

Surah 33. Al-Ahzab

Asad: Verily, We did offer the trust [of reason and volition] to the heavens, and the earth, and the mountains:⁸⁷ but they refused to bear it because they were afraid of it. Yet man took it up⁸⁸ - for, verily, he has always been prone to be most wicked, most foolish.

Malik: The fact is that We offered the Trust ("freedom of choice" and to voluntarily use this option according to the will of Allah) to the heavens, to the earth and to the mountains, but they refused to undertake it and were afraid, but man undertook it. He was indeed unjust and foolish.

Pickthall: Lo! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrank from bearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it. Lo! he hath proved a tyrant and a fool.

Yusuf Ali: We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains: but they refused to undertake it being afraid thereof: but man undertook it he was indeed unjust and foolish ^{3777 3778 3779 3780}
^{3781 3782}

Khatab:

Indeed, We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they ?all? declined to bear it, being fearful of it. But humanity assumed it, ?for? they are truly wrongful ?to themselves? and ignorant ?of the consequences?,

Author Comments

87 - The classical commentators give all kinds of laborious explanations to the term amanah ("trust") occurring in this parable, but the most convincing of them (mentioned in {Lane I, 102}, with reference to the above verse) are "reason", or "intellect", and "the faculty of volition" - i.e., the ability to choose between two or more possible courses of action or modes of behaviour. and thus between good and evil.

88 - Sc., "and then failed to measure up to the moral responsibility arising from the reason and the comparative free will with which he has been endowed" (Zamakhshari). This obviously applies to the human race as such, and not necessarily to all of its individuals.

3777 - The Trust is something given to a person, over which he has a power of disposition; he is expected to use it as directed or expected, but he has the power to use it otherwise. There is no trust if the trustee has no power, and the trust implies that the giver of the trust believes and expects that the trustee would use it according to the wish of the creator of the trust, and not otherwise.

3778 - Cf. lix. 21, where the hypothetical sending down of the Qur-an to the Mountains is mentioned, and it is mentioned that such Parables are put forth in order to aid men to reflection.

3779 - The Heavens, the Earth, and the Mountains, i.e., other creatures of Allah, besides man, refused to undertake a Trust or a responsibility, and may be imagined as happy without a choice of good or evil being given through their will. In saying that they refused, we imply a will, but we limit it by the statement that they did not undertake to be given a choice between good and evil. They preferred to submit their will entirely to Allah's Will, which is All-Wise and Perfect, and which would give them far more happiness than a faculty of choice, with their imperfect knowledge. Man was too audacious and ignorant to realise this, and the result has been that man as a race has been disrupted: the evil ones have betrayed the Trust and brought Punishment on themselves, though the good have been able to rise far above other Creation, to be the muqarrabin, the nearest ones to Allah: lvi. 11 and lvi. 88. What can be higher than this for any creature? It follows incidentally from this that the Heavens and the Earth were created before man was created and this is in accordance with what we know of the physical world in science: man came on the scene at a comparatively late stage.

3780 - Hamala: to undertake, bear, carry (the Trust or responsibility), to be equal to it. This is the ordinary meaning, and the majority of Commentators construe so. But some understand it to mean "to carry away, run away with, to embezzle (the thing entrusted); hence to be false to the Trust, to betray the Trust." In that case the sense of verses 72-73 would be: "Allah offered the Trust to other creatures, but they refused, lest they should betray it, being afraid from that point of view: but man was less fair to himself: in his ignorance he accepted and betrayed the Trust, with the result that some of his race became Hypocrites and Unbelievers and were punished, though others were faithful to the Trust and received Allah's Mercy". The resulting conclusion is the same under both interpretations.

3781 - See ii. 30-34 and notes. Allah intended a very high destiny for man, and placed him in his uncorrupted state even above the angels, but in his corruption he made himself even lower than the beasts. What was it that made man so high and noble? The differentiating quality which Allah gave man was that Allah breathed something of His own spirit into man (xxxii. 9; xv. 29 and n. 1968; and other passages). This meant that man was given a limited choice of good and evil, and that he was made capable of Forbearance, Love, and Mercy. And in himself man summed up Allah's great world: man is in himself a microcosm.

3782 - Zalum (translated "unjust") and Jahul (ignorant) are both in the Arabic intensive form; as much as to say, 'man signally failed to measure his own powers or his own knowledge.' But Allah's Grace came to his

assistance. Where man did his best, he won through by Allah's Grace, even though man's Best was but a poor Good. How did man generically undertake this great Responsibility, which made him Vicegerent on earth (ii. 30)? Here comes in the doctrine of a Covenant, express or implied, between Allah and Humanity. See vii. 172,73 and notes 1146-48 also v. 1 and n. 682. A Covenant (Mithaq) necessarily implies Trust, and its breach necessarily implies Punishment.

[View Page](#)

Source : Alim.org-Compare Translation-Surah 33-Ayah 72