

## From the Commentary of al-Ṭabari on Quran 5:21<sup>a</sup>

يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتُدُّوا عَلَىٰ آدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ

“O my people! Enter the Holy Land which God has decreed for you, and turn not back on your heels otherwise you be overturned as losers”

وهذا خبر من الله عزّ ذكره عن قول موسى صلى الله عليه وسلم لقومه من بني إسرائيل،

And this is a narrative from God, glorious is His remembrance, concerning the saying of Moses, may God bless him and grant him peace, to his community from among the Children of Israel,

وأمره إياهم عن أمر الله إياه، يأمرهم بدخول الأرض المقدسة.

and his order to them according to the order of God to him, ordering them to enter the holy land.

ثم اختلف أهل التأويل في الأرض التي عنها بالأرض المقدسة، فقال بعضهم: عنى

Thereafter, the people of interpretation differ in relation to the land which He means by the holy land, and say some of them: It means

بذلك: الطور وما حوله. ذكر من قال ذلك:

by that: *al-ṭūr* [the mountain, Mount Sinai] and that which is around it. Recollecting those who have said that:

حدثني محمد بن عمرو، قال: ثنا أبو عاصم، قال: ثنا عيسى، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن

Narrated to me Muḥammad bin °Amr, who said related to us Abū °Āṣim, who said, narrated to us °Īsa, of Ibn Abu Najīḥ, of

مجاهد: الأرض المقدسة: الطور وما حوله.

Mujāhid, “The holy land: is *al-ṭur* and that which is around it”.

حدثني المثنى، قال: ثنا أبو حذيفة، قال: ثنا شبل، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن مجاهد،

Narrated to me al-Muthanna, who said, related Abū Ḥadhīfa who said, related Shibl, of Ibn Abu Najīḥ, of Mujāhid,

مثله.

likewise.

حدثني الحارث بن محمد، قال: ثنا عبد العزيز، قال: ثنا سفیان، عن الأعمش، عن

Narrated to me al-Ḥārith bin Muḥammad, who said, related °Abd al-°Azīz, who said, related Sufyān of al-°Amash, of

<sup>a</sup> Translation by Muhammad Al-Hussaini

مجاهد، عن ابن عباس: ﴿ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ﴾ قال: الطُّور وما حوله.

Mujāhid, of Ibn °Abbās: ‘Enter the holy land’ he said, “*al-ṭūr* and that which is around it”.

وقال آخرون: هو الشام. ذكر من قال ذلك:

And have said others, “It is *al-shām* [the Levant, Syria-Palestine, Damascus]. Recollecting those who have said that:

حدثنا الحسن بن يحيى، قال: أخبرنا عبد الرزاق، قال: أخبرنا معمر، عن قتادة في قوله:

Narrated to us al-Ḥasan bin Yaḥya, who said, recounted to us °Abd al-Razzāq, who said, recounted to us Ma°mar, of Qatāda in respect of His saying:

﴿الْأَرْضُ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ﴾ قال: هي الشام.

‘The holy land’ he said, “It is *al-shām*”

وقال آخرون: هي أرض أريحاء. ذكر من قال ذلك:

And said others, “It is the land of °*arīḥā*’ [Jericho]. Recollecting those who say that:

حدثني يونس، قال: أخبرنا ابن وهب، قال: قال ابن زيد في قوله: ﴿ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ

Narrated to me Yūnus, who said, recounted to us Ibn Wahb, who said, said Ibn Zayd in respect of His saying, ‘Enter the holy land

الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ﴾ قال: أريحاء.

which God has decreed for you’, he said, “°*arīḥā*”

حدثني يوسف بن هارون، قال: ثنا عمرو بن حماد، قال: ثنا أسباط، عن السدي، قال: هي

Narrated to me Yūsuf bin Hārūn who said, related °Amr bin Ḥammād, who said, related °Asbāt, of al-Suddī, saying, “It is

أريحاء.

°*arīḥā*”.

حدثني عبد الكريم بن الهيثم، قال: ثنا إبراهيم بن بشار، قال: ثنا سفیان، عن أبي

Narrated to me °Abd al-Karīm bin al-Haytham, who said, related Ibrāhīm bin Bashshār, who said, related Sufyān, of Abū

سعيد، عن عكرمة، عن ابن عباس، قال: هي أريحاء.

Sa°id, of °Ikrima, of Ibn °Abbās, who said, “It is °*arīḥā*”

وقيل: إن الأرض المقدسة: دمشق وفلسطين وبعض الأردن. وعنى بقوله ﴿الْمُقَدَّسَةَ﴾:

And it is said, “Indeed the holy land: is Damascus and Palestine and part of the Jordan. And it means by His saying, ‘The holy’:

المطهرة المباركة. كما:

the purified, the blessed”. Thus:

حدثني محمد بن عمرو، قال: ثنا أبو عاصم، قال: ثنا عيسى، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن

Narrated to me Muḥammad bin °Amr, who said, related Abū °Aṣim, saying, related °Īsa, of Ibn Abu Najīḥ, of

مجاهد: ﴿الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ﴾ قال: المباركة.

Mujāhid, ‘The holy land’ he said, “The blessed”

حدثني المثنى، قال: ثنا أبو حذيفة، قال: ثنا شبل، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن مجاهد،

Narrated to me al-Muthanna, who said related Abu Ḥadhifa, who said, related Shibl of Ibn Abū Najīḥ, of Mujāhid

بمثله...

likewise...

ويعنى بقوله: ﴿الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ﴾: التي أثبت في اللوح المحفوظ أنها لكم

And the meaning of His saying, ‘Which God has decreed [lit. ‘has written’] for you’, is that which He has confirmed in *al-lawḥ al-mahfūz* [the preserved tablet, the eternal preserved tablet of the holy scriptures in heaven] that it is yours

مساكن، ومنازل دون الجبابرة التي فيها.

as settlements and dwellings, in place of the oppressors which are in it.

فإن قال قائل: فكيف قال: ﴿الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ﴾، وقد علمت أنهم لم يدخلوها

And if says one who says, “So how can He say, ‘Which God has decreed for you’ while you know that they did not enter it

بقوله: ﴿فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ﴾؟ فكيف يكون مثبتاً في اللوح المحفوظ أنها مساكن

by reason of His saying, ‘So indeed it is forbidden upon them’? So how can it be confirmed in *al-lawḥ al-mahfūz* that it is settlements

لهم، ومحرمًا عليهم سكنها؟ قيل: إنها كتبت لبني إسرائيل داراً ومساكن، وقد

for them, while it is forbidden upon them to settle it? It is said, "Indeed it is decreed [lit. 'written'] for the Children of Israel as an abode and as settlements, and they did

سكنوها ونزلوها، وصارت لهم كما قال الله جلّ وعزّ...

settle it and reside in it, and it became to them as God, Majestic and Glorious, said...

حدثنا ابن حميد، قال: ثنا سلمة عن محمد بن إسحاق: ﴿التي كتب الله لكم﴾: التي

Narrated to us Ibn Ḥamīd, who said, related Salma of Muḥammad bin Ishāq, 'Which God has decreed for you': "Which

وهب الله لكم

God has granted to you".

وكان السديّ يقول: معنى «كتب» في هذا الموضع بمعنى «أمر»

And al-Suddī used to say, "The meaning of *kataba* [he wrote, he decreed] in this context is the meaning *ʿamara* [he ordered, he commanded]

حدثنا بذلك موسى بن هارون، قال: ثنا عمرو بن حماد، قال: ثنا أسباط، عن السديّ:

Narrated to us thus Mūsa bin Hārūn, who said, related ʿAmr bin Ḥammād, who said, related ʿAsbāṭ of al-Suddī

﴿ادخلوا الأرض المقدسة التي كتب الله لكم﴾: التي أمركم الله بها...

'Enter the Holy Land which God has decreed for you': "Which God has ordered you do that"...

حدثنا بشر، قال: ثنا يزيد، قال: ثنا سعيد، عن قتادة، قوله: ﴿يا قوم ادخلوا الأرض المقدسة

Narrated to us Bishr, who said, related Yazīd, who said, related Saʿīd, of Qatāda, of His saying, 'O my people! Enter the Holy Land

التي كتب الله لكم﴾ أمروا بها كما أمروا بالصلاة والزكاة والحجّ والعمرة.

which God has decreed for you': "They were commanded it, as they were commanded the prayer and the *zakā* [alms due] and the *hajj* [greater pilgrimage] and the *ʿumra* [minor pilgrimage]".