

Surah 38, Surah Sad, Mecca 38

[Amatulla's comment – Since David is reminded that he is sent on earth as a vicegerent of God, he should uphold justice. So, as God's vicegerents, all human beings are also to uphold justice; David was just one human being.]

The Quran's Text & Yusuf Ali's Translation:

يَا دَاوُودُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ... ^{up}

38:26 O David! We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth:

... فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ...

so judge thou between men in truth (and justice):

... وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ...

nor follow thou the lusts (of thy heart), for they will mislead thee from the Path of God:

... إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ...

for those who wander astray from the Path of God, is a Penalty Grievous,

... بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ (٢٦)

for that they forget the Day of Account.

Muhammad Asad's Translation:

(38:26) [And We said:] "O David! Behold, We have made thee a [prophet and, thus, Our] **vicegerent on earth: judge, then, between men with justice, and do not follow vain desire**, lest it lead thee astray from the path of God: verily, for those who go astray from the path of God there is suffering severe in store for having forgotten the Day of Reckoning!"

Edip Yuksel's Translation:

38:26 [Yuksel] O David, We have made you a successor on earth. Therefore, you shall judge among the people with truth, and do not follow desire, lest it diverts you from the path of **God**. Indeed, those who stray off the path of **God** will have a severe retribution for forgetting the day of Reckoning.

Ali's comments:

4177. Cf. 2:30, and n. 47.

David's kingly power, and the gifts of wisdom, justice, psalmody, and prophethood were bestowed on him as a trust. These great gifts were not to be a matter of self-glory.

4178. As stated in n. 4171 above, this vision and its moral are nowhere to be found in the Bible. Those who think they see a resemblance to the Parable of the prophet Nathan (2 Samuel, 12:1-12) have nothing to go upon but the mention of the "one ewe" here and the "one little ewe-lamb" in Nathan's Parable. The whole story is here different, and the whole atmosphere is different. The Biblical title given to David, "a man after God's own heart" is refuted by the

Bible itself in the scandalous tale of heinous crimes attributed to David in chapters 11 and 12 of 2 Samuel, viz., adultery, fraudulent dealing with one of his own servants, and the contriving of his murder. Further, in chapter 13, we have the story of rapes, incest, and fratricide in David's own household! The fact is that passages like those are mere chroniques scandaleuses, i.e., narratives of scandalous crimes of the grossest character. The Muslim idea of David is that of a man just and upright, endowed with all the virtues, in whom even the least thought of self-elation has to be washed off by repentance and forgiveness. (R).