

Tafseer Al-Baqarah (2: 258-60)

From the Book, Introduction to the Tafseer of the Quran,

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﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٢٥٨) أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِئَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِئَةَ عَامٍ فَانْظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ وَانْظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ وَلِتَجْعَلَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَانْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا حَمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٢٥٩) وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى قَالَ أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قَالَ بَلَى وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبِي قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلَى كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (٢٦٠)﴾

“Have you not seen the one who argued with Ibrahim (as) about his Lord [merely] because Allah (swt) had given him kingship? When Ibrahim (as) said, "My Lord is the one who gives life and causes death," he said, "I give life and cause death." Ibrahim (as) said, "Indeed, Allah brings up the sun from the east, so bring it up from the west." So the disbeliever was overwhelmed [by astonishment], and Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people. (258) Or [consider such an example] as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, "How will Allah bring this to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years; then He revived him. He said, "How long have you remained?" The man said, "I have remained a day or part of a day." He said, "Rather, you have remained one hundred years. Look at your food and your drink; it has not changed with time. And look at your donkey; and We will make you a sign for the people. And look at the bones [of this donkey] - how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh." And when it became clear to him, he said, "I know that Allah is competent over all things." (259) And when Ibrahim (as) said, "My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead." He (saw) said, "Have you not believed?" He said, "Yes, but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied." He (swt) said, "Take four birds and slaughter them to yourself. Then put on each hill a portion of them; then call them - they will come [flying] to you in haste. And know that Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise." (260)” [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah 2:258-260]

In these verses, Allah (swt) demonstrates how He (swt) strengthens those who believe, in their encounters with the tyrants, and how the arguments of the disbelievers are rejected and invalid.

Then Allah (swt) elucidates some of the evidence of His (swt) greatness in creating His (swt) creations, and His (swt) ability to resurrect the dead, affirming that Allah (swt) is All-Mighty and All-Wise, and that He (swt) Alone has power over all things.

1. In the first verse, Allah (swt) mentions the debate of the tyrannical disbeliever against Ibrahim (as). Instead of thanking Allah (swt) for granting him sovereignty, he responded with arrogance, tyranny, and disbelief, considering himself a deity.

When Ibrahim (as) argued with him, asserting that it is Allah (swt) Who brings the dead to life, the tyrant responded in argument, claiming that he also gives life and causes death, by sparing one and killing another, employing deceit and misleading tactics. Thus, Allah (swt) guided Ibrahim (as) to present a matter that would not be exploited by the tyrant's deceit or evasion.

Ibrahim (as) informed him that Ibrahim (as) takes Allah (swt) as his Lord, who causes the sun to rise from the East. If he claimed to be a deity, then let him cause the sun to rise from the West.

And thus, the argument circled back to the tyrannical ruler, who stumbled in his argument. The truth became evident to those who could see, that disbelievers twist facts, tamper with scales, and misrepresent matters inappropriately. Instead of believing in Allah (swt), the Creator, the Giver of life and death, they disbelieve in Him (swt), and unjustly take His creations as gods. Indeed, they are the oppressors. How evil is the judgment they make!

As for, ﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ﴾ **“Have you not seen”**, The interrogative hamza indicates negation and affirmation in the negation, meaning “Did you see the one who argued with Ibrahim?” In the interrogative, there is a meaning of amazement, and here the "sight" refers to intellectual perception, understanding and insight. Due to that, the particle (إِلَى) “to” added to it, ﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى﴾ **“Have you not seen the one who argued”**, and Arabs do that when they want to express amazement at a man for something he was denied upon. So they say, (أما ترى إلى هذا) 'Do you not see this!' The meaning is: Have you seen someone like this!

As for ﴿الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾ **“the one who argued with Ibrahim (as)”**, It is Nimrod, with the letter (ن) 'noon' and the letter (د) 'dal' (نمرود), as narrated by Ibn Abbas (ra).

His argument was termed 'al-Muhajjah,' which lacks evidence. The cursed tyrant brought it forth as a basis for argumentation. It is correct to use 'al-Muhajjah' to refer to what the disbelievers argue, because it lacks evidence and clear proofs. It is so as long as they present it as a basis for argumentation, as stated by Allah (swt): ﴿يَا هَٰؤُلَاءِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُكْمُ ٱلْأَبَدِىُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُكْمُ ٱلْأَبَدِىُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُكْمُ ٱلْأَبَدِىُّ﴾ **“O People of the Book! Why do you argue about Ibrahim (as) while the Torah and the Injeel were not revealed until after him? Then will you not reason?”** [TMQ Aali-Imran 3:65] and as mentioned by Allah (swt): ﴿هَٰؤُلَاءِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُكْمُ ٱلْأَبَدِىُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُكْمُ ٱلْأَبَدِىُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُكْمُ ٱلْأَبَدِىُّ﴾ **“Here you are - those who have argued about that of which you have [some] knowledge, but why do you argue about that of which you have no knowledge?”** [TMQ Aali-Imran 3:66] and the speech of Allah (swt): ﴿حُجَّتُهُمْ دَٰخِضَةٌ﴾ **“their argument is invalid”** [TMQ Al-Shura 42:16].

As for, ﴿أَنۢ ءَاتٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ﴾ **“Because Allah had given him kingship?”** That is because Allah (swt) bestowed it upon him," with the omission of "—" (laam of reason) which is frequently omitted in "أَن" and "إِن" to indicate the reason.

That is, his receiving of the kingdom led him to arrogance, rebellion, and tyranny. Instead of thanking Allah (swt) for His blessings, he disbelieved and assumed himself as a deity, and argued against Allah (swt). ﴿وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِى ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْمِحَالِ﴾ **“They dispute about Allah; and He is stern in plan”** [TMQ Al-Ra'ad 13:13], (ٱلْمِحَالِ) “cunning” such as the book of planning, scheming, and power.

As for, ﴿إِذۢ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّى ٱلَّذِى يُحۢى وَيُمِيتُ﴾ **“When Ibrahim (as) said: My Lord is the one who gives life and causes death”** Ibrahim (as) started with this argument, but the tyrant persisted arrogantly, insisting that it is he who could give life and cause death by killing and pardoning. ﴿قَالَ أَنَا۟ أَحۢى وَأُمِيتُ﴾ **“He said: I give life and cause death”**. Despite the fact that what he mentioned was not a response to the argument of Ibrahim (as). This is because the one who gives life is the One Who creates existence out of nothing, or gives it life after it is dead. However, what Namrud did was not giving life to the dead or creating from nothing. Instead he said that out of arrogance and defiance.

So, it was part of the wisdom of Ibrahim (as) that he did not stop at the statement of Namrud to argue with him about it. He did not contend that it was not the giving life to the dead. He came to him with a tangible example of the giver of life and the causer of death. He (swt) is the one capable of transforming things from one state to another, contrary to their original state, and bringing about new creation. So, he said to him: ﴿فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأۡتِى بِٱلشَّمۡسِ مِنَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ﴾ **“Indeed, Allah brings up the sun from the east, so bring it up from the**

west” and at this point, the disbeliever was confounded. Here, evasion or defiance would not avail him. Thus, the fallacy of the tyrant king's argument was exposed.

As for ﴿فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ﴾ **“So the disbeliever was overwhelmed [by astonishment]”** meaning, he was overwhelmed and became speechless, bewildered by the strength of the argument, with no way to escape its grip.

This has always been the way of the unjust. They do not adhere to any valid argument or clear proof or weight. Instead, they resort to feeble excuses and baseless claims, trying to make their weak arguments seem valid. They distort facts and values, putting things out of their proper context, ﴿وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ **“and Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people”**.

2. Then, in the following verse, Allah (swt) mentions clear signs, great evidences of the Creator's power to resurrect the dead. These serve as a proof for the believers, whether they witnessed them firsthand or learned of them through the verses of Allah (swt) in His great Book. Through these signs, they come to know the greatness of Allah (swt) and the majestic nature of His being. ﴿أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ **“Allah (swt) is competent over all things”**. In this noble verse, Allah (swt) recounts the story of a man who passed by a deserted town with its roofs collapsed, marveling at its state of ruin and desolation. He wondered how Allah (swt) would restore this town to its former state of glory, with its inhabitants and buildings.

Allah (swt) caused him to die, and remain dead, for a hundred years. Then brought him back to life afterwards. When he inquired about the duration of his absence, thinking it was only a day or part of a day. He was informed that he had been away for a hundred years. He was then asked to observe his food and drink, which had not changed over the course of a hundred years. This is whilst his donkey, which had died, decayed, and scattered into bones, serving as a stark contrast.

Allah (swt) revealed to him that his death, resurrection, and what happened to his possessions and his donkey were all meant as a lesson and a clear sign for him and his people, who witnessed his state before and after his death, as well as for all those who would come after, and hear about it from the Messengers of Allah (as), so that they are convinced.

This is a wondrous event that only the Creator of the heavens and the earth can accomplish: preserving food and drink, without alteration for a hundred years, causing the donkey to die, and all of this happened simultaneously, in just a moment!

Then, after that, Allah (swt) showed him what was even more astonishing and remarkable. The bones of the donkey gathered and lifted from the ground, returning to their places in its body. Then, flesh covered the bones, and the donkey returned to life as it was, alive again after a hundred years!

All of this while he witnessed it with his own eyes, proclaiming the greatness of the Creator, the Originator, believing in the Almighty and All-Powerful. ﴿فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ **“When it became clear to him, he said: I know that Allah (swt) is competent over all things”**.

As for, ﴿أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا﴾ **“Or consider such an example as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin”**. (أَوْ) “or” serves as a conjunction to link scenarios, by meaning and estimation: Have you seen the one who argued with Ibrahim (as) about his Lord, or like the one who passed by a deserted town, while its thrones were empty?

As for ﴿مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ﴾ **“passed by a township”** Allah (swt) has not informed us in His Book about the identity of the passerby or the specific town. Similarly, I have not found any authentic Hadith from the Messenger of Allah (saw) regarding this. However, there are various narrations from some Companions and Tabieen that differ in specification. Yet, this knowledge is not essential because the context of the verse focuses on the issue of

resurrection and giving life to dead, which requires deliberation and attention. It is this aspect that Allah (swt) has emphasized and made a sign for people. So we are content with what Allah (swt) has mentioned.

As for ﴿وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا﴾ **“a township which had fallen into ruin”**. ﴿خَاوِيَةٌ﴾ **“Ruined”** means "There is no one in it," as in the saying: "The emptiness of the house is desolating".

As for ﴿عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا﴾ **“on its thrones”** i.e. collapsed on its roofs, as the ceiling fell first, then the walls collapsed on it.

And العرش is the roof of the house and everything that provides shade, so it is called العرش. From it is the عريش of the valley, and from it is the saying of the Allah (swt): ﴿وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ﴾ **“And (in) that which they construct”** [TMQ Al-Nahl 16:68].

As for ﴿أَنَّى يُحْيَىٰ هَٰذَا اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا﴾ **“How will Allah (swt) bring this to life after its death?”**, meaning how will Allah (swt) revive this after its death?

As for ﴿ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ﴾ **“then He (swt) revived him”**, so He (swt) brought him to life.

As for ﴿قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ﴾ **“He said: I have remained a day or part of a day”**. So it was as if he thought that he had slept, then got up, and the usual sleep does not last longer than that, as he expected. Perhaps when Allah (swt) brought him back to life, he saw that the sun had not yet set, so he said what he said.

As for ﴿قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ﴾ **“He said: Rather, you have remained one hundred years”**. So Allah (swt) informed him that he had remained for a hundred years, (بَلْ) “instead”, as a conjunction for contrast, meaning you did not stay as you claimed. ﴿يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ﴾ **“a day or part of the day”**, but you resided, ﴿مِائَةَ عَامٍ﴾ **“one hundred years”**.

How Allah (swt) informed him, we do not know, because it is from the unseen (غيب), and Allah (swt) did not inform us in the verse how that was.

As for ﴿لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ﴾ **“it has not changed”** meaning it did not change during this prolonged period. Its derivation from السنه 'the year' and the variation in its (ل) 'laam' has led to different opinions.

It has been said that (هَاء) 'ha' is used as evidence for 'so-and-so's expiration', meaning ﴿يَتَسَنَّهْ﴾ **“changed (over time)”** which is in the majzoom (مجزوم), case with a sukun on the (هَاء) 'ha'. So the (هَاء) 'ha' is in the origin case.

And it is also said 'واو' (the letter waw), evidenced by the plural form of (سنوات) 'years.' So it is in the majzoom (مجزوم) case due to the omission of the letter of illah and the (هَاء) 'ha' for pause.

The most likely explanation is that the (هَاء) 'ha' is an addition for pause, as it has two mutawatir recitations:

First is, ﴿يَتَسَنَّهْ﴾ **“changed (over time)”** as both as a stop وقفا and a continuity وصلًا.

Other is, ﴿يَتَسَنَّهْ﴾ **“changed (over time)”** as a continuity, and (يَتَسَنَّ) yatasan (without the haa) as a stop.

The two readings are both mutawatir and are in accordance with classical Arabic.

Regarding the reading with a stop الوقف by the affirmation of the (هَاء) 'haa', and the reading with continuity الوصول by the absence of the (هَاء) 'haa', this indicates that the (هَاء) 'haa' is additional.

As for the reading with affirmation of the (هَاء) 'haa' for both stop and and continuation with it, it could mean that it is the origin case, because it is confirmed, in both stopping and continuation. However, it could also be considered additional, as in Arabic, additional words can be added for emphasis, even in the case of discontinuity (Qat'a).

The first reading is confirmed with the addition of the (هاء) 'haa'.

The second reading, whether with the addition of the 'haa' or its origin form, is ambiguous.

So, the decisive judgment regarding the ambiguous is that the (هاء) 'haa' is considered additional in ﴿لَمْ يَسْتَنْ﴾ **“it has not changed”**, and in the case of مجزوم (majzoom) by omitting the letter of reasoning (illah).

As for ﴿وَأَنْظِرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ﴾ **“and look at your donkey”** meaning see how we gather his bones and clothe them with flesh, and then revive it. That is how it was.

As for ﴿وَلَنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ﴾ **“We will make you a sign for the people”** meaning a lesson and a sign of resurrection after death.

As for ﴿وَأَنْظِرْ إِلَىٰ الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنْشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوها لَحْمًا﴾ **“And look at the bones of this donkey - how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh”** meaning look at the bones, how We raise them one over the other in composition for resurrection. So 'ننشز' refers to the elevation, meaning look at the bones of the donkey, how We lift them from the ground, assemble them together, and restore them to their places in the body alive as they were.

As for ﴿فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ۖ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ **“And when it became clear to him, he said: I know that Allah (swt) is competent over all things”** meaning when things became clear to him, and he saw how Allah (swt) resurrects the dead clearly, and how He (swt) preserves food and drink for a hundred years without change, as if years had not passed over them.

He said at that moment: Now I know with certainty that Allah (swt) has power over all things.

The understanding of this statement is that previously he knew by inference (from evidence) that Allah (swt) has power over all things, and now with sensory perception, it is more likely that the one who passed by the village was a believer, and when he said: ﴿أَنْتَىٰ﴾ **“How will Allah bring this to life after its death?”**. He did not say it in denial or rejection of the power of Allah (swt), but rather in respect of greatness at His (swt) power, acknowledging the inability of creatures to know how Allah (swt) revives the dead except by Allah's teaching them. So, he said to himself what he said out of a desire and anticipation for Allah (swt) to show him that.

This is more likely than saying that the one who passed by the village was a disbeliever, so he said: ﴿أَنْتَىٰ يَحْيَىٰ هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا﴾ **“How will Allah bring this to life after its death?”**, denying Allah's capability to do so. So Allah (swt) did with him what He did, to make him certain and believe.

3. Then afterward, Allah (swt) mentions Ibrahim's (as) request to show him how He (swt) brings the dead back to life. Allah (swt), while knowing the secret and the hidden, asks him about it. ﴿أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ﴾ **“Have you not believed?”** Ibrahim (as) responds by stating that he is a believer, but he desires assurance for his heart by witnessing it firsthand. The noble verse indicates that seeing the unseen is not a condition for belief. Instead, belief is affirmed through evidence. Ibrahim was already a believer before witnessing the resurrection of the dead firsthand.

Indeed, seeing the unseen as if it were visible, is another status that Allah (swt) bestows upon whomever He (swt) wills among His servants, for a wisdom that He (swt) alone knows.

It is worth mentioning that seeing the unseen requires transmitted (Sharai) evidence to affirm it. If the Quran had not informed us that Allah (swt) showed it to Ibrahim (as), we would not have asserted it because the unseen is not within the realm of sensory perception for the intellect to ponder, and establish evidence upon it. Instead, it requires transmitted (Sharai) evidence to prove it.

So the intellect investigates the reality and derives conclusions from it, and what is not a tangible reality before it relies on transmission for its verification.

So we believe in Allah (swt) through rational inquiry into His (swt) creations that are present before us. We learned from their limited, needy and dependent reality that they are created by an eternal, ever-living, and single Creator, who is Allah (swt).

Then we believe that the Quran is the speech of Allah (swt) through investigating the miraculous nature of this speech, challenging the eloquent Arabs to produce something similar, which they could not and will never be able to do. Thus, we realized that it is the Speech of Allah (swt) and believed in it.

Consequently, we believed in what the Messenger (swt) brought from Allah (swt).

Then, thereafter, we believed in all the unseen based on the definite transmitted evidence.

The way to Iman in the unseen, which is not sensed reality as its evidence, is through this transmitted evidence.

Thus, if someone claims to have seen angels, jinn, or witnessed matters known only to Allah (swt), hidden from him, his statement is not accepted, unless he brings evidence from the Book of Allah (swt) and the Sunnah of His Messenger (swt) to establish the argument for him in that regard.

Therefore, we believe in Allah (swt), His Messenger (saw), His angels, His books, His messengers (as), the Last Day, and Qadr, good and bad in it, and in all the unseen matters that come with definite evidence from Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). We believe in all of this through extension of the confirmed, establishing the argument both rationally and through transmission.

Iman is not contingent upon the direct observation of the unseen. Indeed, Ibrahim (as) was a believer before he saw how the dead are resurrected, as mentioned in the Quranic verse, ﴿قَالَ أَوْلَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ﴾ **“He (saw) said: Have you not believed? He said: Yes”**.

Indeed, Ibrahim (as) desired and yearned to see how the dead are resurrected. He hoped that Allah (swt) would fulfill this desire for him, so that his heart could be contented by witnessing it firsthand, just as he was reassured through extension from evidence.

As for ﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى﴾ **“And when Ibrahim said, 'My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead’”**, (رَبِّ) “My Lord” is an expression of supplication. It implies a sense of compassion and expectation for continued response before making a dua.

As for ﴿أَرِنِي﴾ **“show me”** is from the visual sighting that takes two effects: The first is the first person (speaker's) pronoun, and the second is, ﴿كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى﴾ **“how You give life to the dead”**.

As for ﴿كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى﴾ **“how You give life to the dead”** is a question that includes Ibrahim's (as) acknowledgment that Allah (swt) brings the dead to life, but he preferred to see how that happens.

Thus, it does not imply doubt about bringing the dead to life, otherwise it would have been without 'how,' but with an interrogative form like 'Do You revive the dead?' or 'Can You revive the dead?' Similar to this is when someone says: 'How does Zaid judge people?' It does not imply doubt that Zaid judges them, but rather asks about the known manner of his judgment. If it were questioning the existence of his judgment, it would be phrased as 'Does Zaid judge people?' or 'Can Zaid judge people?'

Therefore the question, ﴿كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى﴾ **“how You give life to the dead”** is an acknowledgment of Allah's (swt) bringing the dead to life, and what Ibrahim (as) meant was to see how this bringing to life occurred.

This is the true meaning of the question with 'how'.

However, the possibility of the figurative meaning remains plausible, which is using 'how' in a challenging manner. For example, if someone claims to carry a heavy load and you firmly believe they are incapable of doing so, you might say to them, 'Show me how you carry this?' intending to prove their inability to carry it.

Even though the literal meaning takes precedence over the figurative one, Allah (swt) intended to demonstrate that the figurative interpretation did not cross Ibrahim's (as) mind when he asked the question.

So Allah (swt) said: ﴿أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ﴾ **“Have you not believed?”** Allah (swt) knows the truth of the matter, yet He (swt) intended to show that Ibrahim (as) only intended the literal meaning of the question, which was his desire for Allah (swt) to let him witness firsthand how the dead are brought back to life.

Thus, Ibrahim's (as) response, 'Yes', meant, I believe, O Lord, that You are capable of resurrecting the dead, and I have no doubt about that.

As for ﴿وَلَكِنْ لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي﴾ **“but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied”** meaning I asked only to reassure my heart by witnessing it firsthand, just as I am reassured by the evidence.

Allah (swt), by His grace, made Ibrahim (as) witness that. He commanded him to take four birds, slaughter them, and scatter their parts on different mountains. Then Ibrahim (as) was instructed to call them, and he saw how they gathered again, each part returning to its original place, and the birds came back to life by the permission of Allah (swt), and so it was.

As for ﴿قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ﴾ **“He (swt) said, "Take four birds”** meaning, if you wish to do so, then take [them]. Here, the particle "ف" serves as a response of an omitted condition (if you wish, then take).

As for ﴿فَصُرُّهُنَّ﴾ **“slaughter them”** is from صاره, يصيره or يصوره. The word 'فَصُرُّهُنَّ' has been recited with a dammah (فَصُرُّهُنَّ) with lightening (takhfeef), and Hamza recited it (mutawatir recitation) with a kasra (فَصِرُّهُنَّ), and with a dammah it means to cut or amputate.

And with a kasra, it means to cut, as Al-Farrā' said.

And because both recitations are mutawatir (متواتر), and the meaning is the same, therefore the decisive meaning between the two recitations is to slaughter them or to cut them into parts.

As for ﴿ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ﴾ **“then call them”** meaning call them.

As for ﴿يَأْتِيَنَّكَ سَعْيًا﴾ **“they will come [flying] to you in haste”** in place of condition and ﴿سَعْيًا﴾ **“in haste”** It means running on their feet, and it is not said to a bird when it flies to go fast.

As for, ﴿وَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ **“And know that Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise”** It means He (swt) overcomes his affairs with profound wisdom, nothing can fail him. He (swt) is not governed by the causes of creations, but rather He (swt) is the Supreme, the All-Knowing, who dominates over his servants.