Stories from the Qur'an
Series 30

No Power Except with Allah

The Story of the Owner of the Two Gardens According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

STORIES FROM THE QUR'AN

SERIES 30

NO POWER EXCEPT WITH ALLAH

The Story of the Owner of the Two Gardens According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ إِن تَرَنِ أَنَا۠
أَقَلَّ مِنكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا

"And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, 'What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah '? Although you see me less than you in wealth and children."

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:39

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, Owner of every garden and every river, who gives and takes back by His wisdom. Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who taught us that "la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah" is a treasure of Paradise, and upon his family and his Companions.

This eBook is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

May Allah make us grateful servants when we are given, and keep us from forgetting ourselves when wealth is poured upon us. May this knowledge be 'ilmun yuntafa'u bih, knowledge that brings benefit.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

The cover of this eBook does not depict any human being. It shows the **scenery** of two lush **vineyards**, **bordered with palm trees**, with **a river** flowing between them.

The scene is taken from the words of Allah: ***"two gardens of grapevines, and We bordered them with palm trees"*** (18:32) and ***"We caused to gush forth within them a river"*** (18:33). This story is an example, so the cover does not depict any actual place.

The cover does not depict the two men of the story or any figure. The **dark blue band** at the bottom, framed by **fine gold lines**, is where the author's name appears.

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CONTENTS

NO POWER EXCEPT WITH ALLAH — *Introduction*

1. AN EXAMPLE — *Al-Kahf 18:32–33*

2. "I AM GREATER THAN YOU IN WEALTH" — *Al-Kahf 18:34–36; Sahih al-Bukhari 6439*

3. THE ADVICE OF A COMPANION — *Al-Kahf 18:37–38*

4. MA SHA' ALLAH, LA QUWWATA ILLA BILLAH — *Al-Kahf 18:39; Sahih al-Bukhari 6384*

5. SOMETHING BETTER THAN YOUR GARDEN — *Al-Kahf 18:39–41*

6. TURNING HIS HANDS ABOUT — *Al-Kahf 18:42–43; Sahih Muslim 2958*

7. AUTHORITY BELONGS TO ALLAH — *Al-Kahf 18:44*

8. WHAT ENDURES AND WHAT PERISHES — *Al-Kahf 18:45–46; Sahih Muslim 2695*

9. WHAT THE QUR'AN DOES NOT TELL — *Israiliyyat and Note*

10. TWO PATHS BEFORE A BLESSING — *Synthesis and Conclusion*

REFERENCES

SUPPORT & DONATIONS

Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = archaeological note; blue table = comparison. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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NO POWER EXCEPT WITH ALLAH

In Series 29, a group of youths left the world for the sake of their religion, and Allah spread out His mercy for them in a narrow cave. This series, also from Surah Al-Kahf, takes us to the opposite picture: a man who was ***given the world***, and forgot the One who gave it.

Allah begins it with a command: ***"And present to them an example of two men"***. It is an ***example*** — a mirror in which anyone who is given a blessing can see himself. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:32

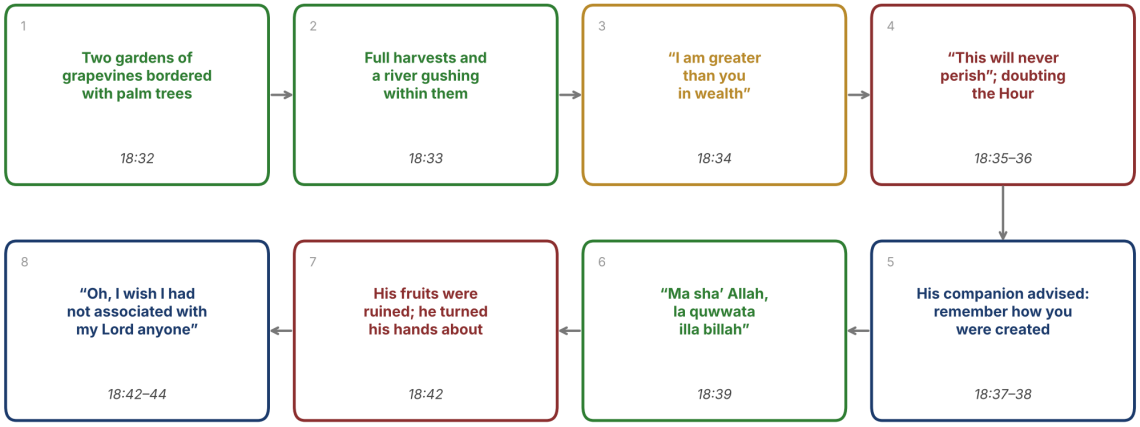


Figure 1: The flow of the story of the owner of the two gardens — from an abundant blessing to regret.

Note: The translation of the Qur'anic verses in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in the Hadith box, with a link to sunnah.com.

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AN EXAMPLE

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:32

وَٱضۡرِبۡ لَهُم مَّثَلٗا رَّجُلَيۡنِ جَعَلۡنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيۡنِ مِنۡ أَعۡنَٰبٖ
وَحَفَفۡنَٰهُمَا بِنَخۡلٖ وَجَعَلۡنَا بَيۡنَهُمَا زَرۡعٗا ٣٢

And present to them an example of two men: We granted to one of them two gardens of grapevines, and We bordered them with palm trees and placed between them [fields of] crops.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:32

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:33

كِلۡتَا ٱلۡجَنَّتَيۡنِ ءَاتَتۡ أُكُلَهَا وَلَمۡ تَظۡلِم مِّنۡهُ شَيۡـٔٗاۚ وَفَجَّرۡنَا خِلَٰلَهُمَا نَهَرٗا ٣٣

Each of the two gardens produced its fruit and did not fall short thereof in anything. And We caused to gush forth within them a river.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:33

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 18:32–33 — A PERFECT BLESSING

First: A complete garden. ***"We granted to one of them two gardens of grapevines, and We bordered them with palm trees and placed between them [fields of] crops"***. Vines in the middle, palms as a border, and crops in between — the picture of the most perfect garden. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:32

Second: A harvest that did not fall short. ***"Each of the two gardens produced its fruit and did not fall short thereof in anything"***.

Third: "We" who gave. Notice the pronouns in the verses: ***We granted***, ***We bordered***, ***We placed***, ***"We caused to gush forth"***. All of it was the gift of Allah — and that is what its owner forgot.

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"I AM GREATER THAN YOU IN WEALTH"

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:34

وَكَانَ لَهُۥ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَٰحِبِهِۦ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُۥٓ أَنَا۠ أَكْثَرُ مِنكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

And he had fruit, so he said to his companion while he was conversing with him, "I am greater than you in wealth and mightier in [numbers of] men."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:34

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:35

وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُۥ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِۦ قَالَ مَآ أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أَبَدًا ﴿٣٥﴾

And he entered his garden while he was unjust to himself. He said, "I do not think that this will perish - ever."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:35

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 18:34–36 — THREE MISTAKES OF A RICH MAN

First: Comparing and boasting. ***"I am greater than you in wealth and mightier in [numbers of] men"***. For him, the only measure of honour was wealth and followers.

Second: Thinking the blessing is permanent. ***"And he entered his garden while he was unjust to himself. He said, "I do not think that this will perish - ever"***. He wronged himself, not anyone else. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:35

Third: Doubting the Hereafter. ***"And I do not think the Hour will occur"***, then adding: ***"I will surely find better than this as a return"***. He thought worldly blessing was a sign that Allah honoured him.

Fourth: A heart that is never satisfied. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ described human nature towards wealth:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6439

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، عَنْ صَالِحٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « لَوْ أَنَّ لاِبْنِ آدَمَ وَادِيًا

مِنْ ذَهَبٍ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَادِيَانِ، وَلَنْ يَمْلأَ فَاهُ إِلاَّ التُّرَابُ، وَيَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَنْ تَابَ ».

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"If the son of Adam had a valley of gold, he would love to have two valleys. Nothing will fill his mouth except dust. And Allah turns in forgiveness to whoever repents."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah al-Uwaysi, from Ibrahim ibn Sa'd, from Salih ibn Kaysan, from Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Softening of Hearts, chapter on guarding against the trial of wealth, Hadith No. 6439. Also narrated by Muslim (No. 1048).

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6439

THE ADVICE OF A COMPANION

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:37

قَالَ لَهُۥ صَاحِبُهُۥ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُۥٓ أَكَفَرْتَ بِٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكَ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰكَ رَجُلًا ﴿٣٧﴾

His companion said to him while he was conversing with him, "Have you disbelieved in He who created you from dust and then from a sperm-drop and then proportioned you [as] a man?"

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:37

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:38

لَّٰكِنَّا۠ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ رَبِّى وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّىٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٣٨﴾

But as for me, He is Allah, my Lord, and I do not associate with my Lord anyone.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:38

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 18:37–38 — REMEMBERING OUR ORIGIN

First: Advice through conversation. ***"His companion said to him while he was conversing with him"*** — not with scorn, but with argument.

Second: Remember where you came from. ***"Have you disbelieved in He who created you from dust and then from a sperm-drop and then proportioned you [as] a man?"*** The One who created from dust is able to bring back to life — an answer to his doubt about the Hour. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:37

Third: A declaration of tawhid. ***"But as for me, He is Allah, my Lord, and I do not associate with my Lord anyone"***. This man, poor in wealth, was rich in faith.

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MA SHA' ALLAH, LA QUWWATA ILLA BILLAH

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:39

وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ إِن تَرَنِ أَنَا۠ أَقَلَّ مِنكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴿٣٩﴾

And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, 'What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah '? Although you see me less than you in wealth and children.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:39

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 18:39 — THE WORDS ON SEEING A BLESSING

First: What should have been said. ***"And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, 'What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah '?"*** In Arabic: ***ma sha' Allah, la quwwata illa billah***.

Second: The manners of admiration. The scholars mention that whoever sees something he admires in himself, his wealth or his children, is recommended to say these words — attributing the blessing to Allah, not to his own effort. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:39

Third: A treasure of Paradise. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentioned the virtue of words like these:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6384

حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ أَيُّوبَ، عَنْ أَبِي عُثْمَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ كُنَّا مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي سَفَرٍ فَكُنَّا إِذَا عَلَوْنَا كَبَّرْنَا فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم « أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ارْبَعُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ لاَ تَدْعُونَ أَصَمَّ وَلاَ غَائِبًا، وَلَكِنْ تَدْعُونَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ». ثُمَّ أَتَى عَلَىَّ وَأَنَا أَقُولُ فِي نَفْسِي لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ. فَقَالَ « يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ قَيْسٍ قُلْ لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا كَنْزٌ مِنْ كُنُوزِ الْجَنَّةِ ». أَوْ قَالَ « أَلاَ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى كَلِمَةٍ هِيَ كَنْزٌ مِنْ كُنُوزِ الْجَنَّةِ، لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Musa رضى الله عنه said: We were with the Prophet ﷺ on a journey, and whenever we climbed a height we said takbir (aloud). The Prophet ﷺ said: **"O people, be gentle with yourselves, for you are not calling upon one who is deaf or absent; rather, you are calling upon One who is All-Hearing, All-Seeing."** Then he came to me while I was saying within myself: *la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah*. He said: **"O 'Abdullah ibn Qays, say la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah, for it is one of the treasures of Paradise."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sulayman ibn Harb, from Hammad ibn Zayd, from Ayyub al-Sakhtiyani, from Abu 'Uthman al-Nahdi, from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Supplications, chapter on supplicating when ascending a height, Hadith No. 6384. Also narrated by Muslim (No. 2704).

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6384

SOMETHING BETTER THAN YOUR GARDEN

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:40

فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّيٓ أَن يُؤۡتِيَنِ خَيۡرٗا مِّن جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرۡسِلَ عَلَيۡهَا حُسۡبَانٗا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتُصۡبِحَ صَعِيدٗا زَلَقًا ﴿٤٠﴾

It may be that my Lord will give me [something] better than your garden and will send upon it a calamity from the sky, and it will become a smooth, dusty ground.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:40

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:41

أَوۡ يُصۡبِحَ مَآؤُهَا غَوۡرٗا فَلَن تَسۡتَطِيعَ لَهُۥ طَلَبٗا ﴿٤١﴾

Or its water will become sunken [into the earth], so you would never be able to seek it.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:41

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 18:39–41 — HOPE AND WARNING

First: Not humbled by poverty. ***"Although you see me less than you in wealth and children"***, he still hoped in Allah: ***"It may be that my Lord will give me [something] better than your garden"***.

Second: A warning of calamity from the sky. ***"will send upon it a calamity from the sky, and it will become a smooth, dusty ground"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:40

Third: Or from beneath the earth. ***"Or its water will become sunken [into the earth], so you would never be able to seek it"***. The river that was his pride could vanish in an instant.

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TURNING HIS HANDS ABOUT

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:42

وَأُحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِۦ فَأَصۡبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيۡهِ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ يَٰلَيۡتَنِي لَمۡ أُشۡرِكۡ بِرَبِّيٓ أَحَدٗا ٤٢

And his fruits were encompassed [by ruin], so he began to turn his hands about [in dismay] over what he had spent on it, while it had collapsed upon its trellises, and said, "Oh, I wish I had not associated with my Lord anyone."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:42

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:43

وَلَمۡ تَكُن لَّهُۥ فِئَةٞ يَنصُرُونَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مُنتَصِرٗا ٤٣

And there was for him no company to aid him other than Allah, nor could he defend himself.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:43

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 18:42–43 — REGRET THAT CAME TOO LATE

First: Everything was ruined. ***"And his fruits were encompassed [by ruin]"***. The Qur'an does not detail how — it is enough for us to know it happened by the will of Allah.

Second: A gesture of regret. ***"so he began to turn his hands about [in dismay] over what he had spent on it, while it had collapsed upon its trellises"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:42

Third: Only now he saw the cause. ***"Oh, I wish I had not associated with my Lord anyone"***. He realised that relying on wealth is a form of shirk. And ***"there was for him no company to aid him other than Allah"*** — the followers he boasted of were gone.

Fourth: The wealth that is truly ours. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ explained what of our wealth truly remains:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2958

حَدَّثَنَا هَدَّابُ بْنُ خَالِدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا هَمَّامٌ، حَدَّثَنَا قَتَادَةُ، عَنْ مُطَرِّفٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ أَتَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ يَقْرَأُ { أَلْهَاكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ} قَالَ « يَقُولُ ابْنُ آدَمَ مَالِي مَالِي -

قَالَ - وَهَلْ لَكَ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ مِنْ مَالِكَ إِلاَّ مَا أَكَلْتَ فَأَفْنَيْتَ أَوْ لَبِسْتَ فَأَبْلَيْتَ أَوْ تَصَدَّقْتَ فَأَمْضَيْتَ ».

TRANSLATION:

Mutarrif narrated that his father (‘Abdullah ibn al-Shikhkhir) رضى الله عنه said: I came to the Prophet ﷺ while he was reciting *“Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you.”* He said: **“The son of Adam says: My wealth, my wealth! But do you have, O son of Adam, of your wealth anything except what you ate and consumed, or wore and wore out, or gave in charity and sent forward?”**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Haddab ibn Khalid, from Hammam ibn Yahya, from Qatadah, from Mutarrif ibn ‘Abdullah, from his father, ‘Abdullah ibn al-Shikhkhir رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Zuhd and Softening of Hearts, Hadith No. 2958.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2958a

AUTHORITY BELONGS TO ALLAH

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:44

هُنَالِكَ ٱلۡوَلَٰيَةُ لِلَّهِ ٱلۡحَقِّۚ هُوَ خَيۡرٞ ثَوَابٗا وَخَيۡرٌ عُقۡبٗا ٤٤

There the authority is [completely] for Allah, the Truth. He is best in reward and best in outcome.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:44

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 18:44 — THE CONCLUSION OF THE EXAMPLE

First: In the moment of truth. ***"There the authority is [completely] for Allah, the Truth"***. When wealth and followers are of no use, only Allah remains. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:44

Second: The best reward. ***"He is best in reward and best in outcome"***. His believing companion owned no garden, but he owned ***the best outcome***.

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WHAT ENDURES AND WHAT PERISHES

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:45

وَٱضۡرِبۡ لَهُم مَّثَلَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخۡتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَأَصۡبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذۡرُوهُ ٱلرِّيَٰحُۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ مُّقۡتَدِرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

And present to them the example of the life of this world, [its being] like rain which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it and [then] it becomes dry remnants, scattered by the winds. And Allah is ever, over all things, Perfect in Ability.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:45

SURAH AL-KAHF 18:46

ٱلۡمَالُ وَٱلۡبَنُونَ زِينَةُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَاۖ وَٱلۡبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيۡرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابٗا وَخَيۡرٌ أَمَلٗا ﴿٤٦﴾

Wealth and children are [but] adornment of the worldly life. But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for [one's] hope.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/18:46

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 18:45–46 — THE EXAMPLE OF WORLDLY LIFE

First: The world is like vegetation. After the story of the two gardens, Allah gives a wider example: ***"And present to them the example of the life of this world, [its being] like rain which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it"***, ***"and [then] it becomes dry remnants, scattered by the winds"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:45

Second: An adornment, not a goal. ***"Wealth and children are [but] adornment of the worldly life"*** — exactly the two things the owner of the gardens boasted of (18:34).

Third: What endures. ***"But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for [one's] hope"***. Many commentators mention that among ***al-baqiyat al-salihat*** are the words of tasbih, tahmid, tahlil and takbir. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:46

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HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2695

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَأَبُو كُرَيْبٍ قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم « لأَنْ أَقُولَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىَّ مِمَّا طَلَعَتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّمْسُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"That I say: Subhanallah, walhamdulillah, wa la ilaha illallah, wallahu akbar, is dearer to me than everything over which the sun rises."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah and Abu Kurayb, from Abu Mu'awiyah, from Sulayman al-A'mash, from Abu Salih Dhakwan, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Remembrance and Supplication, chapter on the virtue of tahlil, tasbih and supplication, Hadith No. 2695.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2695

WHAT THE QUR'AN DOES NOT TELL

The Qur'an presents this story as an ***example*** (18:32) without names, place or time. Following Sahih al-Bukhari 4485 (Series 1), we do not add outside details.

THE POPULAR STORY AND WHAT REVELATION SAYS

THE POPULAR STORY	WHAT THE QUR'AN AND AUTHENTIC HADITH SAY
The names of the two men.	The Qur'an only says "two men" (18:32). The names given in some books of tafsir come from reports of the People of the Book.
They were two brothers who inherited a specific sum from their father.	Not mentioned in the Qur'an or authentic Hadith. The Qur'an calls them "companions" (18:34, 37).
They belonged to a particular people and lived in a particular place.	Not mentioned. This story is an example for all people.
The exact form of the calamity that struck the garden.	The Qur'an only says his fruits were "encompassed [by ruin]" (18:42). What is mentioned in 18:40–41 is his companion's fear, not an account of how it happened.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTE

> **ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTE: AN EXAMPLE, NOT A SITE**
>
> This story begins with ***"And present to them an example"*** — a ***mathal***, an example. The commentators differ on whether it actually happened or is purely an example; neither changes its lesson. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:32
>
> **Claim not included.** No archaeological site can be linked to this story, and any claim about the location of the gardens is **not included**.

TWO PATHS BEFORE A BLESSING

This story is not about rich and poor, but about ***two ways of seeing a blessing***. One says "I", the other says "ma sha' Allah". One relies on his garden, the other relies on his Lord.

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TWO MEN, TWO OUTCOMES

	Owner of the Two Gardens	His Believing Companion
Wealth	Two gardens, a river and other wealth (18:32–34)	Less in wealth and children (18:39)
Attitude	"I am greater than you in wealth" (18:34)	"He is Allah, my Lord" (18:38)
The Hereafter	"I do not think the Hour will occur" (18:36)	Reminds him how man was created (18:37)
Words	Thinks his garden will last forever (18:35)	"Ma sha' Allah, la quwwata illa billah" (18:39)
Outcome	The garden ruined, and regret (18:42)	Hopes for something better from Allah (18:40)

Figure 2: A comparison of the owner of the two gardens and his believing companion according to the Qur'an.

LESSONS FROM THIS STORY

First: Every blessing comes from Allah. (18:32–33).

Second: Do not boast of wealth and followers. (18:34; Sahih al-Bukhari 6439).

Third: No worldly blessing lasts forever. (18:35, 45).

Fourth: Ingratitude often begins with forgetting the Hereafter. (18:36).

Fifth: Advise a friend with reasoning and care. (18:37–38).

Sixth: Say "ma sha' Allah, la quwwata illa billah" on seeing a blessing. (18:39; Sahih al-Bukhari 6384).

Seventh: Regret after a blessing is lost does not bring it back. (18:42).

Eighth: The wealth that lasts is what is given in charity. (Sahih Muslim 2958).

Ninth: Good deeds are better than every adornment of this world. (18:46; Sahih Muslim 2695).

CONCLUSION

Each of us has our own "garden" — a home, a career, children, health. When we enter it and feel admiration, remember these short words: ***"Ma sha' Allah, la quwwata illa billah."*** May Allah grant us a better garden in the Hereafter. Amin.

In sha Allah, the series **Stories from the Qur'an** will continue with the next story — with the same method: the Qur'an, authentic Hadith, and solid archaeological findings only.

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ADDITIONAL HADITH CITED IN THE TEXT

Sahih al-Bukhari 4485 (neither believe nor disbelieve the People of the Book). https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4485

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

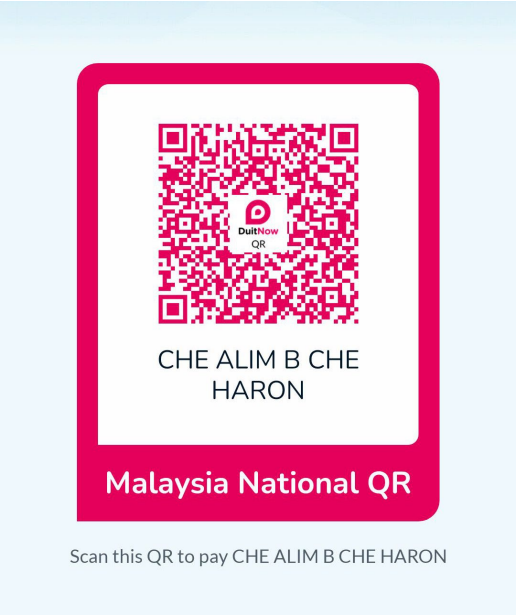
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GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

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