line with Goitein, Rahman argues that "From the Qur'ān, it is abundantly clear that there were, among the followers of Judaism and (whether orthodox or not) of Christianity, some who affirmed the truth of the Prophet's mission and, in fact, encouraged him to in the face of Meccan opposition" (1982:137). However, Rahman admits that it would be hard to establish conclusively the presence of a significant number of Jews and Christians at Mecca because "history tells us next to nothing about them, nor do we know whether these are the same persons with whom the Prophet held discussions." David Marshall (2001) offers a different explanation. For him, the Meccan allusions to the People of the Book are based on theoretical assumptions about what Jews and Christians *should be like* and about how they can be *expected* to respond, rather than on concrete encounters with specific people, as at Medina. This is similar to what Rahman has said: "This attitude (that his message was a continuation or revival of earlier Prophets) is, however, on a purely theoretical or ideal religious plane and has no reference to the *actual* doctrine and practice of the 'People of the Book' and the two must be distinguished" (Rahman 1982:26).

### Stewart

v. 32 Many earlier prophets were mocked before you. This not only reveals something about the Prophet's experience that shows up in other stories of the Prophets but also hints at something about Qur'ānic style, for the text responds to this mockery with mockery. Certain passages in the Qur'ān do not only inform the unbelievers of their errors or denounce or curse them, but rather taunt them in such passages as *fa-bašširhum bi-'aḏābin alīm* "So give them the good news of a painful torment!" or *fa-ḏuq innaka anta l-'azīzu l-karīm* "So taste! For you are the powerful and noble!" etc.

At the end of the *sūra* occur a number of references to books that are distinct but in close proximity, and this seems intended.

V. 36 Those to whom We have given the Book, meaning the Bible.

V. 37 *ḥukman* ‘*arabiyyan* refers to the text that has been revealed to the Prophet > the Qur’ān.

V. 38 For each appointed time is a book > God’s decree, determination.

V. 39 the Mother of the Book > the inaccessible exemplar from which the verses of the Qur’ān are revealed, which lies in the supernatural realm.

V. 43 and he who has knowledge of the Book > Is this a reference to God? The Book appears many times in this section, in verses, 36, 38, 39, and 43, with distinct meanings. I am not sure what the cause of this arrangement is exactly, but the effect would seem to be to create a sense of connection and perhaps of conflation between the various senses of book, even while recognizing that they have distinct denotations.

### Toorawa

Two Qur’ānic concepts, present in this *sūra*, and to which I would like to devote further thinking, are: (1) the maternal; (2) mountains.

The maternal is well discussed in the context of God not having offspring, and in connection with the root *R-Ḥ-M* (see Roberts 2009)—if less so in terms of mothers as Qur’ānic characters. But we need a more sophisticated handle on the Qur’ān’s maternal lexicon (and, indeed, its kinship lexicon generally). In v. 39, for example, we find *umm al-kitāb* (“the matrix of the Scripture”?). When are things in fact maternal or matricial? How is such vocabulary coded? What is the relationship of these words with the Qur’ān’s conception of God, prophets, their mothers, mothers generally, generation? And how are mother-characters described? These are all questions awaiting answers.

As for mountains, they appear in another of this *sūra*’s very interesting verses, namely v. 31. The image here is of mountains *suḡyirat*, “moved, set in motion,” thus a figurative expression. How else are mountains figuratively deployed in the Qur’ān? We find them described as *rawāsī* (“firm, stable”) elsewhere in this *sūra* (v. 13), but for example as *awṭād* (“pyramids”?) in other *sūras* (e.g. Q 78:7). Creating a meaningful lexicon of mountain vocabulary would be very helpful.

### Younes

Vv. 31 and 33 seem to be missing part of a longer text. V. 31 contains an antecedent (protasis) but lacks the necessary “consequent” (or apodosis). The apodosis is filled in in English translations. Note the parenthesis in Pickthall’s translation, for example: “Had it been possible for a Lecture to cause the mountains to move, or the earth to be torn asunder, or the dead to speak, (this Qur’ān would have done so)”...

V. 33 starts with *a-fa-man huwa qā'imun 'alā kulli nafsin bimā kasabat* “Is He Who is aware of the deserts of every...”. A new sentence begins: *wa-ġa'alū li-llāhi shur-akā'*, which Pickthal translates as “Yet they ascribe unto Allah partners” after filling in (as he who is aware of nothing).

V. 31 has an additional problem in the word *yay'as*, which is written in the Cairo edition *يائيس*, with *hamza* sitting on the seat of the second *yā'*. In the *rasm*, which does not include the *hamza*, the word is written as follows: *يائس*. *yay'as* and other words sharing the same root are quite common in the Qur'ān with the general meaning of “to despair, give up hope.” Such a meaning would not work here. That is why Pickthall translates it as “to know.” What he is translating is most likely the word *يَأْنَسُ*, which means “to know or become familiar with” (Ibn Manẓūr, 1: 147). *Ya'nas* more faithfully conforms to the *rasm*.

Finally, a careful examination of the language of this passage suggests that it consists of two distinct layers, with one having the same rhyme, one coherent theme, and is free of the kind of syntactic problems mentioned above. This layer includes all the verses that have “b” as their rhyme, namely 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43. The other layer includes the remaining verses.